

Gender and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights : Barriers and Opportunities for RH and Family Planning

Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo
Women and Gender Studies Makerere
University gbantebya@ss.mak.ac.ug

SEAPACOH Meeting Sept. 27-29 2011
Kampala

Presentation outline

- Understanding Gender in SRH
- Gender Barriers and opportunities for RH and Family planning
- Conclusion .. Action points

Summary of SRH Sub-Saharan Africa

- The main MDG target that may not be met by most African countries is **Goal 5 Improve maternal health:**
- Lifetime risk of maternal death is 1 in 22 in SS Africa
- Peak HIV prevalence for women 30-34 years
- Men late 30s –early 40s
- Young women between 15-19 are 3 times more likely to be infected than their male counter parts
- Women aged 20-24 are 5.5 likely to be living with HIV than the men of their cohort(Kenya 2009)

Summary of SRH Sub-Saharan Africa

- Access to RH especially FP remains a big challenge
- Access to right information is limited... extension services limited
- Access to contraception..expands but unmet needs remain high
- Young women more vulnerable...unsafe abortion
- The power to decide use of FP largely remains in the hands of men

Africa Why ?

- .. Health Care Service delivery systems and plans not comprehensive
-Poverty
- Government priorities and budget allocation
- **Gender inequalities , barriers and drivers** ... this will be the focus of the presentation..... how gender has impacted on RH and FP in Africa

Gender

- Relational -
Socially
constructed
roles,
behaviors,
responsibilities
- Context –
varies within
and between
cultures,
ethnicity, class
etc
- Changes -
Changes over
time
- Hierarchical –
Power relations
- Institutional –
institutionally
structured,
supported by
values,
legislation,
religion etc

Gender Issues

Three basic elements to a gender issue:

- A gender gap is a measure of gender inequality on any particular socio-economic indicator.

Knowledge Gap.. females knowledge of RH and FP is limited despite its availability.. Why? Gender diff in educ , movement, etc

Gender Discrimination
.... results from stereotypical beliefs, trends and different treatment of men and women or boys and girls. Women treated in an inferior manner, men not expected to access SRH services openly,

Gender Issues



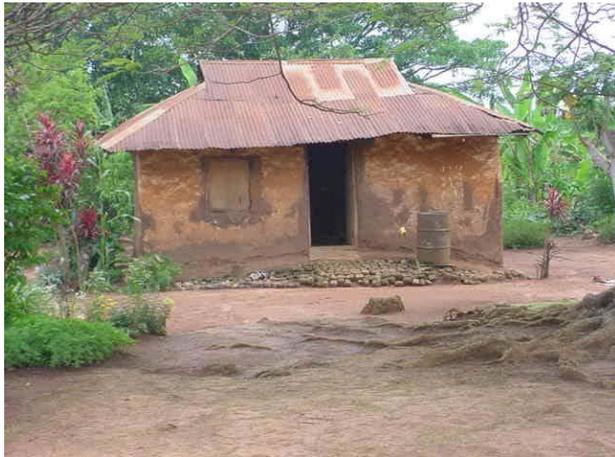
Gender oppression is the inferior treatment of one sex

In gender oppression there is an unequal distribution of resources, and power, there is injustice;

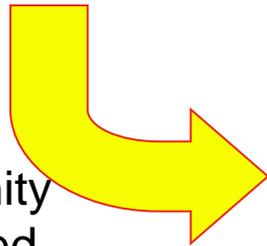
- Most women not to make decisions on use of FP, number of children, sometimes visits to health facilities.

Gender Barriers/ drivers ... RH and FP

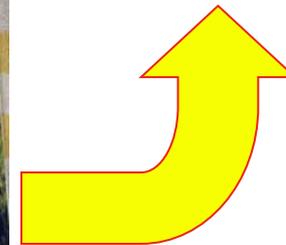
Home setting.. Gendered Values , practices , beliefs



Community Gendered perceptions , beliefs and practices



Health facility practices , attitudes



Unpacking the HH, Community and Health Institutions in Africa

RULES
How things get done

Activities
What? Who?
Who benefits.

RESOURCES
WHAT IS USED?
WHAT IS PRODUCED?

PEOPLE
WHO IS IN?
WHO IS OUT?

POWER
WHO DECIDES?
WHOSE INTERESTS ARE SERVED?

Rules

- **Rules:** *how things get done*
- Household behavior is governed by rules. These may be official and written down as well as unofficial and expressed through norms, values, laws. They determine what is done, how it is done, by whom it will be done and who will benefit. Women/men should , do , access , behave



Activities

- **Activities:** *who does what? who gets what? who can claim what?*
- In the household ; they try to achieve goals by following their own rules. These activities can be productive, distributive, or regulative. Its important to ask who does what? who gets what? who can claim what?



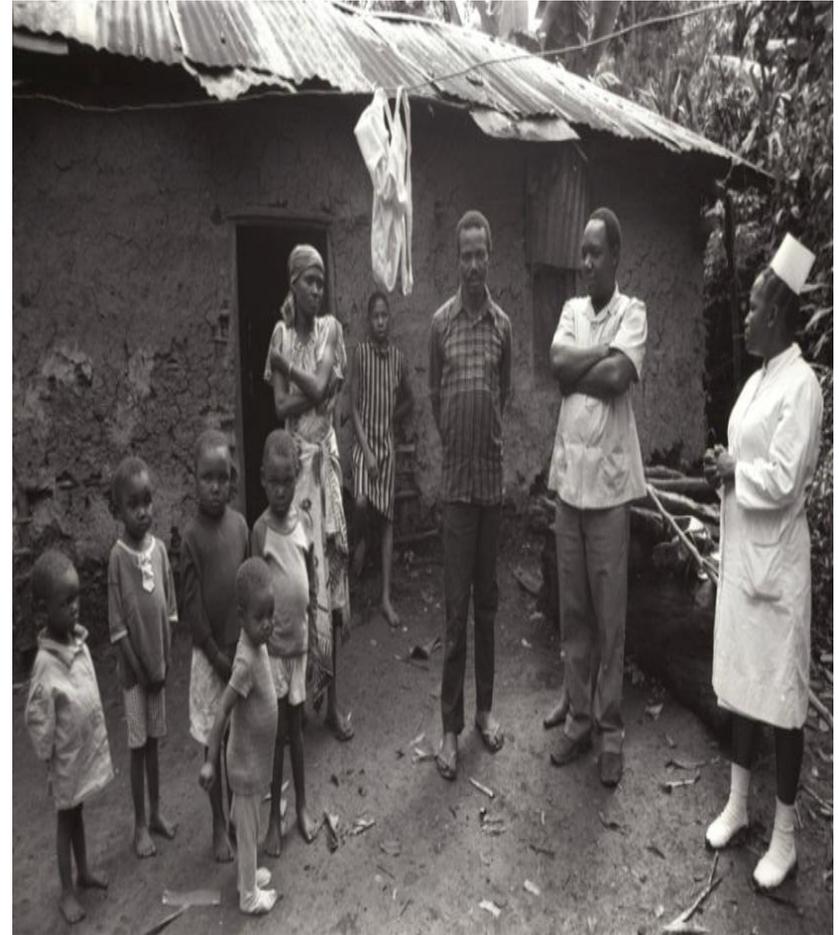
Resources

- **Resources:** *who gets resources to do the activities? who gets the benefits from the use of resources?*
- Households mobilize and distribute resources. These may be human resources (for example, labour, education, and skills), material ones (food, assets, land, or money), or intangible ones (information, political, clout, goodwill, or contacts)



People

- **People:** *who is in? who is out?*
- Households has was defining its people and are selective about: who they allow in and whom they exclude; who is assigned various resources, tasks, and responsibilities; who is positioned where in the hierarchy. different household rules are in different cultures determine who will be looked after by in what way, etc. Women and girls low priority..!



Power

- **Power:** *Who decides? Whose interests are served?*
- Households embody relations of authority and control. The unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities, together with the official and unofficial rules which promote and legitimize this distribution, ensure that some household actors have authority and control over others.



Gender issues

- **Gender based/inequalities ... Sexual violence ,**
- **Differential rights entitlements ..land and resources**
- **Religious restrictions**
- **Low levels of inter spousal communications**
- **Conflict situations.. Violations of women's rights**
- **Poverty...**



General Low Status of women in Africa

Cultural beliefs and practices ..mukazi twrwarara!

Women's battle!! : olutalo lwakyaala?

Social networks .. Grand mothers , mother in laws influence..

Women's value and identity .. Predominantly linked to mother hood...

Men's involvement..... points of engagement (resources and decision making)... may be too late

Interventions

... improving women's status and position and promote gender justice...educ,econ empowerment

Mobilize and fight gendered practices that keep women and girls discriminated and oppressed

Mobilise men as partners in RH and FP