



International AIDS Conference
Global Village - WAZ
Vienna – 19th July 2010



*'Before we were sleeping but now
we are awake':*

How Stepping Stones makes a
difference to young women's lives

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Director



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www.steppinstonesfeedback.org

Middle picture used in Vienna for the Women's Networking Zone - Hundertwasser Haus (special building in Vienna)

'Before we were sleeping but now we are awake' – Women's comment after a Stepping Stones workshop in the Gambia (MRC)



What is Stepping Stones?



- Training package on HIV and AIDS, Communication and Relationship Skills, Gender and inter-generational relations, and community mobilization.
- Designed to enable participants to define, analyse, articulate and realise their visions in relation to various factors which influence their sexual and reproductive health, HIV status, gender *and inter-generational* relations.



What is Stepping Stones?

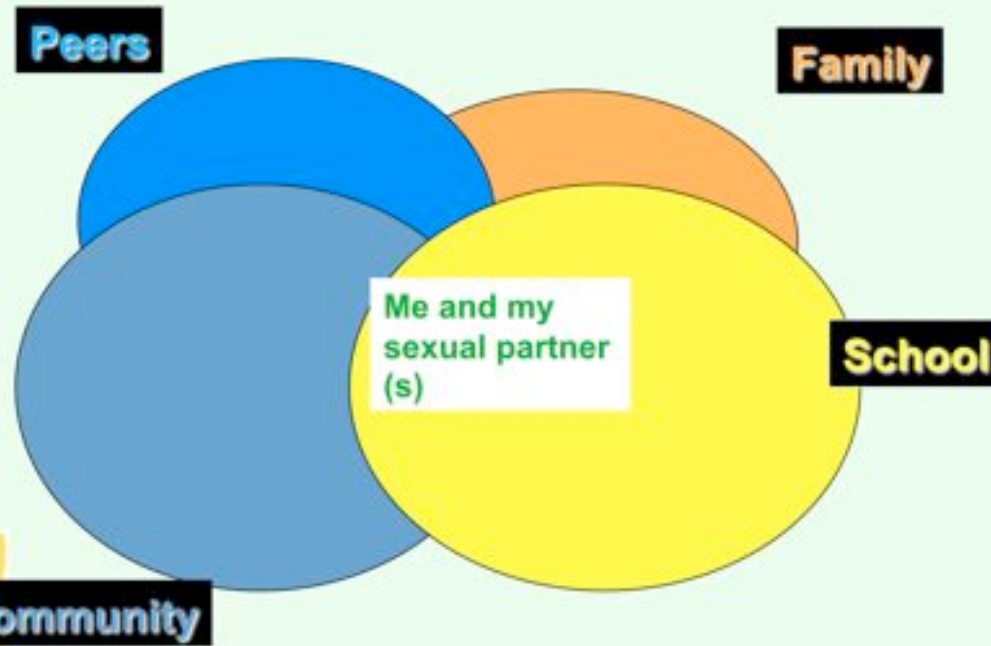


- Community-based programme (approach that uses workshops and exercises to engage members of a community). Package made of manual + DVD
- First workshop in Uganda in 1994 – manual 1995 : longest running programme of its kind
- Author is Dr. Alice Welbourn – based on her social anthropology PhD work in Kenya
- 1992: diagnosed HIV-positive → desire to reach out to other people facing similar situation, particularly women
- Content = Gender + HIV – but broader remit – Intergenerational dialogue.



The Participant as the principal actor

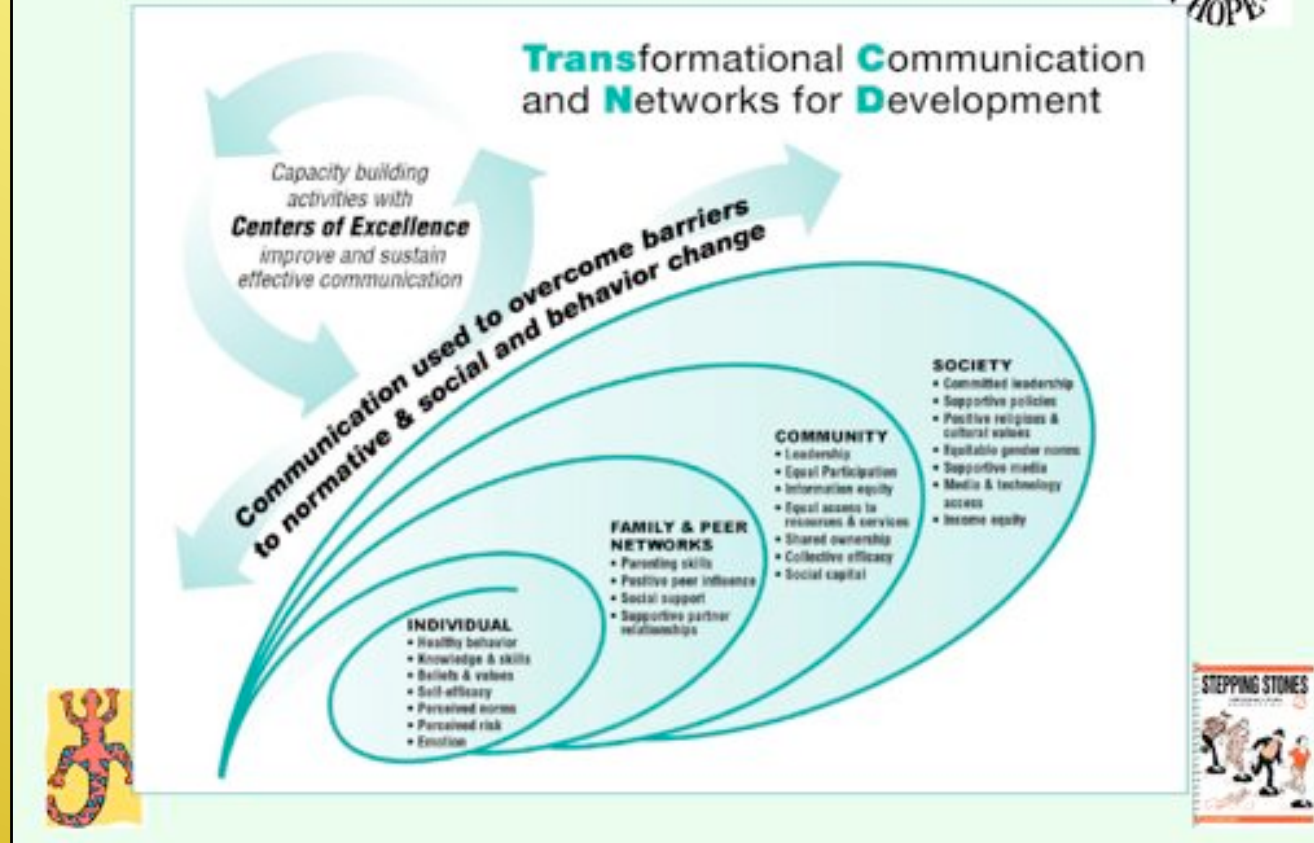
The shapes, sizes and strengths of these circles will vary with context and time



The individual is not alone but belongs to various spheres of influence that shape their identity. Therefore, we could talk of “we” identity rather than “i” identity. ‘Me’ within a social context. The things that are different about Stepping Stones is that it addresses the individual through various social interactions



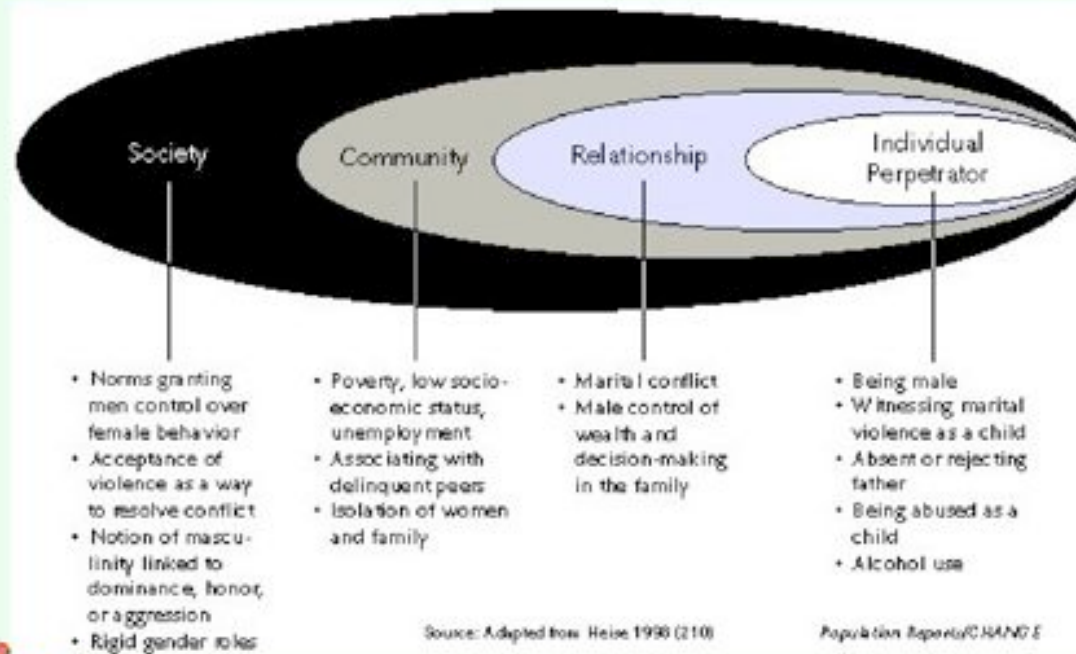
Stepping Stones is based on the Socio-Ecological Model of behavioural change



Model from mid 50s based on Charles Darwin’s writings on the “web of life”; There are multiple factor levels that affect human behaviours & it is unrealistic to expect individuals to change behavior if barriers at higher levels are insurmountable; 4 levels must be addressed to be effective: individual, social network, community & societal / like Russian dolls; Communication interventions can overcome barriers at each level and facilitate change; Behaviour change is more sustainable if individual change is supported by social change; Many programs focus on the individual only – particularly with regards to M&E



Socio-Ecological Model in the context of violence against women

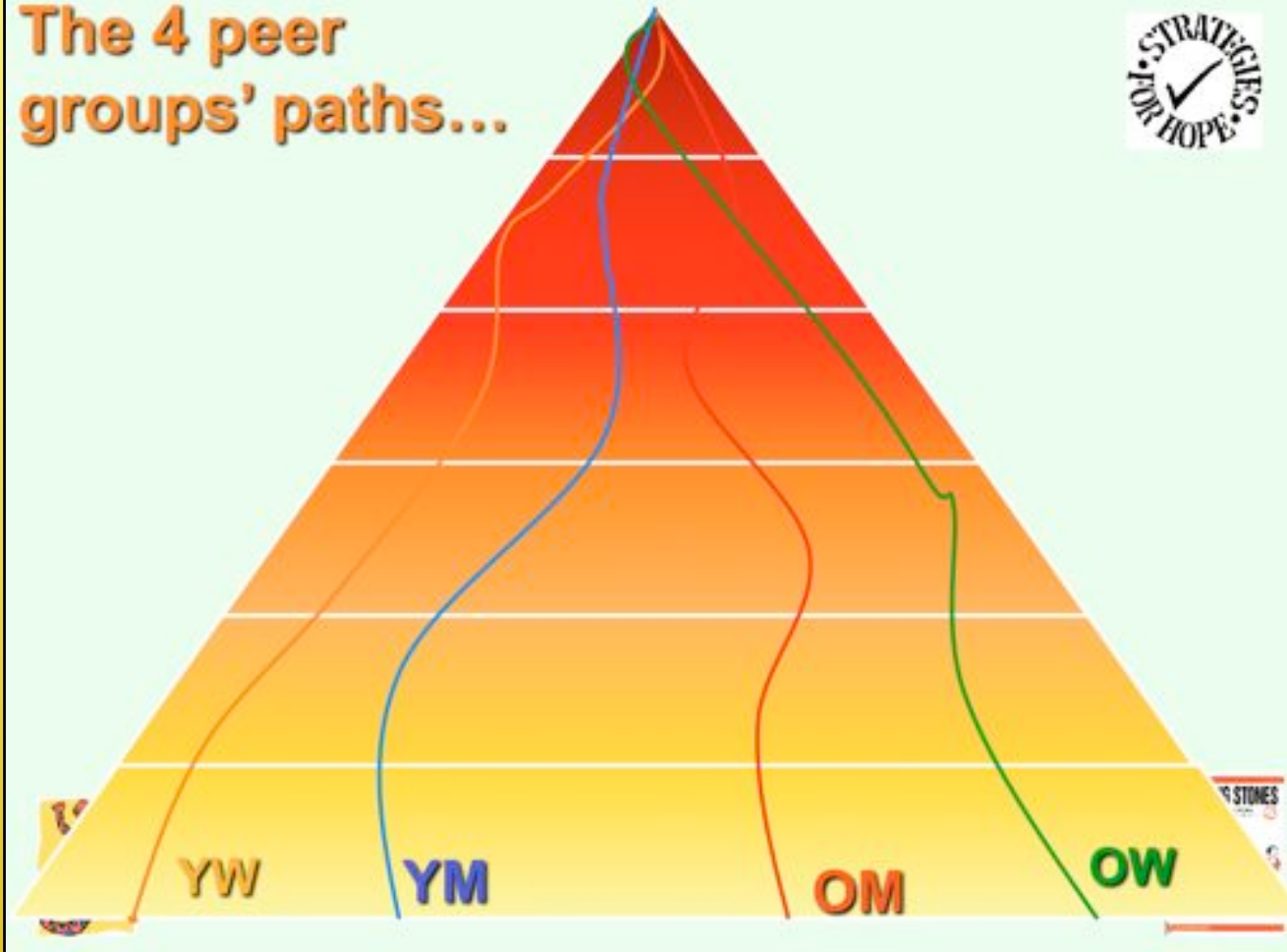


A more recent version of the Socio-Ecological Model explains the occurrence of violence against women and helps identify potential prevention strategies

See also recent two WHO reports on gender-based violence and HIV ("Addressing Violence" and "Preventing Violence"); see also: http://www.aidstar-one.com/sites/default/files/technical_briefs/AIDSTAR-One_Gender_Based_Violence_and_HIV_tech_brief.pdf



The 4 peer groups' paths...

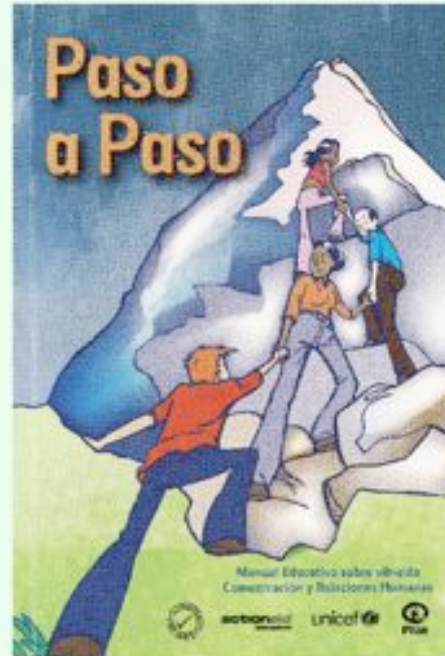


YW = young women, YM = young men, OM = old men, OW = old women. Each peer group is facilitated by someone of the same gender and similar age to themselves. These four facilitators form the facilitation team for the whole process and they have to be able to work closely together as a team.

Image of a mountain because journey from bottom to top changes our sense of vision - The higher up you climb the broader your view becomes



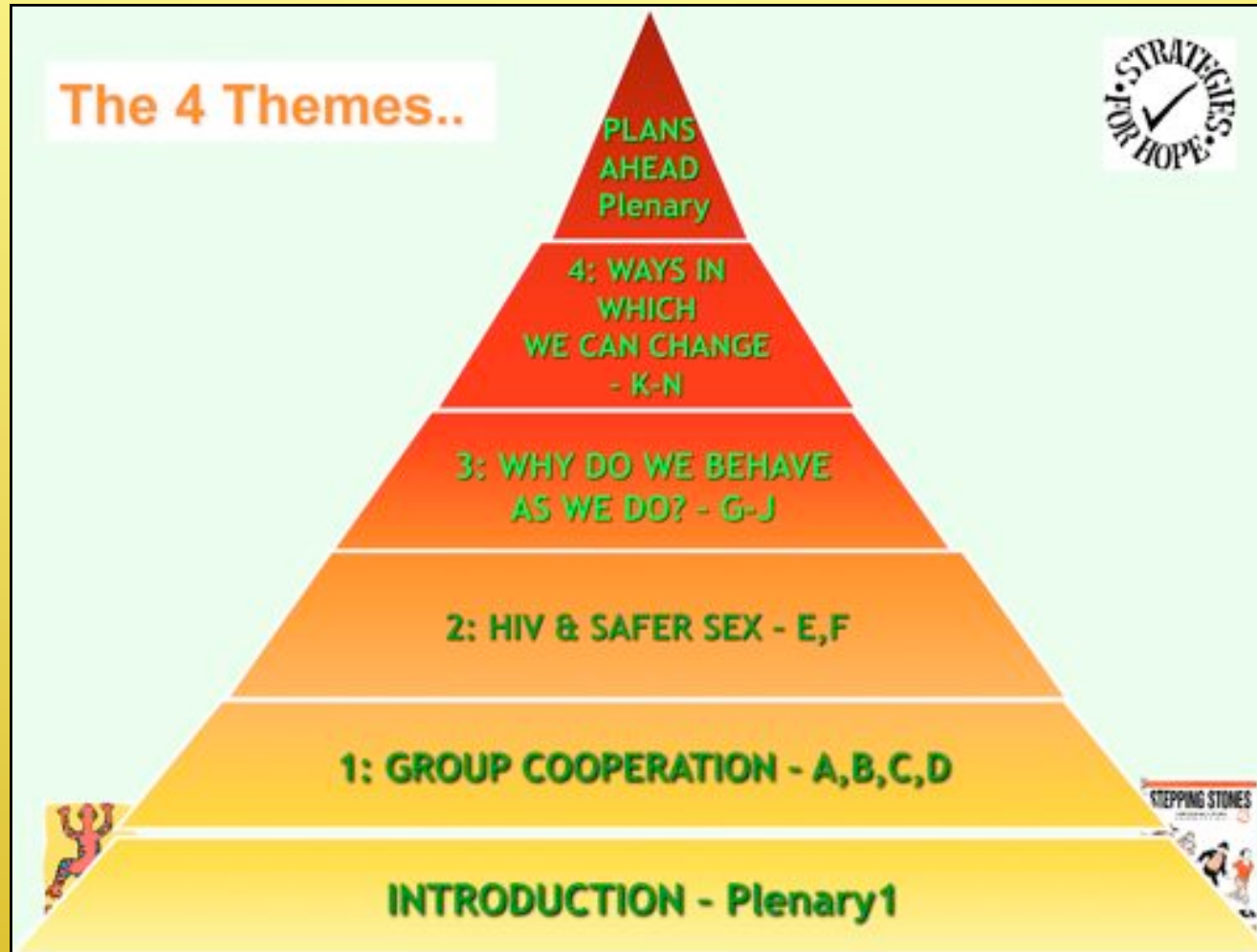
Stepping Stones in Central America: Paso a Paso



The image of a mountain was used for the cover of the Spanish version of Stepping Stones



The 4 Themes..



4 themes: progression on purpose (from getting to know each other and working together to talking about sensitive subject, addressing one's own behaviour and reflecting on ways to change) / Stepping Stones was breaking barriers because of its development of critical literacy & routes to address gender norms + framework for analysis of what is going on in our lives: it's giving participants critical literacy ie the ability to reflect and evaluate on their own lives & on power relationships
[Critical literacy is the ability to read texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships. Accordingly, songs, novels, conversations, pictures, movies, etc. are all considered texts.]



Learning & teaching theory: Bloom's taxonomy



From a theoretical point of view we use Bloom's taxonomy to nicely illustrate how SS works / Bloom headed a group of educational psychologists who developed a classification of levels of learning / Critical literacy that relates to our mountain design / 3 "domains" of learning - *knowledge*, *comprehension* and *application*. It is suggested that one cannot address higher levels until those below them have been covered / **Cognitive**: knowledge structures ("knowing the facts") / **Affective**: It is concerned with values / **Psycho-Motor**: model of developing skills, and role of imitation in skill acquisition.



Stepping Stones Foundation Stones...



- *Four*-peer group work and discussions
- Interactive exercises
- Discussions, role plays, and diagrams
- Being able to address people's *own* most pressing needs
- *Ownership* of the process by the community
- Involvement of all stakeholders
- Holistic response to HIV (linked with sexual and reproductive health and gender issues)
- Emphasis on gender and inter-generational relations



Stepping Stones Foundation Stones...



- Nonetheless, in all adaptations there are pitfalls and we strongly encourage those making their own adaptations to stick to certain principles – or “foundation stones” as we call them, as shown in this slide.
- Examples of pressing needs: young girls of 13 years of age in Uganda talking to older men and officials on sexual harassment
- Interactive exercises such as role plays (eg. men acting as women in a very macho environment enables them to experience women’s issues)
- Community owns the process so they use their own ways of communicating and sharing eg pictures or singing, dancing
- it’s a different way of addressing HIV: everyone is involved and all social aspects are brought up



Fission and Fusion:



This is the structure of the sessions moving from peer groups to full groups and back again to peer groups. We call them “Fission and Fusion”.



Lily Pad exercise



Think as different peer groups; developing group communication skills / We can think of Lily pads as gentle stones across the river. We need to support one another not to fall in.

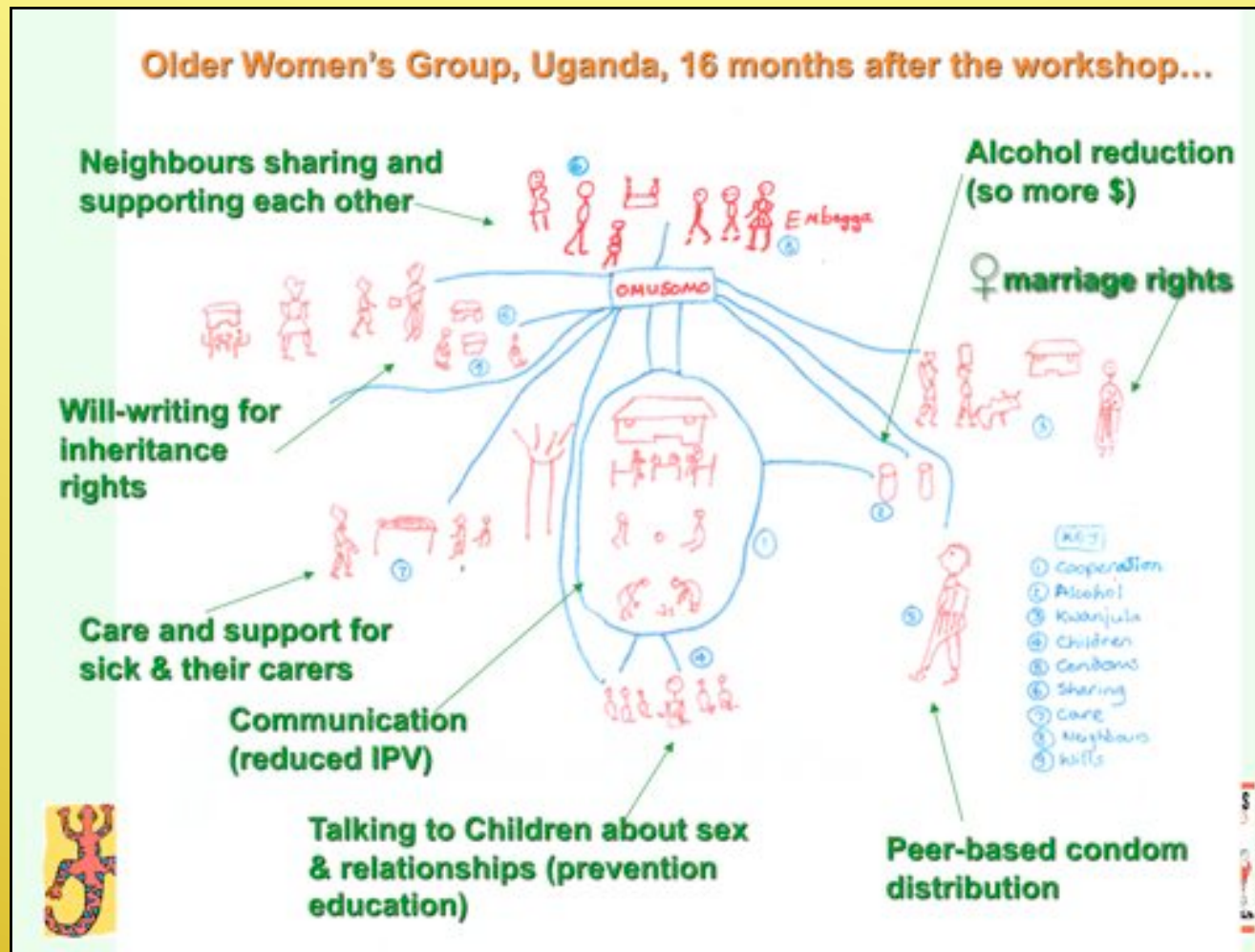


Outcomes of Stepping Stones...



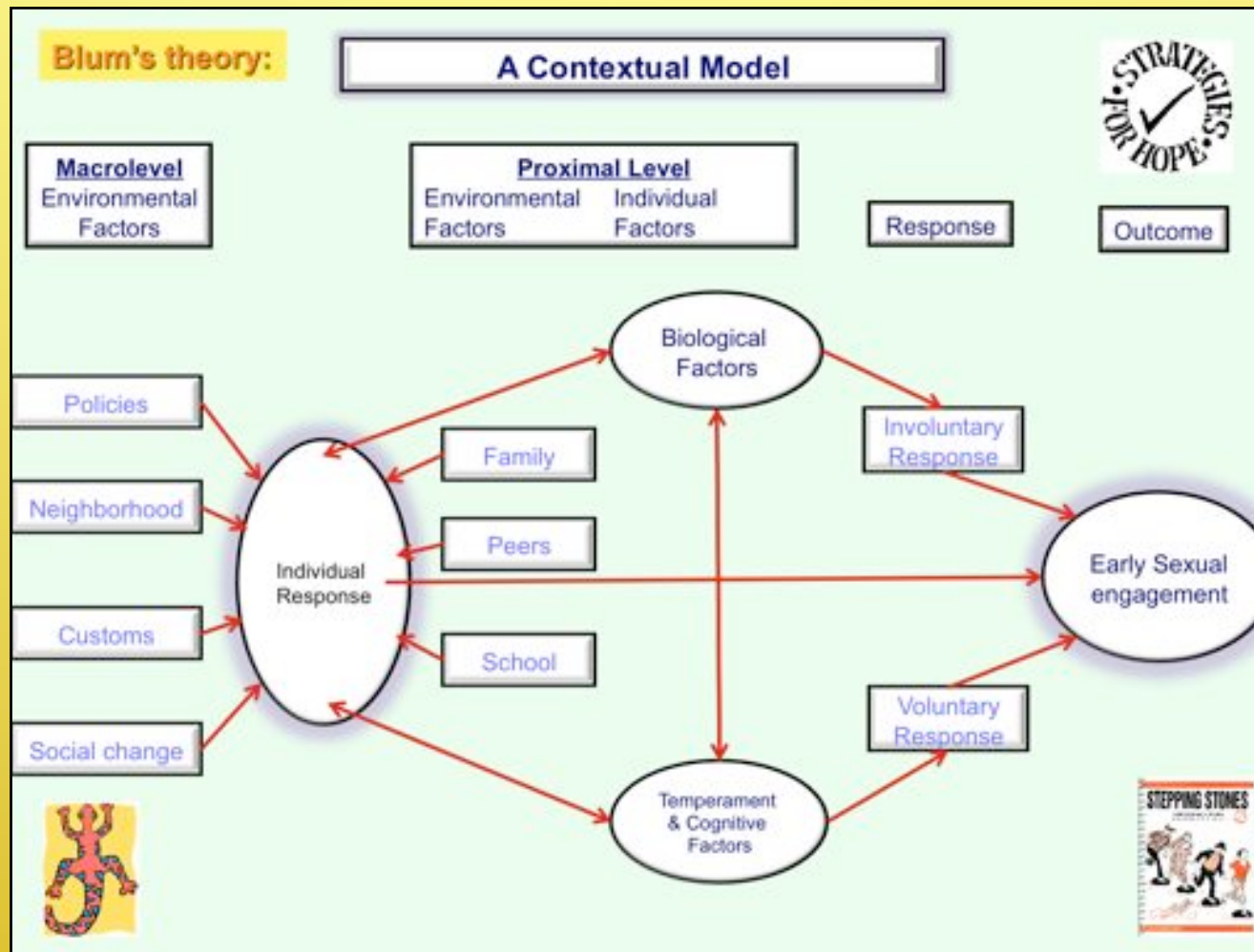
Picture by Petra Röhr-Rouendaal (taken out of Stepping Stones - original manual)





Here we can see in this diagram: prevention education; condom distribution; property and inheritance rights; a reduction in gender violence and greater harmony in the household; reduction in alcohol consumption (ie less expenditure also); and, critically, greater care and support for people with HIV and their carers. Eg: marriage rights – woman formalising a formal marriage proposal with his man carrying beers, cows & food (dowry) to her parents / Eg2: Neighbours and notion of “we” identity / IPV: Interpartner Violence / (which in fact feature the themes that 9 years later the GCWA address (see next slide) eg property inheritance & rights, care & support, education, gender inequality, prevention, SRH, violence, human rights, treatments





Example of girls early engaging in sexual intercourse. Presentation by Pr Robert Blum that shows areas that Stepping Stones seeking to influence.

The model reminds us that it is important to address all these areas to have a mechanism of being able to change an individual's behaviour; Positive parenting on prevention and education/ Positive language eg. the way in which we ask questions like: "what do you think your partner thinks when....." - put their minds in others' shoes, so you aren't just asking "what do you think when" but taking it one step further with them.

- The power of "kinaesthetic memory" - ie how our bodies somehow imprint what we have done with them. It's therefore, I have learnt, especially important always to finish off exercises/sessions with positive exercises, so that is the last imprint our bodies have received. We always round off the sessions with something good/happy/positive. But it's that actual "rehearsing for reality" with our bodies that enables us to kick into real action with a positive "I can" approach afterwards. Eg. The power of kinaesthetic memory in skills like sport, music, yoga – prob. Counts at least 70% of our communication with one another in ordinary interactions.





Examples of Stepping Stones across the world

- Central America
 - India: sex workers, people in prisons, braille
 - Post conflict settings (Mozambique, Liberia, Uganda, Angola) – rebuilding communities
 - Stepping Stones development
 - Other contexts: LGBT communities (Caribbean), Drug use (Myanmar, Russia & Central Asia)
- The Stepping Stones community of practice





Central & Latin America

Plan International & Ayuda en Acción

- Countries: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico & Ecuador
- Communities: indigenous, schools (peer training), health workers, HIV-positive people
- Issues: Church (eg. Manuals in Honduras & El Salvador) + early pregnancies, machismo, homophobia, migration, sexual abuse (promiscuity)



Nicaragua – Gilbert Antonio



trained nurse, 19, trained by Plan - “ni una lágrima más” : Play written around access to water, familial planning and HIV, in which Gilbert also took part.

Issues in Nicaragua: early pregnancies, STIs, illegal abortion, access & quality of condoms, lack of discretion from health workers, no pre or post test counselling

+ Difficulty to discuss sexuality with parents, many taboos, machismo



Honduras – Cristhian I Cabrera



Asociación cristiana de jóvenes

Stepping Stones /
Paso a Paso
trainer



Cristian is 16, a great Stepping Stones trainer in Honduras who took part in all our M&E work. She is part of the Youth Christian association, which is a partner of Ayuda en Acción – peer training through church / importance of working with the church to address issues such as unintended pregnancies / Honduras: highest rate of HIV transmission in the region of Central America (female sex workers and men having sex with men are mostly affected) / Through Ayuda en Acción Honduras, Stepping Stones is present in rural areas & cities + used with indigenous people (garífunas) + teachers and in school settings + work at national level



El Salvador – Maria Paz Callejas, PASMO

Stepping Stones / Paso a Paso trainer



MariPaz is one of our main trainer of trainers at national level in El Salvador. Her organisation, PasmO, is a partner of Plan International and Ayuda en Acción locally. MariPaz uses Stepping Stones to work with groups of HIV-positive women and sexually abused young girls. She can be listened to on the Stepping Stones website (in Spanish subtitled in English).



INDIA

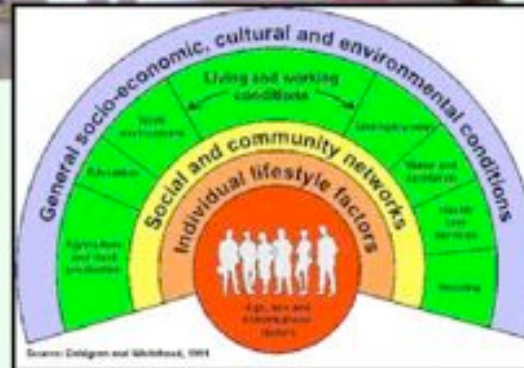


Photo with half moon: WHO report (“closing the gap in a generation”) = The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities

+ Tarantola & Gruskin (human rights indicators to measure health). See India page on the Stepping Stones website to see the various adaptations of the manual (Braille, People in prisons, sex workers, etc.).



INDIA



Parinita Bhattacharjee
Karnathaka Health Promotion Trust

Operational Guidelines for Implementing
Stepping Stones
with Women in Sex Work



Listen to Parinita explaining the use of Stepping Stones with Indian sex workers

Indian cultural context → divide the 4 peer groups not in function of age but of marital status + sex workers based on religious reasons

Other organisations working in India – eg Action Aid, Disha Foundation,...





Post conflict settings

Mozambique, Liberia, Uganda, Angola –
Rebuilding communities



Angola: ACORD – Video of Condom Commandos (available on the Angola page of the Stepping Stones website) /
Mozambique: used by UNICEF, ActionAid /

Uganda: trainer who received TOT in Harare, Zimbabwe. *"In northern Uganda, we used stepping stone package to address issues of relationship, communication and HIV / AIDS in the IDP Camps during the two decades of war. Many young girls, boys and the IDPs went for voluntary testing as a result of the use of stepping stones in Ireda, Bala Stock Farm Camp, Starch Factory Camp, Erute Camp, LPC Square Camp and other IDP Camps in Lira Municipality, Northern Uganda. Imagine that in Bala Stock Farm IDP Camp then, after running stepping stone with the IDPs, the medical workers who went testing the people ran out of the testing reagents! The IDP had up to 33,000 people at the peak of the war in northern Uganda. I handled stepping stone with members of Youth Aids Association - YASA based in Moyo Town, the youth of Pader District, members of National Community of Women Living with Aids - NACWOLA Lira, Arua and Apac districts as well as members of Apac PHAs."*
A Stepping Stones trainer in Uganda"

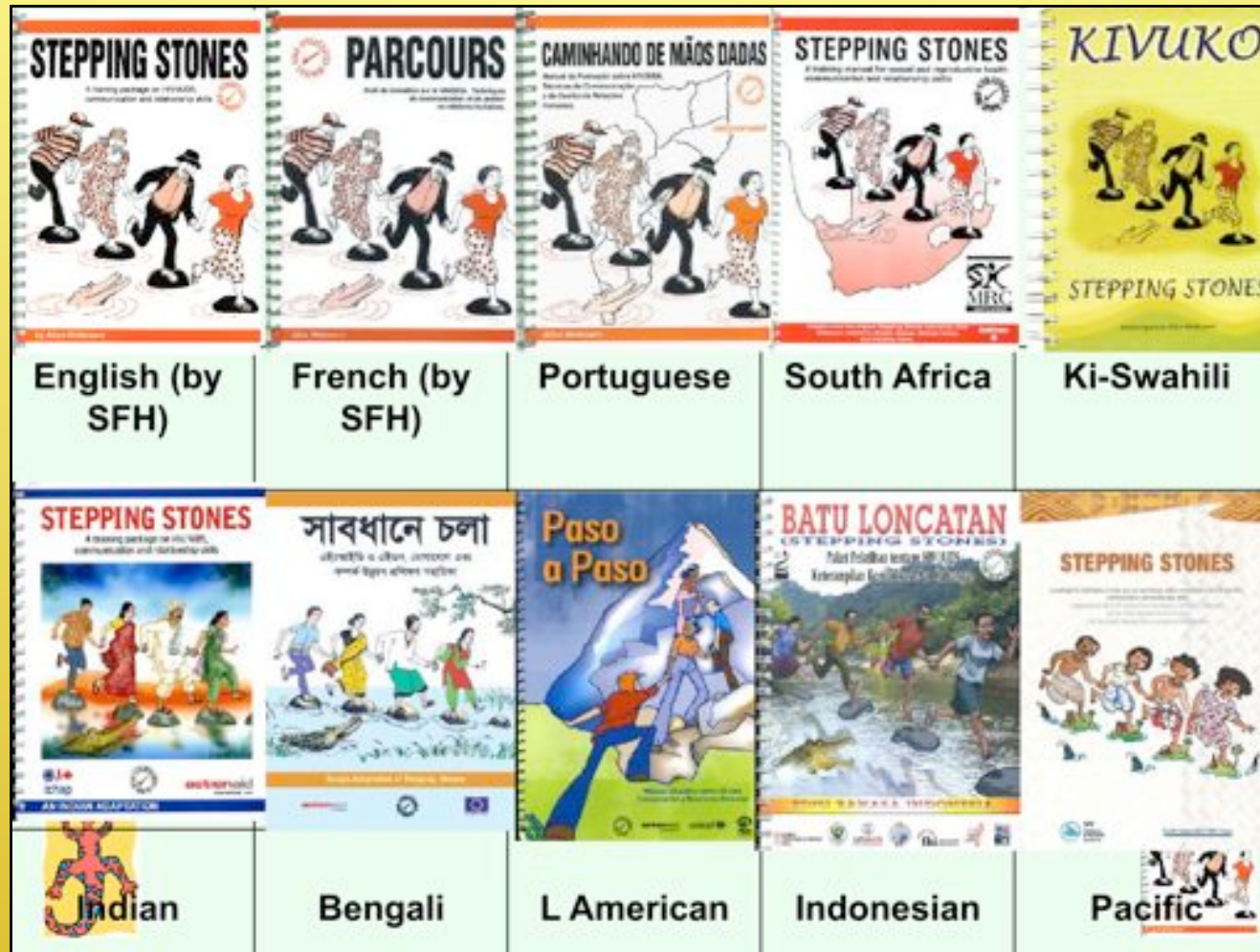


Other contexts...

LGBT communities (Caribbean)
Drug use (Myanmar, Russia & Central Asia)

Russia: “15” is not directly used with drug users and sex workers because they are communities that are very difficult to reach. So they’re not included in the programmes. Injecting drug use is a worrying issue in Russia as it is the main HIV transmission channel. Many sex workers are themselves using drugs – 90% of all the sex workers in St Petersburg for instance. 80% of female sex workers in the city are HIV-positive. The number varies with location; it is 15% of female sex workers in Moscow. Drug use is not only an urban issue, it is also very frequent in rural settings such as Siberia. Many women who are living with HIV in rural areas are also drug users. They are often abandoned by their friends and families, and live isolated with their children, with few resources to survive.





Some of the covers of the translations of the original manual...



Other Languages...



- Afrikaans,
- Hindi,
- Kannada,
- Khmer,
- Marathi,
- Nepali,
- Sinhala
- Vietnamese
- ... and others...



And additional languages in which it was translated.



Current International users include:



- ACORD
- ActionAid
- Ayuda en Accion
- CAFOD
- Care International
- Christian Aid
- Concern Worldwide
- DFID
- Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Islands
- India Canada HIV/AIDS Project
- IPPF
- Plan International
- Save the Children International
- Tear Fund
- UNICEF
- USAID
- *And many other local organisations (and CBOs)*



With whom has Stepping Stones been Introduced?



Many different contexts: (see handout on assessment of mental health in South Africa)

- People with disabilities (eg India)
- Pastors and Imams and their congregations (Kenya, Gambia)
- School pupils and teachers (many countries)
- NGO staff (eg Tanzania)
- People living with HIV and AIDS (eg Zimbabwe, Namibia)
- National and constituency AIDS Control Councils (Gambia..)
- Girls and boys out of school (many countries)
- Women's rights groups (many countries)
- Health staff (Mumbai)
- Drug using communities (Myanmar)
- People in prison (Morocco, India)
- University staff and students (Namibia)



With whom has Stepping Stones been Introduced?



Stepping Stones has been creatively adapted to be used in many different religious, cultural contexts and institutional and we welcome and encourage its adaptation for different settings.

All the exercises are based on “think of something that has happened to you or to someone you know.....”, in order to ensure that people feel that what they are thinking about or discussing is directly relevant to *them* and not something abstract and irrelevant to their lives.

This is a part of the process of enabling the workshop to feel meaningful and useful to them – and ultimately contributing to the work and changes involved becoming more sustainable.





The Stepping Stones community of practice

- Self-organising group = not a network + 6 conditions brought together according to Swiss Development Agency (one of main early sponsors of SS)
- Our CoP is about 700 members – common goal: tackling HIV and gender issues in their communities (in Latin/Central America, Africa, Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Pacific and South East Asia). Database growing
- To support the CoP: www.stepsstonesfeedback.org + forum + emails + newsletters...





Questions ?



Parkiing lot - flichart





Monitoring and Evaluating Stepping Stones

- Gambia findings
- A review of evaluations up until 2006 (T. Wallace)
- Regional evaluations (C. Am, South Africa, Fiji)
- Worldwide structural review
- "Hope" to be measured
- What next



GAMBIA



POSITIVE CHANGES SEEN NOW IN THE VILLAGE, February 2000

GOOD CHANGES	W	YM	OM
More DIALOGUE in the home	#	#	#
Less quarrelling amongst couples (violence)	#	#	#
More trust and confidence between couples and the community	#		
Fewer sex partners		#	
*Practise safer sex	#	#	
**Stay with husbands during breastfeeding	#	#	
Husbands provide more fish money	#	#	#
More understanding and respect in the home	#	#	#
Husbands buying presents for wife and children	#		
Husbands helping wives with difficult jobs at household level	#	#	#
Husbands granting permission for wives to visit relatives	#	#	
Talking to children about sex	#		#
Safer sex even outside marriage	#	#	#
Awareness		#	#
Safe drinking water ⁴		#	



Change perceived BY the participants since the workshop took place / “Before we were sleeping, now we are awake”: Preliminary evaluation of the Stepping Stones sexual health programme in The Gambia / Gambia predominantly Muslim – implemented in 4 villages (563 people) / Initial resistance from men who thought it was a family planning programme – introduced to them as a infertility prevention workshop / Participants were asked to prioritise their health problems, to prioritise SRH related issues (jealousy, wives unwilling to have sex...), then to look at ways to prevent infections = through condoms/ See Gambia page on Stepping Stones website



GAMBIA



NEGATIVE CHANGES SEEN NOW IN THE VILLAGE, February 2000

BAD CHANGES	W	YM	OM
Outsiders accused them of being involved in family planning practices		#	#
The collaboration of GFPA in Stepping Stones has raised suspicion amongst the community members, especially the community members		#	#
Jealousy from others for not having Stepping Stones in their villages		#	
Lack of maximum satisfaction during sex because of condom use			#
Increase of multiple partners due to condoms accessibility			#

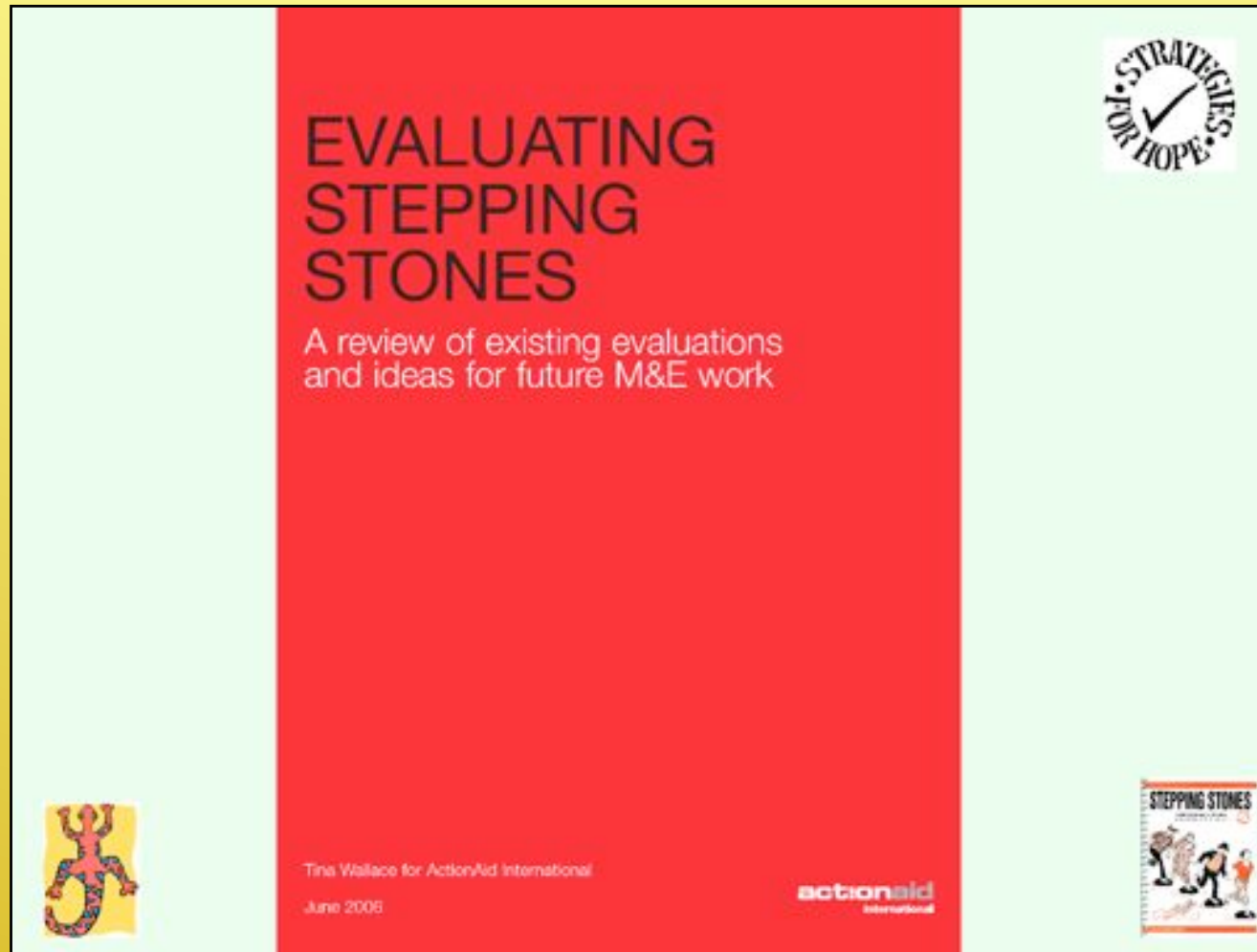
REASONS FOR BAD CHANGES	W	YM	OM
GFPA collaboration in Stepping Stones		#	#
Non participants are not clear about the Stepping Stones programme		#	#
Jealousy for not having Stepping Stones in their village		#	#



“Before we were sleeping, now we are awake”: Preliminary evaluation of the Stepping Stones sexual health programme in The Gambia

Women: nothing neative perceived





Universal support & appreciation of SS although anecdotal rather than scientific feedback but consistent / Key findings: - Improved communication in all reviews (spouses, parents/children); Actual change of knowledge & attitudes in relation to HIV eg. Condom use... ; Change of behaviour: less domestic violence, cooperation in household...; NEED FOR BASELINE & MORE M&E RESOURCES



REGIONAL EVALUATIONS



- SOUTH AFRICA
 - MRC cluster

- CENTRAL AMERICA
 - Outcome Mapping

- PACIFIC / FIJI
 - UNAIDS model / MSC
 - Self-assessment
 - GemScales



Difficult to evaluate programmes used across regions, by various size NGOs & in different contexts

SOUTH AFRICA: context of research = RCT (Randomised Control Trials) on HIV and Herpes which are perceived as being scientific measures but as couldn't afford to pay for 4 peer groups, did only on young people + in a context where HIV prevalence was low anyway. Results were that there was no evidence that SS lowered incidence of HIV but has an impact on risk factors such as intimate partner violence – so quite an achievement given that not properly used

C. AM: desired outcomes (3) + signs of progression + monitoring with facilitator journal based on Fiji model (4 domain of focus: gender inequality, communication, sexual behaviour, taboos & myths) / See also "Evaluation" page on the Stepping Stones website





Worldwide Structural Review

- WHO Quality of Life
- Bath University



WHO questionnaire

University of Bath, WHO Quality of Life centre collating all docs in relation to M&E + use to do a systematic review of the programme



HOPES...to be measured



- Appreciative Inquiry / Positive psychology
- Mental health issues --> disability
- Measuring Hope (Snyder, Barnett)
- Power of assertiveness training
- Power of preparing for death
- Trust, love, spirituality
- Community involvement/GIPA
- Creating solidarity with *all* marginalised people (including women and girls)
- Stepping Stones *Plus...*



Stepping Stones allows to monitor all this through positive questions, minimising the negative side of things / Helps measuring hope / Reduce sense of fear around death – presented as a long journey (what do you do before travelling, who do you say good bye to ...) + property & inheritance





What NEXT?

- Only 18 sessions
- Stepping Stones in Buwenda revisited
- Role of Microcredit



Only 18 sessions over 9 weeks + pressure for donors = now move to another village but change doesn't happen from one day to another (eg – smoking ban only 2 years ago but we've known for 60 years that bad for health... = timeframe for change v long). Would like to develop website as a link to other resources

+ in India, young women's lives haven't changed as much as we'd like to because of entrenched attitudes / Greater change in MRC South Africa young female staff bcs these women have money so power to change / Buwenda: girl saying she wants to go to university actually went , cos dad agrees under peer pressures of other older men after workshop / Microcredit: Redd Barna working there has enabled environment for workshops & then use that ground to implement microcredit strategies / Change for young men: before workshop were laughing at HIV+ people, afterwards choose to socialise with village girls who have gone through the same programme





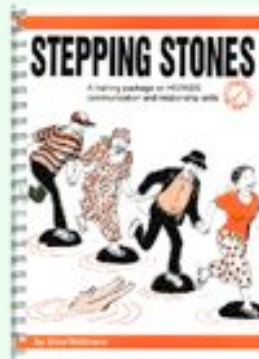
Ongoing developments

- Stepping Stones PLUS
- Stepping Stones for Children



Stepping Stones PLUS: community wide + brings understanding about issues faced by positive people
Issues such as disclosing, community support, religious group support, sero-discordant (magnetique) relationships, VCT, medical male circumcision, breastfeeding... - Stepping Stones website





Thank you

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Amandine Bollinger

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