



Women's Empowerment Program Burundi Evaluation: 2009 - 2013

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABUBEF	Association Burundaise pour le Bien être familial
AIDS	Syndrome de l'immuno-déficience acquise
APDH	Association pour la promotion des droits humains
CEDAW	Convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
CM	Chef de ménage/Head of household
CO	Country Office
CPF	Code des personnes et de la famille/Code of the person and family
CW	Community Worker
EDS	Etude démographique et de santé/Demographic and Health Study
EDS/SR	Etude démographique et de santé / santé de la reproduction (reproductive health)
FHI	Family Health International
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IGA	Income Generating Activity
ISTEEBU	Institut des Statistiques et d'Etudes Economiques au Burundi
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NN SG	Nawe Nuze Solidarity Group
OAG	Observatoire de l'Action Gouvernementale/Obsevatory of the Goverment's Actions
OPJ	Judicial Police Officer
RFP	Réseau des women pour la paix/Women's Network for Peace
SG	Solidarity Group
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmissible Infections
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
VIH	Virus de l'immunodéficience humaine

Executive Summary

CARE has been working in Burundi since 1994 when it first established an office to assist communities affected by civil unrest, and has carried out many short to medium term projects in the domains of health, education, women's development, income generation, humanitarian assistance and community development, among others. CARE is now working towards maximizing its impact on vulnerable women in Burundi. Women are the bedrock of households in Burundi. Despite this vital role, they face socio-cultural, economic and political challenges. It is in this context that the Umwizero Programme was conceived in January 2009.¹

The "UMWIZERO II" project was launched in January 2009. This intervention is a logical upshot of the "UMWIZERO I" project. The project is implemented in four Northern provinces of Burundi; Ngozi, Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga. The primary impact group includes direct beneficiaries numbering 103,060 rural poor women from the age 15 and above, who are vulnerable to Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the provinces of Ngozi, Kirundo, Kayanza and Muyinga. The indirect beneficiaries are the members of their households, thus a total of about 620,000 on the basis of the average household of six persons. Some of the key features of the target group include; widows, the Batwa indigenous group (it must be noted that it covers all Burundi ethnic groups), etc.

The UMWIZERO II Programme places special emphasis on the empowerment of women, and is involved in capacity building of women by working directly on issues of organizational and economic capacity building and indirectly on questions of civil rights and women's political rights in SRH, while promoting the practice of advocacy with the support of experienced partners. The networking of Solidarity Groups (SG) provided under the terms in this phase allowed women members to advocate and defend their own interests.

CARE Burundi commissioned this endline study within the framework of the UMWIZERO II Program. The overall objective of the endline was firstly to assess the changes the program has contributed for creating in the lives of the program participants using expected objectives and/or outcomes at country level as a starting point. Secondly, to specifically explore unintended positive and negative effects the program has had on the program participants and impact group. This report presents findings of the endline study for the CARE Burundi, UMWIZERO II Programme that was implemented in 4 provinces (Ngozi, Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga). The report provides background to UMWIZERO II Programme, objectives of the study, methodology, findings, conclusions and key recommendations. The study was conducted during the first and second quarters of 2014, which included qualitative research with impact groups and stakeholders, and a quantitative survey conducted with 650 households, 516 women and a small group of male target group members.²

Outcome indicators	Baseline 2009	Endline 2014
2) Women's attitude towards the empowerment of women as shown in the following areas		

¹ <http://www.care-international.org/where-we-work/burundi.aspx>

² Sample sizes for men sampled are indicative and not representative

- The protection of women's economic security (property rights, inheritance, etc.)	3.12	3.65
- Women's participation in the public sphere, decision making at community level	3.54	3.98
- Social inclusion	3.81	4.17
- Protecting the rights of SRH and maternal health	3.75	3.99
- Attitudes of women regarding GBV (domestic violence, harassment harmful traditional practices such as FGM, early marriage, etc.)	2.36	2.88
2) Measurement of attitude of men concerning women's empowerment as indicated in the following areas:		
- The protection of women's economic security (property rights, inheritance, etc.)	3.12	-
- Women's participation in the public sphere, decision making at community level	3.61	-
- Protecting the rights of SRH and maternal health	3.86	-
- Attitudes of men regarding GBV (domestic violence, harassment harmful traditional practices such as FGM, early marriage, etc.)	2.24	-
Indicators		
% Women who control over assets in the household	27.0%	36.8%
% Women with the capacity to cope with economic shocks	56.8%	48.0%
% of women reporting meaningful participation in decision-making bodies	-	62.8%
% of women reporting being satisfied with the availability and quality of sexual and reproductive health services	92.9%	68.1%
% Women making decisions / making informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health.	-	56.0%

Outcome 1: Women and girls impact group members in the target provinces are economically and socially empowered

Many stakeholders feel that the project effects on women's ability to cope with economic shocks are sustainable as the SG members are now relatively autonomous in managing their activities. As the results indicate, women at endline are more likely to use their savings (14.5% at endline, compared to 9.6% at baseline), or use the social fund of their group or a VSL group or similar (18.2% at endline compared to 4.9% at baseline). At baseline, 50.5% of all women surveyed (56.8% of VSLA members) reported having the capacity to cope with economic shocks. Burundi has a high population growth rate, and as the population grows, the amount of fertile land available for agriculture is decreasing. According to the World Food Programme, the level of food vulnerability is extremely high: more than 60 per cent of the population is at risk of food insecurity as a result of climatic events, declining soil fertility and rising food prices. At endline women's ability to cope with shocks has reduced to 48% of all women surveyed, in part because women are less likely to report that they are able to use their resources or produced items to cope as a key strategy.

Improving the economic power of women has led to a new understanding of their responsibilities because they are able to meet the needs of the household such as catering, children's schooling and clothing. It also impacts on young girls: the participation of mothers in the SG helps girls who have not had the chance to

study. The girls supported by their mothers learn responsibility, they undertake income-generating activities, trainings benefited by their mothers come to them, and they are prepared for their future lives in the household.

At endline, 36.8% of women have control over assets in their household, compared to 27% of women at endline stage. The study established that in the UMWIZERO II Programme area, there has been a marked improvement in control of assets in the household. Key shifts have taken place in relation to attitudes to household decision-making and asset ownership: a 30.8% shift has taken place at endline (86.9%) since baseline (56.1%) in relation to attitudes to whether women should be able to own and control the same assets as men. The responses to the qualitative research indicate that the change in the ownership interest of the assets of women, has translated into increased participation in decision-making but that, “There is no decision making exclusively of women, rather consultation”. Others feel that improved economic power of women has changed the understanding of men about their responsibilities in the household as it is not just men who feel that they who must provide for the families basic needs. Some felt that this change in power has the potential to cause conflict if there are misunderstandings or confusions about roles and responsibilities.

Women’s attitudes towards traditional gender roles seem to have shifted since baseline. The average scores at endline indicate a more positive attitude of women surveyed towards their economic freedom (3.65 average Likert score, compared to 3.12 at baseline). The results indicate some clear shifts in women’s attitudes and realisations about the ability and potential for women’s involvement in activities outside the home. At endline women are significantly more positive about the fact that women should be able to inherit and keep property or assets from their husbands, fathers, mothers, or other relatives, with 84.1% agreeing, compared to just over a third of women at baseline stage (35.4%). The issue of inheritance is the only major aspect of Burundian law, which is still not governed by legislation. In spite of the fact that Burundi has already signed and ratified the majority of international instruments which establish equality between the sexes and even Burundi’s constitution includes these instruments, Burundian custom excludes daughters from inheritance.

Women are more confident about their social inclusion at endline (4.17 average Likert score) than at baseline stage (3.81). The majority feel they have a good social network in the community (95.4%) and are happy with their involvement in funeral associations and community groups (75.1% at endline). Importantly, 95.7% feel at endline that social cohesion has improved, by agreeing that the community members are ready to support them in case of shock or crisis, an increase on the baseline rate of 80.3%.

Outcome 2: Formal and informal community-based structures are in place at all levels and promote social change and equitable norms that favour women’s rights

At endline stage in the four study areas of Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga and Ngozi the average Likert score indicates that women hold more positive attitudes towards their participation in the public sphere at endline compared to baseline (3.98 at endline compared to 3.54 at baseline). From the study, it is evident that the respondents are convinced that women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected institutions as well as men. In relation to women’s political participation, 96.8% of women at baseline agreed that women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected bodies just like men, and 83.5% (compared to 72.9% at baseline) report that women should be head of state just like men. This denotes two key issues, the legislative environment is translating into real politics with the quota of 30% being utilized and recognized. During the various FGDs in the programme area, most of the female

respondents, responded that they have the right to elect and to be elected in decision-making institutions. Women singled out UMWIZERO II as having contributed significantly to their empowerment through the training they received, which encouraged the women to seek elections and to be elected. However men and boys members feel that they are still not sufficiently empowered, knowledge-wise, to confront any violations of women's civic and political rights.

Female respondents to the survey felt they have the right to apply to be members of community structures in their locality and CARE has influenced these structures. Women are clear about their rights to participate in the public sphere in their communities. For example at endline 93.1% of women agree that women should have a say in important decisions in the community (an increase on baseline figure of 85.2%). Women were also more likely to report that it is wrong to say that a woman has no place in the decision making of the household (89.7% compared to 69.3%). At endline stage, 62.8% of women report that they are able to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes.³ At endline farmers associations and political parties are the key decision-making structures where women report membership. In comparison to baseline, a higher number of women report membership of community conflict management structures. As at baseline, over 75% of women are members of both water and education management committees

Women interviewed during a FGD in Kirundo Province explained that prior to the coming of UMWIZERO II Programme, they (women) had no responsibility in decision-making within the household and consequently beyond. They felt that CARE projects have contributed to the development of women's capabilities through the various training workshops that were organized, the women were able to develop their self-esteem, and they have had ideas about the characteristics of a good leader and how to conduct lobbying and advocacy. At endline both male and female respondents feel that women VSLA members' participation in local governance issues is significant and could contribute to overall change (perceptions & attitudes towards women participation in governance) in the community. This is attributed to the high level of self-confidence and respect exhibited by women who are members of VSLAs. Men interviewed reported the level of control over decision making related to household finances and IGAs of their women has increased at least 20% since the Program began.

One area where traditional cultural norms remain similar to baseline is with regards to women's freedom to move in public places. Just over half of women feel that it is wrong to say that when going to most public places, a woman should obtain the permission of her husband or head of household (56.6% compared to 37.8% at baseline in 2009). This is supported by the qualitative research in which stakeholders indicated that barriers remain to participation for women such as pervasive cultural stereotypes and attitudes, misinterpretations from extracts from the Bible or the Qu'ran and the fear of being dominated.

At endline farmers associations and political parties are the key decision-making structures where women report membership. In comparison to baseline, a higher number of women report membership of community conflict management structures. As at baseline, over 75% of women are members of both water and education management committees. Compared to baseline data, women are more likely to report that they are members of farmers associations or committees deciding on the use of community land at endline stage. Of those who are members of these groups, women report moderate to active participation levels.

³ data was not collected on this at baseline stage in 2009

In relation to SRH, at endline women within the UMWIZERO II programme area have a higher level of knowledge on the importance of SRH services and they adhere to schedules within those services. At endline the attitude of women towards their Sexual and Reproductive Health indicative a more positive perspective (with average scores of 3.99 at endline compared to 3.76 at baseline stage). Today, women within the UMWIZERO II programme area have a higher level of knowledge on the importance of SRH services and they adhere to schedules within those services. At endline female respondents overwhelmingly (95.9%) agreed that a couple should decide together how many children to have. However compared to baseline (when 92.9% reported satisfaction with SRH services) fewer women are satisfied with SRH service delivery at endline stage (68.1%). Whilst the support of health workers in the reproductive health services serves to strengthen the rights of women seeking reproductive health services in the programme area, one recurrent issue remains the distance to some health centres from the homes of the women.

Outcome 3: The legal framework, government institutions, civil society and private sector at all levels promote the GEWEP impact group's enjoyment of their rights.

During the baseline study opponents to CEDAW defended the principles of the Burundian traditions; they argued that the implementation of CEDAW will inevitably lead to social disintegration and tearing of the social fabric. These allied subgroups wanted, above all, to safeguard the Burundian culture through suppressing key elements of women empowerment. Today it is these same opposing groups on the issue of promoting women, which continue to compete on the socio-political scene for and against positive changes for women. There has been a slight change amongst the opponents, which now includes judges, politicians, and legislators, and through ignorance even women themselves, the churches that cling to certain Bible verses and the Qu'ran that supports the persistence of patriarchy. They all benefit in one way or another in an ideal situation due to the achievements of custom and struggling, therefore, to keep women in a position of dependence.

Women's access to land, in particular, is widely recognised as important both for ensuring equality of basic rights and for reducing poverty and ensuring household food security. While women's land rights have become better protected by national laws, discrimination against women stems from both the state (e.g. via administrative processes) and customary systems. This makes it more critical to look at whether women enjoy equal rights to land, property and natural resources in practice, rather than only under statutory law.

On the legislative environment, although the Constitution of Burundi integrates the CEDAW Convention and other international instruments, but laws to implement the principles contained in these international texts are incomplete or insufficient. Indeed, according to some KIIs the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code do not effectively protect women from violence. It is important that the views at the grassroots be fully integrated in any proposed legislation for it to gain both acceptability and to move from the statutes to households.

At endline stage women are less positive about GBV issues (with scores of 2.88 compared to baseline average Likert score of 2.36). In relation to female circumcision for examples attitudes at endline remained similar to baseline with 15% agreeing that there are important advantages for a circumcised girl. Women are also more likely to accept that domestic violence happens, with more women agreeing that a wife should tolerate being beaten by her husband or partner in order to keep the family together (average score at endline 2.71, compared to 2.20 at baseline).

The respondents in the four provinces still acknowledge that GBV is a prevalent vice. However they credit UMWIZERO II for generating invaluable awareness about the dangers of GBV. Young women for example, felt that CARE's support has been helpful in advocacy and counselling for victims of GBV. At the beginning of the training, beneficiaries have taken knowledge of the existence of the services available to help victims of GBV; they also helped in strengthening the capacity of community leaders in advocacy. Community leaders have effectively played the role of advocacy at the community level.

The respondents explained that they now contribute to the prevention of GBV in their communities through increased sensitization of community members on the dangers of GBV. Most respondents also stated that they actively advocate to the competent authorities for the victims of GBV, to receive both justice and services. The qualitative research shows that respondents express confidence that local authorities have been very supportive of the drive against GBV in their communities. The FGDs indicated that the authorities have received training in matters pertaining to GBV and are consequently aware of the harm caused by GBV to the perpetrator and household concerned.

The study recognized that culture is still a key factor in GBV, the more participatory approach adopted by UMWIZERO II Programme where men play a role as key partners in prevention and management of GBV issues has contributed to a gradual turnaround. The Abatangamuco were singled out during the various KIIs and FGDs as being instrumental in changing attitudes amongst men who were perpetrators of GBV. One member of the Abatangamuco explains how they have changed attitudes throughout the project during an FGD involving male activists he says, "As a group of activists our strong testimonials as one time perpetrators acts as a powerful magnet attracting men who wish to learn how to change for the better. At the end of the show, community members ask us individually to explain how we have changed for the better so they can follow our examples".

1 Introduction

1.1 Brief description of the project

Located at the heart of the African Great Lakes region, Burundi has weathered nearly two decades of conflict and troubles, which have contributed to widespread poverty. Burundi is ranked 178th out of 187 countries on the 2012 United Nations Development Programme's human development index, and eight out of ten Burundians live below the poverty line. Per capita gross national income (GNI) in 2010 was US\$170, about half its pre-war level some 20 years ago.⁴

CARE has been working in Burundi since 1994, its initial program focused on distribution of non-food items to internally displaced people and returning refugees in the northern part of the country. The development of the UMWIZERO II programme is informed by lessons and experiences obtained from CARE's experiences in Burundi. The UMWIZERO II programme is a continuity of POWER project (POWER project-Promoting opportunities for women empowerment In Burundi) started in January 2006 with the main of improving access of 30,000 extremely poor people, 80% of whom are women to sustainable socio-economic opportunities and participation in decision-making processes, both at household and community level.

Through the UMWIZERO II programme, CARE and partners sought to implement strategies and initiatives aimed at empowering vulnerable women in the four provinces of Burundi, these provinces are highly marginalized. They include; Ngozi, Kayanza, Ngozi and Kirundo. CARE Burundi sought through UMWIZERO II to address social cultural norms and barriers, and fully participate in decision-making processes, that improve their social and economic status.

The central target of UMWIZERO II is that "by 2013, women members of solidarity groups in the four northern provinces of Burundi are socially, economically and politically autonomous". This was set to be achieved through the mobilization of women members of solidarity groups (SG) involved in managing a village savings and loan scheme. The project will act as a Launchpad, through which these groups, will enhance women's ability to manage their everyday concerns such as sexual and reproductive health, illiteracy, fight against diseases and HIV / AIDS and promoting human rights in developing their capacity to negotiate and influence laws with gender-sensitive decision-making structures of government and civil society.

1.2 Theory of change and results framework

The UMWIZERO II programme sought to address some of the underlying causes of poverty in Burundi, such as deep economic impoverishment and marginalization of women and weak participation of women in decision-making bodies. The programme's theory of change is premised upon CARE's empowerment framework which revolves around the fact that where a woman's individual skills, knowledge and abilities are increased, they have access to and engage in social networks and the legal and cultural barriers to women empowerment are removed, women will be socially, politically and economically empowered. It hinges on three key aspects namely:

- ✓ Agency
- ✓ Structure

⁴ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BDI>

✓ Relations

CARE Burundi Umwizero Programme's theory of women's empowerment refined through research and partnership identifies three critical factors:

- ✓ **Women's own knowledge, skills and aspirations**
- ✓ **The environments and structures that influence or dictate the choices women can make**
- ✓ **The relationships through which women negotiate their lives**

A key insight from CARE Burundi's experiences in the Umwizero Programme is that progress in one area is usually insufficient for a woman to fully realise her rights and aspirations. For example, a woman who develops her own skills and access to resources through a microfinance program may still be held back because others in her household or community prevent her from deciding how to spend the income she earns – or because her activities outside the home ignite frictions, fear or even domestic violence.

In short, it is evident that progress in only one realm can lead to fragile or reversible gains. At worst, the result can be severe harm to women and girls, through an increase in incidents of GBV or holding back of girl child education. It is therefore both a moment of opportunity for advocates of women's empowerment worldwide, but also potentially one of high-stakes risk. This survey however points to a gradual receding of the threats of reversal. This theory of change fits in with the results framework of CARE Burundi's Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Programme (GEWEP) (successor to Umwizero Programme).

1.3 Results framework

The 2012 revision of UN World Population Prospects estimates that of the total population in Burundi, around 2 200 000, are women between 15-50 years old. The programme seeks to reach approximately 322 500 vulnerable rural women, amounting to 15 % of the Burundi total.

Table 1 Result framework represents the outcomes and selected and synthesized outputs.

Development goal: By 2025, Impact Group members live in dignity and fully enjoy their rights, including in times of crisis.			
Programme goal: By 2018: 282,000 women and 40,500 female youth members of Solidarity Groups (SG), in Ngozi, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, Gitega and Bujumbura provinces are economically, socially and politically empowered, enjoying their human rights and meaningfully participating in decision-making processes.			
Goal	Outcome Indicators	Source	Frequency of measurement
GEWEP impact group members report positive changes in social norms and structures in their communities. Evidence of change in the enforcement of laws & policies at the grassroots level		Evaluation reports	At baseline & endline
Outcome 1: Women and girls impact group members in the target provinces are economically and socially empowered	Change in ability of coping of IG with livelihood shocks. Increase in the level of use of SRH & GBV services. Evidence of increase in meaningful participation of the IG		
Selected outputs 1.1 282,000 women and 74,250 youth	% IGs accessing services from MFIs, market, mobile technology, etc. # of IG members who	Monitoring reports	Annually

(40,500 female) SG members have sustainable access to basic services (SRH, VCT, GBV, financial services) 1.2 Women IG members participate in relevant decision-making processes	hold seats in decision-making bodies (hill and communal councils)		
Outcome 2: Formal and informal community-based structures are in place at all levels and promote social change and equitable norms that favour women's rights	Evidence of action taken by community leaders (traditional, religious and elected administrators) supporting the protection of women's rights (GBV, SRHRs, and equitable access to basic services). Evidence of change in gender roles practices that protect and promote the rights of women.	Evaluation reports	At baseline & endline
Selected outputs 2.1 Religious, traditional, government and civil society leaders take action to support gender equity 2.2 Men and boys act as positive change agents, allies and partners in their communities to support women's rights and gender equity.	% of community leaders (Religious, traditional and elected leaders) and other men reporting increased understanding and agreement with the rights of women % of male activists (and social movements such as Abatangamuco) that is effectively advocating for the rights of women and female youth	Monitoring reports	Annually
Outcome 3: The legal framework, government institutions, civil society and private sector at all levels promote the GEWEP impact group's enjoyment of their rights.	Inheritance law and law on sexual and gender based violence are ratified under the influence of civil society and GEWEP impact group members. Measures taken to improve the quality in service delivery in response to recommendation/feedback from the community (through accountability mechanisms such as the CSCs)	Evaluation reports	At baseline & endline
Selected outputs 3.1 Civil society organizations, with the active participation of impact group members, effectively advocate for the rights of vulnerable women. 3.2 Institutions and community structures providing basic services to poor rural women demonstrate increased transparency and efficiency	Level of joint effort taken by the IG and CSOs to influence government to enact laws in favour of poor and vulnerable women Change in the level of knowledge & attitude among service providers on the protection of the rights of the IG	Monitoring reports	Annually
Outcome 4: Enhanced learning and knowledge management by CARE and partners	Evidence of improved program quality (strategic program decisions based on improved knowledge management and best practices integrated in program cycle, etc.)	Evaluation reports, fact sheets, technical briefs,	At mid-term & endline

		etc.	
Selected outputs 4.1 CARE's and partner organizations' capacities are strengthened to produce and use knowledge products for enhanced program quality	Existence of harmonized indicators of Women and youth developed with CARE, partner organizations and communities Extent to which CARE and partners have used experience from WEP and GEWEP to improve other Women Empowerment and Youth programming.	Evaluation reports, knowledge products (fact sheets, technical briefs, etc.)	At baseline, mid-term and final evaluation
4.2 CARE and partners use the evidence gathered and models built through the program in advocacy for scale up	Extent to which implicit knowledge from program implementation has been captured in knowledge products (including program strategies, technical briefs, etc.). Existing programming models improved based on lessons learned and informing program cycle. Engagement of CARE in dialogue with others (including policy makers) on the scaling up of effective programming models.	Evaluation reports, knowledge products (fact sheets, technical briefs, etc.)	At baseline, mid-term and final evaluation

The link between the theory the results framework is clear. It is important that women in Burundi undergo a holistic empowerment (theory based on agency, structure and relations) this will contribute to their subsequent sustainable empowerment.

1.4 Objective of the endline study

The overall objective of the end line is to assess the changes the program has contributed for creating on the lives of the program participants using expected objectives/outcomes at country level as a starting point. Secondly, to specifically explore unintended positive and negative effects the programs have had on the program participants and impact group. The study was conducted during the month of March to July 2014 in the entire area of UMWIZERO II Programme implementation.

1.5 Limitations of the study

In respect to qualitative data, one significant limitation faced by the study revolves around the ability to generalize certain results to other segments of the Burundian population. This is owing to the fact that qualitative research is often exploratory, making it problematic to extrapolate some findings to more broad populations or to draw general or far-reaching conclusions from the findings of a qualitative study.

This tool targeted key stakeholders including but not limited to administrators, traditional and opinion leaders among others. Interviewing this specific category was a major challenge setting reliable appointments proved fairly elusive. Indeed, the CARE Burundi team was consequently limited to working with stakeholders whom they had earlier interfaced with as opposed to new stakeholders in Gitega Province. There were instances where the CARE Burundi team were unable to meet some interviewees due to time setting constraints, with some interviews scheduled for the night. This resulted into long hours of waiting and readjustments of time schedules for them to be interviewed, whereas some were fitted other unfortunately were unable to participate.

There was also a challenge of translation from Kirundi to French, which could lead to having several reviews of one concept. In such instances, efforts were made to make cross-references until the team was sure that correct meanings of every concept, question and answers were communicated. In extremely rare cases,

some respondents ignored or avoided important questions, which they perceived as inappropriate, sensitive and /or against cultural practices.

There are two main issues that confront this study: Firstly, the challenge of attributing the outcomes achieved to the inputs by CARE Burundi and of demonstrating a causal relationship; and thirdly the counterfactual problem, the difficulty of knowing what would have happened if UMWIZERO II Programme had not been implemented. In the context of the quantitative survey some challenges were faced with regards to the application of the suggested sampling strategy. As a result number of males interviewed by CARE Burundi is limited.

2 Methodology

The study employed a cross sectional and descriptive design employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It was conducted in four provinces where the UMWIZERO II program is operating. These included Kayanza, Muyinga, Kirundo and Ngozi. Within the households, all members of the household aged over eighteen years were targeted for interviews using the designed female and male questionnaires. A household questionnaire was also administered to household heads. Table 2 outlines the projections and the ultimate number of interviews are indicated below it. Table 3 outlines the sampling strategy during the baseline study. There was a 10% increase in the number of households in the endline. The key methods of data collection for the quantitative strand of the endline study included structured interviews using the male and female questionnaires and the household questionnaire while those for the qualitative strand included focus group discussions, key informant interviews and Most Significant Change stories.

Table 2 Number sampled units according to the weight of each Province during the endline.

Province	Male	Female	Number of Communes	Old	New	Zone of extension	Number of collines	Households
Kayanza	281,957	303,455	2	1	1	3	5	130
Kirundo	303,791	324,465	2	1	2	4	7	160
Muyinga	308016	324393	3	0	2	4	6	180
Ngozi	323037	337,680	3	1	2	4	7	180
Total	1,216,801	1,289,993	10	3	7	15	25	650
				12%	28%	60%	100%	

Table 3: Number sampled units according to the weight of each Province during the baseline study in 2008/9

Province	Population	Communes	Collines				Households
			Old	New	Zone of ex-Tension	Total	
Kayanza	334,594	2	1	1	3	5	110
Kirundo	479,802	2	1	2	4	7	132
Muyinga	430,737	3	0	2	4	6	154
Ngozi	436,471	3	1	2	4	7	154
Total	1,681,604	10	3	7	12	25	550
Proportion collines			13%	27%	60%	100%	

2.1 How respondents were selected

In the provinces where the baseline study was conducted, communities were selected to reflect demographic variations within the project area. In addition, provincial and national level stakeholders were interviewed as indicated under the Key Informant Interview section. Thus, the study team heard the perspectives of women, men and boys, in the selected communities.

The respondents' ages were also taken into account to ensure that it represented a broad spectrum of the community. Interviews were carried out by same sex researchers, and interview schedules included clear instructions about informed consent, with participants told that they could withdraw at will. In each step of the research process, researchers also consulted with local partners for support and reporting mechanisms.

To ensure that respondents were not coerced into participating against their will, all participants were given clear information about CARE UMWIZERO II Programme. They were also told that they were able to choose not to participate and to withdraw at any time. Researchers also sought permission to carry out the research in communities according to existing procedures in Burundi. In selecting the respondents, for the endline, the study took into consideration the fact that the baseline offered a smaller sample, subsequently, an increment of 10% was made to ensure that this concern was addressed however the deviation from the agreed strategy by the team affected the final analysis.

2.2 Data collection techniques

The quantitative method used in this study generated “hard” numerical data and is based on a larger and more representative sample as previously explained. The objective was to generate a clear, simplified picture.

Table 4: Project area population and sample

Province	Male	Female	Total	Female (n)	Female %
Kayanza	281,957	303,455	585,412	148	28.6%
Kirundo	303,791	324,465	628,256	137	26.5%
Muyinga	308016	324393	632,409	114	22.1%
Ngozi	323037	337,680	660,717	117	22.8 %
Total	1,216,801	1,289,993	2,506,794	516	100%

The study had earlier utilized qualitative techniques including direct interaction with individuals on a one to one basis (using the Key Informant Interview Approach) and direct interaction with individuals in a group setting (using the Focus Group Discussion Approach). In this study, both qualitative and quantitative techniques are complementary. For example, an exploratory qualitative study based on in-depth interviews in the provinces of Burundi (Kayanza) paved the way for a large-scale survey among a representative sample of the population. Conversely, the large-scale survey (quantitative) was also supplemented with in-depth interviews that focused more deeply on certain themes and trouble spots that have been revealed through the survey.

2.3 Difficulties during data collection

The CARE Burundi team baseline qualitative study has a partially structured form, in the sense that the interviews are semi-structured interview. The collection of the quantitative data on the other hand was fraught with challenges despite the consultants attempt to guide the process, the team was unable to meet the basic benchmarks for data collection. The subjects to be discussed are decided by the researcher, but both the researcher and the informant have the freedom to change the order and the stories. The challenge is to master the situation and to decide what is best for gathering the information. The key difficulty was based on the work schedule of the respondents, with the CARE Burundi consistently finding

either the schedules of the respondents full and hence being unable to meet them for the basis of information provision. Technological innovations used by the consultant shortened the time required to process the quantitative data. The original strategy for the survey (the male sampling strategy in particular) which was agreed, was not the final version used by CARE Burundi, for various reasons.

2.4 Ethical dimensions

This study is cognizant of the fact that sound research is a moral and ethical endeavour and should be concerned with ensuring that the interests of those participating in a study are not harmed as a result of research being done. It conforms to the tenets of the CARE Norway do no harm principle. The research protocol was developed to ensure rigour and high standards of ethical conduct. All those asked to participate in the research were informed about the purpose of the evaluation and why they were asked to participate. They were informed that they had the right to refuse to participate and could withdraw at any time. All data is anonymous and no individual can be identified in any reports or other publications arising from the evaluation. All questionnaires, interview transcripts and FGD notes have been stored in a secure location. All the relevant permission from the appropriate authorities were sought and obtained.

Gender considerations and cultural sensitivities were taken into account throughout the research process and particularly in relation to FGD and beneficiary interviews. The consultancy team included both male and female members and wherever possible female beneficiaries were interviewed by female members of the team.

3 Description of the study area

3.1 Burundi geographical demographic & political characteristics

The UMWIZERO project was implemented in the north of the country in four provinces of Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga and Ngozi. Agriculture is the economic mainstay of the country, with industrial activities accounting for less than one-fourth of the gross domestic product. Coffee, chiefly arabica, is the principal export crop and source of foreign exchange. Cash crops of lesser importance include cotton and tea. By the late 1990s, more than three-fifths of the country's population was living in poverty—a result of civil strife and the ravages of war, the predominance of traditional subsistence agriculture, the persistence of low-income levels, chronic deficits in the balance of trade, and heavy dependence on foreign aid.

Approximately half of Burundi's land area is considered cultivable, and about one-third is suitable for pasture. Staple food crops include beans, corn (maize), cassava (manioc), and sorghum. Arabica coffee traditionally has been a major commodity for Burundi. The production of coffee dropped by about half in the 1990s because of civil strife but has since rebounded. Tea and sugar are also major export crops. Large areas of cotton are cultivated, mainly in the Imbo valley; however, cotton output has decreased to less than half the production levels of the early 1990s. Although the density of livestock results in overgrazing, the commercial value of livestock production is virtually nil. By the early 21st century, Burundi's forested area had shrunk to less than 3 percent of the total land area in spite of reforestation efforts. Lake Tanganyika and the smaller lakes and rivers of the interior are rich sources of tilapia and other fish.

Population density in Burundi is the second-highest in Africa: estimates of average population density vary from about 230 people per km² to as high as 278 people per km² and is as high as 360 persons per km² in some areas. Over 93 per cent of the population is rural and entirely reliant on agriculture for their survival and income. Given the high population growth and increasingly smaller plots of land per family unit, land scarcity has become a severe problem, and access to arable land is a priority for almost every household.

Agricultural production and economic reward have increased for groups with favourable access to productive land and resources, hence the high social status, political power and patronage associated with land ownership. Land issues have played a major role in Burundi's conflict cycle and refugee crisis, and the great majority of legal disputes in Burundian courts relate to land rights. Land disputes in Burundi are exacerbated by inconsistent implementation of the relevant legal and policy instruments, which have been poorly disseminated. Many actors misunderstand the existing structure, while land management and administration institutions are ineffective and highly corrupt.

Substantial and sustained economic growth based on increasing agricultural productivity will, however, require continued attention to issues of property rights and resource governance. Outstanding questions include, for example: how sufficient land might be made available to permit rural households, including those headed by women, to increase their incomes through intensified agricultural production; what kinds of rules would increase access to and assure better management of water and wetlands for production; and how forests might be maintained or even enhanced to protect watersheds and produce fuel wood and timber for the population

3.2 Constitutionalism

Under the 2005 constitution, power is to be shared by the Hutus and Tutsis. Executive power is vested in the president, who is ordinarily elected directly to a five-year term, renewable once. The president appoints the Council of Ministers. There is a bicameral legislature, with power exercised by the National Assembly, which is mandated to comprise 60 percent Hutu and 40 percent Tutsi, and by the Senate, which includes one Hutu and one Tutsi representative from each province, with three seats reserved for former presidents. In addition, three seats in each house are reserved for the Twa, and at least 30 percent of the

seats in both houses are to be held by women. Members of both houses, most of whom are elected by universal suffrage, serve five-year terms.

3.3 Education

Offering free education, making it compulsory and supporting it politically has been the winning strategy behind Burundi's successful bid to ensure that virtually all children get a primary school education. In a recent report by the UN Secretary-General, Burundi topped the list of countries having made the greatest strides in education, although it remains among the poorest countries in the world. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the proportion of children in school increased from 59 per cent in 2005 to 96 per cent in 2011. The fact that Burundi is just emerging from war and that its schools were then often targeted makes the progress even more remarkable. "It is clearly an example of a government taking in charge the question of education, and especially of the universality of education."⁵

At endline stage, 66% (n = 341) of female respondents reported that they were able to read and write in Kirundi. During the endline study, 54% (n=283) indicated that had attended formal institutions of learning. In total 52.4% (n=271) have completed primary education at endline, and only 5% report that they have received a secondary education.⁶

3.4 NN groups

During the endline study it was established that 67.9% (n=351) of the female respondents belonged to Nawe Nuze (NN) groups (VSLAs), of which 92.8% were in CARE established NN groups (n=326). An NN Group or VSLA, in this context is a women's association can be defined as a connection or cooperative link between people or organizations. The primary purpose of an association is to ensure that the women members benefit at both the collective and individual levels. The central focus of women associations therefore remains holistic women's empowerment.

Women's political empowerment, usually envisioned as political participation in elections and government, is necessary to give women a voice in the policies that affect their lives. Women's economic empowerment, which entails that women have the authority to make their own decisions regarding use of their resources, leads to prosperity for families and communities. Social empowerment, often achieved through public policy and education, liberates women from the mistreatment, exploitation, and oppression that inhibit women from reaching their full potential. The formation of association ensures that two distinct elements of women empowerment are both harnessed and fused these are that

- ✓ Individual empowerment is about the process to acquire greater independence and capacities to determine one's own choices.
- ✓ Collective empowerment that is about the capacity of a group to influence social change

Association formation can only be an effective strategy if used as an entry point to multifaceted empowerment for women. According to Andrea Cornwall; "Much depends on how the term "empowerment" is interpreted. In some parts of the world, "empowerment" has come to be synonymous with projects that give women small loans and enlist them in small-scale business activities such as producing handicrafts for sale."⁷

The above definition that focuses on the narrow view of economic empowerment is dispelled by the clear agency structure relations model that the SGs in UMWIZERO II are premised upon. The SG plus model actively pursued by CARE Burundi ensures that there is balanced empowerment through using the association formation approach (Solidarity Groups) as a key entry point for empowerment which if

⁵ <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/web-features/burundi%E2%80%99s-push-universal-education>

⁶ 218 women did not respond to this question, so these figures are not representative of the sample

⁷ Pathways of women's empowerment Andrea Cornwall 30 July 2007

structured along economic, political, SRH & GBV lines then women empowerment will have a much bigger impact. Associations therefore act as more than mere vessels of empowerment when they are viewed as gateways to the various forms of empowerment that seek to transform the status of women both in the long term and sustainably. This is clearly demonstrated by the SG approach used by UMWIZERO II by CARE Burundi.

4 Women's economic empowerment

Outcome 1: Women and girls impact group members in the target provinces are economically and socially empowered

Indicators

- Change in ability of coping of IG with livelihood shocks.
- Increase in the level of use of SRH & GBV services.
- Evidence of increase in meaningful participation of the IG

4.1 Introduction

Burundi is ranked 185th out of 187 countries by the UNDP Human Development Index (Burundi Demographic Profile, 2013). It is a largely rural country, with more than 90% of its 10 million inhabitants relying on agriculture for their livelihoods. Women make up more than 52% of the adult population and a large number of female-headed households (21% of all households in Burundi) due to the civil war. Women also account for 60% of war casualties (EAC Secretariat, Arusha, Tanzania, 2009).⁸

Even though it was not formally recognised as genocide, Burundi has experienced several outbreaks of inter-ethnic violence since independence in 1962, with large-scale massacres in 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988, and 1991. Between 1993 and 2005, a civil war caused hundreds of thousands of deaths. People were displaced internally or had to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, leaving behind their land and livestock. Many men died, leaving behind thousands of widows and orphans. Each time war broke out; women were forced to abandon their farmlands and to flee with the orphans they supported, thus becoming heads of household – a new role for them in Burundian society. This situation affected their access to land and exacerbated pressures on it; on their return from refugee camps or exile, women often went to live with their families and so did not own any land. Furthermore, conflicts and disputes were common within communities between those who had fled the country and those who stayed behind. The country's population grew very rapidly after the war which, combined with the return of displaced people, increased pressures on land, reduced the amount of fertile land available for agriculture, and contributed to an increase in land and family disputes. The result is a critical situation today.

4.2 Economic activities

The respondents at the household level both during the baseline and endline identified agriculture as the central economic activity that they relied upon for their livelihood. A majority (94%) of the respondents identified agriculture as their mainstay. The vast majority of Burundi's population living in poverty are small-scale subsistence farmers. Burundi has a high population growth rate, and as the population grows, the amount of fertile land available for agriculture is decreasing. According to the World Food Programme, the level of food vulnerability is extremely high: more than 60 per cent of the population is at risk of food insecurity as a result of climatic events, declining soil fertility and rising food prices.

Table 5: Female respondents. Most prominent economic activity

Responses	N Female Respondents	%
Agriculture	489	94.7%
Trade	8	1.5%

⁸ http://www.landcoalition.org/sites/default/files/r-wlr-securing-women-land-rights_web_en__0.pdf

Craftsman	3	0.5%
Other	1	0.1%
No answer	15	2.9%

The adverse effects of prolonged drought, the increase in crop pests and the decline in land productivity are most apparent in the eastern and northern regions. In those regions an estimated 100,000 households are at permanent risk of food insecurity and fragile nutritional conditions. The extremely high population density (about 270 inhabitants per km square, and up to nearly 500 per km square in the most densely populated areas) has contributed to greater food and resource scarcity in rural areas.⁹

Respondents to the qualitative research reported that the project had encouraged them to try different strategies to increase their financial income, in particular especially the sale of labour during the asphaltting of new roads for example, and the paving of streets in the city of Ngozi. Some women who are members of SGs have developed non-farm IGAs such as trade, farming, crafts, manufacturing improved stoves for sale; many of whom were inspired by exchange visits with others who have developed these IGAs. The majority of key informants feel confident that CARE has opened the women's horizons to undertake new IGAs.

4.3 Attitude towards women's economic security rights

Table 6. Attitudes of women on women's economic security

Stage	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N A	Total %	Number of women 15 years and more
Baseline	Women have the same rights as men to study and work outside the home.	13.7	24.4	5.8	38.9	17.2	0	100	584
Endline		25	38.5	1	27.5	7.7	1	100	517
Baseline	A married woman should be allowed to work outside the home if she wants to.	15.7	30.3	5.9	32.5	15.7	0	100	584
Endline		5.4	13.5	2.3	52.6	25.5	1	100	517
Baseline	Women should be able to own and control the same assets as men.	15.6	24	4.3	45	11.1	0	100	584
Endline		3.7	6.2	2.5	54.4	32.5	1	100	517
Baseline	Women should be able to own cash savings and decide how to use it.	11.9	22.1	5.7	45.2	15.2	0	100	584
Endline		2.9	6.4	3.1	50.3	36.9	0	100	517
Baseline	Women should be able to inherit and keep property or assets from husbands, fathers, mothers, or other relatives.	21.7	35.2	7.8	25.9	9.5	0	100	584
Endline		3.7	7.5	3.7	45.4	38.7	1	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that a woman's only role is to take care of the house and prepare meals for her family.	12.2	14.9	1.4	47.3	24.2	0	100	584
Endline		2.5	4.6	0.8	40.8	50.1	0	100	517

Table 7 Average scores. Attitude of women towards women's economic security

⁹ <http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/Pf/factsheets/burundi.pdf>

Statements	Stage	Average score
It is wrong to say that a woman's only role is to take care of the house and prepare meals for the family	Baseline	3.56
	Endline	4.28
Women have the same rights as men to study and work outside the home.	Baseline	3.21
	Endline	2.54
A married woman should be allowed to work outside home if she wants to.	Baseline	3.02
	Endline	3.77
Women should be able to own and control the same assets as men.	Baseline	3.12
	Endline	4.04
Women should be able to own cash savings and decide how to use it.	Baseline	3.30
	Endline	4.11
It is wrong to say that In the household, men should make the major decisions such as buying land, or other assets, or building a house	Baseline	2.98
	Endline	2.73
Women should be able to inherit and keep property or assets from their husbands, fathers, mothers, or other relatives.	Baseline	2.66
	Endline	4.05
Baseline 3.12 Endline 3.65 *High scores indicate positive attitudes towards women's economic freedom		

The average scores at endline indicate a more positive attitude of women surveyed towards their economic freedom (3.65 average likert score, compared to 3.12 at baseline). The results indicate some clear shifts in women's attitudes and realisations about the ability and potential for women's involvement in activities outside the home. For example 90.9% of women agree that it is wrong to say that the only role of a woman is to take care of the house and prepare meals for the family, compared to 71.4% of women at baseline stage. At endline a 30% shift has taken place since baseline stage, with 79% of women at endline agreeing that women have the same rights as men to work or study outside the home, compared to 48.2% of women at baseline stage.

Key shifts have taken in relation to household decision-making and asset ownership, at endline a 30.8% shift has taken place at endline (86.9%) since baseline (56.1%) in relation to attitudes to whether women should be able to own and control the same assets as men. Women at endline were also more likely (87.2%) to agree that women should be able to own cash savings and decide how to use it compared to baseline stage (60.4% of women surveyed agreed. At endline women are significantly more positive about the fact that women should be able to inherit and keep property or assets from their husbands, fathers, mothers, or other relatives, with 84.1% agreeing, compared to just over a third of women at baseline stage (35.4%). In relation to inheritance women are still held back by critical aspects of culture. The issue of inheritance is the only major aspect of Burundian law, which is still not governed by legislation. In spite of the fact that Burundi has already signed and ratified the majority of international instruments which establish equality between the sexes and even Burundi's constitution includes these instruments, Burundian custom excludes daughters from inheritance. In the survey women were asked to respond to a statement Women should be able to fairly inherit and actually have property or assets (e.g. field, house, and all other assets) of their husbands, fathers, mothers or other relatives.

Stakeholders felt that the groups which were established by CARE Burundi further cement the shift in attitudes towards the economic empowerment of women in the area of study. This is because the NN groups supported by CARE Burundi have undergone training in critical aspects such as leadership and the complimentary nature of the roles of men and women.

These challenges are both structural and circumstantial. Looking at the circumstantial challenges, a clear lack of political resolve can be observed. At a structural level, the challenges consist of a reduction of land resulting from a rapidly expanding population as well as the fear that the arrival of change would affect the established social and marital orders.¹⁰ The study established that most FGD discussions in the UMWIZERO II Programme area were in unanimity that women enjoyed their economic rights. There was also consensus that in the realm of rights however that men enjoyed their rights more than women.

A woman interviewed during a female FGD narrated that when her husband who was away for one year due to occupational reasons returned and found she had bought a parcel of land, he congratulated her. Today she grows banana, which she harvests and sells in the local market to meet the day-to-day needs of her family. Previously, such as initiative (of owning land) would be frowned upon by society as unwomanly, however in this instance it is evident that the empowered woman, both economically, socially and cultural is able to contribute to the wellbeing of the family. This is a key opening in the push towards culture change that has transformed the individual thinking (of both wife and husband who see eye to eye on issues of property rights) and groups the large social fabric who have not acted in a manner likely to suggest that the woman who bought the land would be ostracised. Attitudes on economic security are thus shifting in the UMWIZERO II programme area.

4.4 Control over household assets

Table 8 Control over household assets

Indicator: % of women with control over assets in household				
Endline	Numerator:	All women who report control over at least one asset	128	36.8 %
	Denominator:	All women whose household owns at least one asset	347	

At endline, 36.8% of women have control over assets in their household, compared to 27% of women at endline stage. The responses to the qualitative research indicate that the change in the ownership interest of the assets of women, has translated into increased participation in decision-making but that, “There is no decision making exclusively of women, rather consultation. Others feel that improved economic power of women has changed the understanding of men about their responsibilities in the household as it is not just men who feel that they who must provide for the families basic needs. Some felt that this change in power has the potential to cause conflict if there are misunderstandings or confusions about roles and responsibilities.

Abantangamuco men interviewed confirmed that men and women’s ability to buy or sell property or assets and decide on the use of household wealth has changed. For example for the sale or purchase of a cow or earth, the man and his wife confer. Many Abatangamuco also reported that they entrust money to their wives for the amount of security. At the time of use of this money, the man and his wife get together and make a decision together. This served as a model to others ever since.

From the men’s perspective

The Umwizero Project CARE influenced many attitudes in our involvement in decision-making in the household in the sense that now we are very receptive in decisions taken by our women for the management or control of household assets. For example: now the wife can refuse her husband to sell part of his plot and her husband considers the idea of his wife; which was not the case before the intervention of Umwizero project.

¹⁰ http://fride.org/download/the_issue_of_inheritance_for_women_in_burundi.pdf

Improving the economic power of women has led to a new understanding of their responsibilities because they are able to meet the needs of the household such as catering, children's schooling and clothing. It also impacts on young girls; the participation of mothers in the VSLA groups helps girls who have not had the chance to study. The girls supported by their mothers learn responsibility, they undertake income-generating activities, training benefited by their mothers come to them, they are prepared for their future lives in the household.

4.5 Women with capacity to cope with economic shocks

Table 9 Female respondents experience of economic shocks in the last 12 months

Shocks		All women	
		N	%
Sudden severe illness / injury of family member	Baseline	295	50.5%
	Endline	268	52.0%
Death of immediate family member	Baseline	83	14.2%
	Endline	177	34.0%
Crisis caused by drought, flood or other natural disaster	Baseline	263	45.0%
	Endline	0	0.0%
Other important crisis	Baseline	37	6.4%
	Endline	304	59.0%

Table 10 Female respondents. Main coping strategies in response to economic shocks

Main coping strategies	Stage	%
Capacity to cope with shock (indicator 4)		
Used resources /produced items	Baseline	30.7%
	Endline	9.5%
Use savings	Baseline	9.6%
	Endline	14.5%
Use social fund of group of a VSL group or similar	Baseline	4.9%
	Endline	18.2%
Reduced capacity to cope with shock		
Borrowed money or got support	Baseline	36.6%
	Endline	4.5%
Used productive assets	Baseline	37.8%
	Endline	14.3%
Reduced consumption or critical expenses	Baseline	28.8%
	Endline	4.7%

As the results indicate women at endline are more likely to use their savings (14,5% at endline, compared to 9.6% at baseline), or use the social fund of their group or a VSL group or similar (18.2% at endline compared to 4.9% at baseline). In terms of reduced capacity to cope with economic shocks, at baseline stage 36.6% of all women surveyed reported that they had to borrow money or get support to cope, whereas at endline only 4.5% reported this strategy. Women at endline are also less likely to have to reduce consumption or critical expenses as a main coping strategy (4.7% of women at endline reported this strategy, in comparison to 28.8% at baseline stage).

Table 11. % of women with the capacity to cope with economic shocks

Endline		
Outcome indicator		

% of women with capacity to cope with economic shocks NUMERATOR: Women who used at least one strategy regarding use of resources/produced items as coping strategies	204	48 %
DENOMINATOR: All women whose household has gone through economic shock in the last 12 months (i.e., reporting household had to cope with at least one economic emergency).	424	

At baseline, 50.5% of all women surveyed (56.8% of VSLA members) report having the capacity to cope with economic shocks. At endline this has reduced to 48% of all women surveyed, in part because women are less likely to report that they are able to use their resources or produced items to cope as a key strategy. This is supported by the qualitative research in which stakeholders report that those at endline who are most vulnerable in the study areas are widows and women who have the least “resources” – for example who have no shelter and no means of subsistence (without property, without any other source of income); the father and mother of orphans that are hosted in families (with uncles, aunts, grandparents); large families (with many children) without property or other sources of income. Similarly the Batwa remain a particularly vulnerable group.

Men interviewed felt that the UMWIZERO has impacted on members of the VSLA of the strategies to cope with economic shocks, because they can now cope with shocks without in their view “damaging economic household goods” as was before the advent of the project. Instead of using the bad habit of “Umugwazo” members make use of their SG to deal with economic shocks. Many women however report that they will continue to rely on the cash or emergency funds via the VSLA if they need to. This move from the unsustainable and often expensive non-VSLA related approach has had a positive impact in the community as conflicts have been reduced significantly. Furthermore the women IGs in their FGD note that through training that the project has provided members of VSLAs crucial management skills. Significantly the VSLAs provide more than just an avenue for financial relief and micro investment, but also a social platform that ensures that members support each other in times of crisis.

Table 12: How was the family able to respond to the need for money to pay for such an emergency or crisis?

Strategy	Did not use this strategy
Sale of agricultural production (coffee, peas, sorghum, banana, beer, tea ...)	70%
Sale of goods for household production	84%
Use of savings	63%
Use of the capital of an NN group or women’s solidarity groups	57%

The women IG FGDs in the UMWIZERO II programme area emphasized that the key strategy of empowerment in dealing with economic shocks is to use VSLAs to seek structured credit and organizational mutual support that has always been the hallmark of VSLAs. Indeed, the women argue that unlike those (women) that are not in the VSLAs; when there is a problem, they resort to non-VSLA related methods that often are expensive and unsustainable. The women explain that overtime, there has been change with more and more women adapting to the VSLA approach.

Many stakeholders feel that the project effects on women’s ability to cope with economic shocks is sustainable as the SG members now are autonomous in managing their activities. Men interviewed for example say that their economic well-being has improved in the sense that they have been able to buy plots; bikes and continue to diversify income-generating activities in order to grow more. Abatangamuco also report that women are free to choose or to diversify IGA in their households. They gave examples of women who are now involved in the sale of bananas, avocados, fodder for livestock, cows etc.

4.5.1 Entrepreneurship

Improving the economic power of women has led to a new understanding of their responsibilities because they are able to meet the needs of the household such as catering, children's schooling and clothing. However some stakeholders feel that the savings and loan levels in SGs are not sufficient for entrepreneurship yet. However as stakeholders highlight, female entrepreneurs in Burundi are rare.

Example: Entrepreneurship

One woman received a loan from a microfinance institution to develop a proposed sale of banana beer, after a year or so; she had already opened a large restaurant. Today it is she who prepares and provides room to the market and in the various ceremonies. It not only improved its economic empowerment, but also it created jobs for other women because in this business, they work as fourfold woman.

5 Governance and women's participation

Outcome 2: Formal and informal community-based structures are in place at all levels and promote social change and equitable norms that favour women's rights

Indicators

- Evidence of action taken by community leaders (traditional, religious and elected administrators) supporting the protection of women's rights (GBV, SRHRs, and equitable access to basic services).
- Evidence of change in gender roles practices that protect and promote the rights of women.

5.1 Attitudes to women's participation in the public sphere and decision making at community levels

Table 13: Attitude of women towards women's participation in the public sphere

Stage	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total %	Number of women 15 years and more
Baseline	Women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected bodies just like men.	2.2	5	3.6	54.5	34.8	100	584
Endline		0	1.7	1	36.8	60	100	517
Baseline	Women should be head of state just like men.	7.5	12	7.5	44.4	28.5	100	584
Endline		3.9	4.6	5.6	36.9	46.6	100	517
Baseline	Women should decide on their own whom to vote for in elections, without the influence of their husbands.	8.8	15.8	2.2	47.5	25.6	100	584
Endline		0.6	1.7	0.4	40.8	55.7	100	517
Baseline	A woman can disagree with her husband's political opinion.	22.7	31.6	4.8	28.5	12.4	100	584
Endline		7.2	8.9	6.8	39.7	36.8	100	517
Baseline	Women should have a say in important decisions in the community.	3.1	9.1	2.6	63.5	21.7	100	584
Endline		1.2	3.3	1.5	57.3	35.8	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that a married woman should obtain her husband's permission in order to vote.	8.4	28.1	3.3	39.9	20.4	100	584
Endline		23	33.3	4.1	24.4	13.3	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that a woman has no place in the decision making of the household.	5.4	22.2	3.1	50.4	18.9	100	584
Endline		3.5	3.7	1.4	40.4	49.3	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that women should not be allowed to go to school.	6.6	8.8	0.9	47	36.7	100	584
Endline		2.3	2.7	0.2	35.4	58.6	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that when going to most public places, a woman should obtain the permission of her husband or head of household	16.7	41.7	3.8	25.8	12	100	584
Endline		9.5	26.3	6	39.8	16.8	100	517

Table 14 Average scores. Attitude of women towards women's participation in the public sphere

Statements	Stage	Average Likert score
Women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected bodies just like men.	Baseline	4.15
	Endline	4.54

Women should be head of state just like men.	Baseline	3.74
	Endline	4.18
Women should decide on their own whom to vote for in elections, without the influence of their husbands.	Baseline	3.65
	Endline	4.47
A woman can disagree with her husband's political opinion.	Baseline	2.76
	Endline	3.88
Women should have a say in important decisions in the community.	Baseline	3.92
	Endline	4.21
It is wrong to say that a married woman should obtain her husband's permission in order to vote.	Baseline	3.36
	Endline	2.66
It is wrong to say that a woman has no place in the decision making of the household.	Baseline	3.55
	Endline	4.23
It is wrong to say that women should not be allowed to go to school.	Baseline	3.98
	Endline	4.43
It is wrong to say that when going to most public places, a woman should obtain the permission of her husband or head of household	Baseline	2.75
	Endline	3.23
Baseline 3.54		
Endline 3.98		

At endline stage in the four study areas of Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga and Ngozi the average likert scores indicate that women hold more positive attitudes towards their participation in the public sphere at endline compared to baseline (3.98 at endline compared to 3.54 at baseline).

From the study, it is evident that the respondents are convinced that women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected institutions as well as men. This denotes two key issues, the legislative environment is translating into real politics with the quarter of 30% being utilized and recognized. In relation to women's political participation, 96.8% of women at baseline agreed that women should be able to stand for election to all publicly elected bodies just like men, and 83.5% (compared to 72.9% at baseline) report that women should be head of state just like men. Over 30% more women agreed at endline that a woman can disagree with her husband's political opinion compared to baseline stage (76.5% compared to 40.9%) and almost all women (96.%) at endline agreed that women should decide on their own whom to vote for in elections, without the influence of their husbands. During the various FGDs in the programme area, most of the female respondents, responded that they have the right to elect and to be elected in decision-making institutions. They singled out UMWIZRO II as having contributed significantly to their empowerment through the training they received, which encouraged the women to seek elections and to be elected.

In discussing if the laws governing the rights of women are fully understood in the community by all stakeholders, the FGD of Men and Boys (MBEI), they state that UMWIZERO II has contributed to their pool of knowledge on the existence and effective enforcement of law on women's civic and political rights. The FGD of Men and Boys however points to one consistently emerging weakness, the members feel that they are not sufficiently empowered knowledge wise to confront any violations of women's civic and political rights. The qualitative research also revealed that some men still provide token support, as women in the FGD commented, "Men generally support in principle, but may not always recognize the political participation of women in practice, which shows is that if a woman is applying to get elected, often men do not elect for this woman. We (the women in the community) hope that this support and recognition will materialize into concrete actions rather than just in the speeches and slogans."

Women are clear about their rights to participate in the public sphere in their communities. For example at endline 93.1% of women agree that women should have a say in important decisions in the community (an increase on baseline figure of 85.2%). Women were also more likely to report that it is wrong to say that a woman has no place in the decision making of the household (89.7% compared to 69.3%). Just over half of

women feel that it is wrong to say that when going to most public places, a woman should obtain the permission of her husband or head of household (56.6% compared to 37.8% at baseline in 2009). This reflects the qualitative research in which stakeholders indicated that barriers remain to participation for women such as pervasive cultural stereotypes and attitudes; misinterpretations from extracts from the Bible or the Qu'ran and the fear of being dominated.

Women's attitudes about women and girls involvement in decision making processes and education have shifted at endline stage, with women expressing views that support and express hope in women's increasing engagement. Men interviewed reported the level of control decision making related to household finances and IGAs of our women has increased at least 20% since the CARE UMWIZERO project began.

Young Women

What kind of power do you have over other people, and over whom? How do you use it?

I can wake my little sisters very early in the morning to work in the fields;
 I can take all the members to go do work in a team;
 I refuse to follow bad advice;
 I can give advice to younger than me;
 I can advise of a child who refuses to go to school;
 At home I can contribute by buying oil or salt when it is needed;

Most of the time I use my powers on others to:

Punish them;
 Serve;
 Lead by example;
 Give orders;
 Build capacity;
 Balance the pros and cons and measure the consequences;
 Reject firmly with a non-closed or accept;
 Influence decision-making;

Those who have power over me:

The parents;
 The authorities;
 Neighbours;
 People older than me;
 Compared to my sister, my brother has more power over me, because I always have to do laundry, ... for him;

Young women felt they have the right to apply to be members of community structures in their locality and CARE has influenced these structures. They felt that CARE projects have contributed to the development of women's capabilities through the various training workshops that were organized, the women were able to develop their self-esteem, they have had ideas about the characteristics of a good leader and how to conduct lobbying and advocacy. Young women felt that women's participation in decision-making structures is of great importance as it allows the development of capacity to boost women into great progress. They felt that their participation has impacted positively on the participation of women in decision-making structures by allowing them to find appropriate solutions to the problems of women and also the rest of the other community.

In relation to public participation, over 90% of women at endline and baseline feel that woman should join associations such as VSLAs or other organizations at the same extent as men.

5.2 Participation in decision making and public governance

Table 15 Indicator: % reporting meaningful participation in decision making

Endline	Numerator:	Women reporting participation AND select, "2", or "3" on influence scale in Question No. 12;	325	62.8%
	Denominator:	All women in the sample (all women aged 15 and above).	517	

At endline stage, 62.8% of women report that they are able to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes.¹¹ At endline farmers associations and political parties are the key decision making structures where women report membership. In comparison to baseline, a higher number of women report membership of community conflict management structures. As at baseline, over 75% of women are in the management committees of both water and education committees. Compared to baseline data, women are more likely to report that they are members of farmers associations or committees deciding on the use of community land at endline stage. Of those who are members of these groups, women report moderate to active participation levels.

Table 16 Participation of women in decision-making bodies at community level.

Decision making structures	Do you participate? N	Members of the M'gmt Committee (% of those who participate)	How active is your participation?			
			A little	Moderately	A lot	No Answer
Water Management Committee	31	77.4%	4	10	14	3
School Management Committee / Community Education	48	81.2%	3	16	23	6
Community Health Management Committee	24	75%	3	8	12	1
Funeral Association	35	11.4%	1	10	10	14
Farmers associations	271	55.3%	17	99	118	36
Committee deciding on use of community land	23	60.8%	2	5	6	10
Political Party	253	34.7%	24	78	65	85
Local/colline council	58	87.9%	0	20	37	1
Religious Structure	101	69.3%	3	35	51	12
Community Conflict Management Structure	111	72.9%	2	28	61	19
Other agencies managing community assets or resources	83	60.2%	3	23	30	27

During the qualitative stage of the survey it was noted that a mainstream of the respondents including the male FGDs in the UMWIZERO II Programme area feel that women VSLA members' participation in local governance issues could contribute to overall change (perceptions & attitudes towards women participation in governance) in the community. This is attributed to the high level of self-confidence and respect exhibited by women who are members of VSLAs.

Key interviews with some stakeholders suggest that groups of Batwa are sometimes excluded from decision making in some organisations, which stakeholders suggested is linked to longer-term

¹¹ data was not collected on this at baseline stage in 2009

stigmatisation and discrimination. However respondents suggest that this exclusion within the communities is not always apparent in the VSLAs where all members have access to credit if they meet the VSLA Internal Rules (ROI). VSLAs do not exclude vulnerable groups linked to ethnicity, age, religion or political affiliation, so each active member (who pays and reimburses credits) is entitled to credit.

Women interviewed during a FGD in Kirundo Province explained that prior to the UMWIZERO II Programme, they (women) had no responsibility in decision-making within the household and consequently beyond. The entry of UMWIZERO II ushered in a series of trainings, which have been useful, in addition to the role of the VSLAs, which have allowed them to become aware of their role in decision-making within both the household and the wider community. This is also justified in the endline study as indicated by the table that follows.

5.3 Women's perception of social inclusion and cohesion in the community

Table 17: Attitude of women towards social inclusion

Stage	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total %	Number of women 15 years and more
Positive statements (expected agree or strongly agree)								
Baseline	I have a good social network in the community	2.6	10.7	4.3	61.4	21.1	100.0	584
Endline		0	1.5	1.2	44.3	51.1	100	517
Baseline	I am happy with my involvement in funeral associations etc	6.6	12.6	28.7	37.4	14.8	100.0	584
Endline		0	0.8	0.6	50.3	47.2	100	517
Baseline	I am frequently invited to attend community events.	5.7	15.8	3.4	55.8	19.3	100.0	584
Endline		0.8	6.4	1.2	49.1	40.6	100	517
Baseline	The community members are ready to support me in case of shock or crisis.	4.1	9.5	6.1	61.0	19.3	100.0	584
Endline		0	1.2	1.5	48.7	47	100	517
Baseline	The community leaders listen to my voice.	3.7	10.7	17.8	55.1	12.8	100.0	584
Endline		3.1	8.3	4.6	59.6	22.6	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that I feel lonely, isolated in this community.	3.4	16.2	3.6	53.9	23	100.0	584
Endline		1.4	8.1	1.4	38.3	48.9	100	517
Baseline	I feel that I have sufficient access to the market to buy and sell things.	1.2	8.2	2.9	64.8	22.9	100.0	584
Endline		1.4	3.1	1	55.1	37.3	100	517
Baseline	I feel that I am treated with respect and dignity when I visit the health centre / hospital/ other health facility	2.2	7.9	2.6	61.2	26.1	100.0	584
Endline		3.3	5	3.5	60.9	25.7	100	517

Table 18 Average scores. Attitude of women towards their social inclusion

Statements	Stage	Average score
I have a good social network in the community	Baseline	3.88
	Endline	4.39
I am happy with my involvement in funeral associations, informal women's support groups, etc.	Baseline	3.41
	Endline	4.41
I am frequently invited to attend community events.	Baseline	3.67
	Endline	4.17
The community members are ready to support me in case of shock or crisis.	Baseline	3.82
	Endline	4.37
The community leaders listen to my voice.	Baseline	3.63
	Endline	3.86
It is wrong to say that I feel lonely, isolated in this community.	Baseline	3.77
	Endline	4.20
I feel that I have sufficient access to the market to buy and sell things.	Baseline	4.00
	Endline	4.18
I feel that I am treated with respect and dignity when I visit the health centre / hospital/ other health facility	Baseline	4.34
	Endline	3.79
Average scores		
Baseline 3.81		
Endline 4.17		

Women are more confident about their social inclusion at endline (4.17 average Likert score) than at baseline stage (3.81). The majority feel they have a good social network in the community (95.4%) and are happy with their involvement in funeral associations and community groups (75.1% at endline). Importantly, 95.7% feel at endline that social cohesion has improved, by agreeing that the community members are ready to support them in case of shock or crisis, an increase on the baseline rate of 80.3%. Women also feel confident that community leaders listen to their voice (82.2%, an increase of 14% on the baseline level).

The qualitative results also confirm that there is a high level of women's perception of social inclusion in the community. The women interviewed in the programme area, both within the FGD and KII format indicated that their driving and uniting themes included; positive solidarity, mutual assistance and consciousness. It is also clear from the study that women who are economically, socially and culturally empowered under UMWIZERO II felt a higher level of social inclusion in the community.

CARE staff feel that the support has had an impact on the cohesion between the different women in groups through mutual aid among members, group work, access to interest-free loans in the solidarity fund, training to sensitize women to be elected and to elect other women to defend the rights of their sisters, and the unification of women divided by ethnic groups and affiliations to political parties.

5.4 Attitudes of women towards their Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Table 19: Attitude of women towards women to their Sexual and Reproductive Health

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total %	Number of women 15 years and more
Baseline	A couple should decide together how many children to have.	4.8	8.6	6.7	49.7	30.1	100	581
Endline		1.2	2	1	46	49.9	100	517
Baseline	A husband and wife should decide together what kind of contraception to use.	3.0	6.1	4.7	56.6	29.7	100	581
Endline		0.8	1.2	1	46.4	49.3	100	517
Baseline	When a woman has a health problem or question related to pregnancy, childbirth, care after she has given birth she can ask	11.5	23	7.1	43.8	14.6	100	581
Endline		7.9	29.6	4.3	45.1	12.2	100	517
Baseline	If a wife knows her husband has a disease that she can get during sexual intercourse, she is justified in asking	7.5	9.7	11	55.8	16	100	581
Endline		1.9	6.6	10.3	56.9	23.4	100	517
Baseline	Women should have the same opportunities to receive health care as men	4	9.1	2.8	57.3	26.7	100	581
Endline		4.6	5.4	2.3	54	33.1	100	517

Table 20 Average scores. Attitude of women towards their Sexual and Reproductive Health

Statements	Stage	Average score
A couple should decide together how many children to have.	Baseline	3.92
	Endline	4.40
A husband and wife should decide together what kind of contraception to use.	Baseline	4.04
	Endline	4.38
When a woman has a health problem or question related to pregnancy, childbirth, care after she has given birth	Baseline	3.27
	Endline	3.21
If a wife knows her husband has a disease that she can get during sexual intercourse, she is justified in asking	Baseline	3.63
	Endline	3.91
Women should have the same opportunities to receive health care as men	Baseline	3.94
	Endline	4.04
Average Scores		
Baseline 3.76		
Endline 3.99		

At endline the attitude of women towards their Sexual and Reproductive Health indicative a more positive perspective (with average scores of 3.99 at endline compared to 3.76 at baseline stage). Today, women within the UMWIZERO II programme area have a higher level of knowledge on the importance of SRH services and they adhere to schedules within those services. At endline female respondents overwhelmingly (95.9%) agreed that a couple should decide together how many children to have. The respondents in the four provinces were emphatic that participating in family planning and HIV services not only saves and improves lives but it also uses scarce financial and human resources more efficiently, expands overall health for women and girls, particularly for those from vulnerable and marginalised groups, and reduces the burden on health systems in the long run, this is most significant in the case of Burundi. It

is important to note that attitudes towards SRH services in Burundi are gradually changing, although the KIIs and FGDs revealed that some religious groups are opposed to family planning based on matters of religious doctrine.

There has been a shift in issues of sexual and reproductive health rights with the respondents concurring fully that the husband and wife should decide together on the type of contraceptive use with 86.3% of women agreeing at endline. Male members of SG groups interviewed agreed that joint planning and decision-making in the family is a real advantage because it all leads firstly understanding, peace and also sustainable development in the family "Ibigiye inama Bigirimana."

This suggests that progress is being made, and that for many households the subject of contraceptive use is no longer a taboo subject and that parents are able to plan together for child spacing. The study established that if a woman knows that her husband has a disease that she may contract during sexual intercourse is justified in her request to use a condom when having sex. 57% of the respondents agreed with the foregoing assertion. When a woman has a health problem related to an STI, she should be able to decide with her husband of using qualified health personnel. The respondents agreed fully with the statement and this is a reflection of the evolving attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health.

The qualitative study results (through focus group discussions and interviews) suggest that the female respondents feel that giving birth in the localities takes place in Health centres. Women feel that even those women who were unable to use the HCs for giving birth are quickly referred by members of the VSLAs to health centres to receive postnatal care. However only just over half of women (57.3%) feel that when a woman has a health problem or question related to pregnancy, childbirth, care after she has given birth she can take the initiative and ask herself. Whilst the use of health centres ensures that both the health of the mother and the baby has improved, and perspectives suggest that the use of HCs is not viewed as an option but as near mandatory owing to its importance in the provision of SRH services; barriers clearly still remain to women feeling that they can independently seek SRH advice and support. However 87.1% of women are sure that women should have the same opportunities to receive health care as men (a slight increase on the baseline rate of 84%).

Table 20 Indicator: % satisfaction with SRH services

Endline	Numerator	All women who have used at least one SRHR service and report satisfaction with at least one SRHR service	346	68.1%
	Denominator	All women who have used at least one SRHR service	508	

Compared to baseline (when 92.9% reported satisfaction with SRH services) fewer women are satisfied with SRH service delivery at endline stage (68.1%). Whilst the support of health workers in the reproductive health services serves to strengthen the rights of women seeking reproductive health services in the programme area, one recurrent issue remains the distance to some health centres from the homes of the women. Those women who do access services within the programme area did however express satisfaction with their local health centres on reproductive health rights services. They stated that they were pleased with the way the staff of the HC was welcoming, furthermore where a woman expresses dissatisfaction with a contraceptive the health workers respond in a very progressive manner and offer other choices. This has boosted the level of satisfaction with the availability and quality of the SRH services.

Over half of women (56% Table 21) in the programme area attest to making informed decisions in relation to their SRH Services¹². The women in a number of FGDs and KIIs in the programme area explained that a

¹² Data was not collected on this at baseline stage in 2009.

majority of women now give birth at health centres and hospitals. There are isolated cases that give birth at home, even this after childbirth, and immediately rush to health centres or hospitals for post-natal care.

Table 21 % of women making informed choices / decisions with regard to SRHR

Endline	Numerator	Women who make decisions (i.e., report making decisions to use SRHR services singly or jointly with their husbands – and report that the decisions are based on relevant and valid information	291	56%
	Denominator:	All women in the survey aged 15 to 49.	517	

Based on the level of exposure to training offered by UMWIZERO II some men report attitudes in the qualitative research that suggest that they still resist attempts by their wives to involve them more in SRH activities. This is particularly where they have grudgingly accepted their wives participation in the SRH services. This is more so in cases such as STI, HIV/AIDS testing which may require couple participation, despite the marked increase by women, this increase should be supported by male participation in crucial areas such as HIV/AIDS testing where even where one partner tests negative there is a possibility of the other being positive. The phenomenon referred to as discordant couples. This may put the other partner at risk or cause domestic tensions. The lesson here is that increased participation of male partners will further improve the SRH of women as well. During a number of FGD and KII sessions, it also emerged that some men still resist the concept of allowing their wives to access both FP and SRH services. This can be attributed to both attitude and to some extent cultural issues. It is important that increased sensitization especially by groups such as the Abatangamuco be promoted. This would break the silence about SRH & FP being cultural issues that cannot be discussed in public forums. The increased discussion, will perhaps further demystify issues to do with FP & SRH services. Increased men sensitization should concomitantly lead to increased involvement of men in matters of SRH and FP.

6 Legal frameworks support women's rights

Outcome 3: The legal framework, government institutions, civil society and private sector at all levels promote the GEWEP impact group's enjoyment of their rights.

Indicators

Inheritance law and law on sexual and gender based violence are ratified under the influence of civil society and GEWEP impact group members.

Measures taken to improve the quality in service delivery in response to recommendation/feedback from the community (through accountability mechanisms such as the CSCs)

6.1 Introduction

During the baseline survey, the focus was on the then existing laws such as the various arguments advanced by advocates of CEDAW, including counter arguments by opponents of the law. During the baseline study opponents to CEDAW defend the principles of the Burundian traditions; they argue that the implementation of CEDAW will inevitably lead to social disintegration and tearing of the social fabric. These allied subgroups want, above all, to safeguard the Burundian culture through suppressing key elements of women empowerment.

Today it is these same opposing groups on the issue of promoting women, which continue to compete on the socio-political scene for and against positive changes for women. The same arguments are advanced by all sides: the first seeking the respect of women's rights through the implementation of the Convention which is an integral part of the constitution of BURUNDI; others want the predominance of the patriarchal system ("*abagabo bagaba ivyabo n'ivyabandi*" which means (men are the managers of all the household goods). There has been a slight change amongst the opponents, which now includes judges, politicians, and legislators, and through ignorance even women themselves, the churches that cling to certain Bible verses and the Qu'ran that supports the persistence of patriarchy. They all benefit in one way or another in an ideal situation due to the achievements of custom and struggling, therefore, to keep women in a position of dependence.

The efforts of organizations advocating the promotion of women's rights are often broken due to several factors: lack of financial, human, material means... and the strength of belief in customs, in religions that feed self discrimination of women themselves. The evolution of the associative context is visible and reinforces women's civil society. SYNERGIES brings together almost all the associations and groups (besides the CAFOB, Réseau Women et Paix [Women and Peace Network], Centre des women pour la Paix [Women's Centre for Peace], Association pour la Promotion de la Fille Burundaise [Association for the Advancement of Burundian Girls], DUSHIREHAMWE, Association des Women Juristes [Association of Women Lawyers] and other emerging associations) for the protection of women's rights and promote actions for civil and political rights; This coalition could bring significant changes in the political and civic life of women. The National Council of Bashingantahe is favorable for women's equal access to inheritance, as proposed by the draft law on matrimonial regimes, inheritance and gifts, which constitute a significant change in the positioning of institutional actors in the debate on the issue of inheritance, to be precise.

6.2 CEDAW and the Constitution, a general framework

During the baseline study, it was noted that Burundi having ratified the CEDAW, has submitted its first report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 1999. Legislation has been adopted. CEDAW has also positively influenced the various studies on violence against women and gender based violence that took place in our country.

The Code of Persons and the Family, issued in 1980 (Decree No. 1 / 1 of January 15, 1980) as amended by Decree-Law No. 01/024 of 28 April 1993, introduced major innovations regarding the promotion and equality between men and women on the following points:

- The regulation of age of marriage;
- The free consent to marriage;
- Co-management of family assets;
- The right to manage family assets in the absence of the husband.

The integration of the Convention in the constitution has created many changes in the daily lives of women, particularly in terms of enrolment of girls and women's political participation

The protocol of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights¹³, regarding of women's rights is an important milestone in the struggle for the promotion of the rights of African women was signed by BURUNDI but its ratification is not yet effective. This protocol provides guarantees that are more complete and specific in terms of women's rights. In several respects, it brings principles and solutions to some acute problems. It acknowledges and guarantees to women a range of civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights: the right to life, integrity and social security of person, the prohibition of harmful traditional practices... It requires States and stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective in their policy decisions, their laws, their development plans and their activities, and ensures the well-being of women.

6.3 Land tenure systems and inheritance

Secure access to productive land is critical to the millions of poor people living in rural areas and depending on agriculture, livestock or forests for their livelihood. It reduces their vulnerability to hunger and poverty; influences their capacity to invest in their productive activities and in the sustainable management of their resources; enhances their prospects for better livelihoods; and helps them develop more equitable relations with the rest of their society, thus contributing to justice, peace and sustainable development (IFAD 2010).

Women's access to land, in particular, is widely recognised as important both for ensuring equality of basic rights and for reducing poverty and ensuring household food security. While women's land rights have become better protected by national laws, discrimination against women stems from both the state (e.g. via administrative processes) and customary systems. This makes it more critical to look at whether women enjoy equal rights to land, property and natural resources in practice, rather than only under statutory law. As gender equality may challenge deep-seated power structures, legal reform must be accompanied by awareness-raising, capacity-building and improved access to legal services.¹⁴

There are both economic and social benefits when women have secure land rights. Property rights in land—whether customary, formal, or religious—provide economic access to key markets and social access to non-market institutions such as household-and community-level governance structures (COHRE 2004). If women had the same access to productive resources as men, they would increase yields on their farms by 20-30 per cent. This could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 and four per cent, enough to pull 100-150 million people out of hunger (FAO 2011).

Facing a fragile post-conflict situation and high demographic pressure, Burundi's need for a stable and effective land tenure system stands beyond doubt. The death of many male heads of household during the war has left a large number of extremely vulnerable households headed by women and children with limited access to land and other resources. In this context access to land is a key asset for women's

¹³ Protocol on Women's Rights adopted in Maputo on July 2003

¹⁴ Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty 2013 , Legal Empowerment to Secure Women's Land Rights in Burundi

empowerment. Increasing pressure on available land, amplifies women's traditional lack of land ownership and control. Land is the cause of disputes among family members and female members are often marginalized and excluded from inheritance. According to customary law, after leaving their father's household, daughters lose their rights over the family plot. Therefore, girls over the age of 15 are often pushed by their brothers into marriage, even an illegal union (for example with a man involved in a polygamous relationship). In most cases, women end up without rights to their partner's land, because their marriage is not legalized. The number of women with no land and no family support is therefore constantly growing, and so is their vulnerability. This difficult scenario is further complicated by the ravages of climate change that have not spared Burundi.

6.3.1 Changing & challenging legal environment

An estimated 70 -90 per cent of the cases brought to the Burundian civil courts are land disputes. Access to justice for rural communities is very difficult because of the physical distance from legal institutions and limited financial means. Resolution of a land dispute within the formal court system is procedurally difficult and a lengthy process. At the lowest level, magistrates have little education and training. The courts have limited budgets, including no funds for field visits, and enforcement of judgments is uncertain. Corruption is an issue, in part due to low judicial salaries. Above the lowest level, there is a perception that the court system is Tutsi-dominated and so few Hutus use the court system to pursue justice (Kamungi et al. 2005; van Leeuwen and Haartsen 2005).¹⁵

Donors have stepped up their support for Burundi's efforts to address land ownership and management issues since the election of 2005. Efforts have included: providing financial and technical assistance for drafting a new Land Code and for developing the dispute resolution work of the National Commission for Land and Other Possessions (CNTB); strengthening the capacity of the government to register property and of the judiciary and informal institutions to resolve disputes; piloting the decentralization of land administration to local levels (with specific priority given to ensuring that women had access to land); and developing options for repatriation and resettlement of displaced people and reintegration of former combatants into civilian life.

6.3.2 Towards the current legal framework

Security of land tenure in Burundi tends to be quite weak and women are particularly affected: the scarcity of land, the lack of legislation, and customary norms all has a negative impact on their livelihoods. Men have traditionally enjoyed access to land while women have faced inequalities in both access and ownership, especially unmarried women and widows. Three legal domains are particularly relevant to women's land rights in Burundi: land law, succession law, and the Family Code. In the area of land legislation, a series of attempts has been made since the Arusha Peace Agreement in 2000 to improve land management in Burundi.

These have included the post- transition constitution (2005), the Communal Law (2005 and again in 2010), the national decentralisation policy (2007), a pilot project of communal land offices (2008), the National Land Policy Letter (2010), and eventually the Land Law (2011). The Land Law made a distinction between land belonging to the state (publicly and privately) and land belonging to private citizens, recognising private property rights over land: land owners have the right to exclusive use and possession, the right to transfer land freely, and the right to mortgage their land. Land can be acquired by inheritance, purchase, donation, lease, or government allocation. Land rights acquired and held under customary law are recognised though, if not registered, customary rights do not have the same protection as formal law. However, land registration is not compulsory and technical difficulties relating to the registration process

¹⁵ http://usaidlandtenure.net/sites/default/files/country-profiles/full-reports/USAID_Land_Tenure_Burundi_Profile.pdf

contribute to the fact that less than 5% of all land is registered. The study established that the majority of the respondents felt that there was law in existence however implementation was the challenge.

Currently, there is good coordination on land tenure issues thanks to the establishment of an expanded technical committee on land issues. This coordination has allowed for development of a land tenure policy paper and revision of the land tenure framework, the content of which is set for adoption. As for the specific issues of those without land, particularly returnees, the CNTB is engaged in finding detailed solutions, but the task has been very onerous in that as of year-end 2008 only 29.3 percent of the 11,568 disputes had been settled. This has an overall negative impact on the entire Burundian society however it is worse on women. This is because agricultural work is entirely the responsibility of women, according to the social division of labor. Women belonging to richer households, which have more land, often resort to hired labor mainly made up of farmers from landless households, this phenomenon is increasingly observed in the collines, following sales of land rather cramped when partition of the inheritance or sale for exploitation in case of a severe shock suffered by the household. This situation is compounded by the fact that the culture does not allow women to inherit land and it is percolating through the legislative system thus affecting the ability of women empowerment programmes to achieve their goals.¹⁶

The women surveyed stated that it was not largely possible to 'invest' in other areas without the influence of their husbands. This can only mean two possible scenarios; the women still feel obligated to consult their husbands over all matters financial and that the possibility of a veto on any decisions taken exists. Secondly the use of the word influence in Kirundi may sometimes be understood to lean towards consulting and in the process the respondents may have understood that to mean without consultation and consequently rejected that assertion overwhelmingly at 73%. It is evident that the women respondents are caught in the culture trap.

6.4 Gender Based Violence

On the legislative environment, although the Constitution of Burundi integrates the CEDAW Convention and other international instruments, laws to implement the principles contained in these international texts are incomplete or insufficient. Indeed, according to some KIIs the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code do not effectively protect women from violence. It is important that the views at the grassroots be fully integrated in any proposed legislation for it to gain both acceptability and to move from the statutes to households.

The respondents in the four provinces still acknowledge that GBV is a prevalent vice. However they credit UMWIZERO II for generating invaluable awareness about the dangers of GBV. Young women for example, felt that CARE support has been helpful in advocacy and counselling for victims of GBV. At the beginning of the training, beneficiaries have taken knowledge of the existence of the services available to help victims of GBV; they also helped in strengthening the capacity of community leaders in advocacy. Community leaders have effectively played the role of advocacy at the community level.

The respondents explained that they now contribute to the prevention of GBV in their communities through increased sensitization of community members on the dangers of GBV. Most respondents also stated that they actively advocate to the competent authorities for the victims of GBV, to receive both justice and services. The qualitative research shows that respondents express confidence that local authorities have been very supportive of the drive against GBV in their communities. The FGDs indicated that the authorities have received training in matters pertaining to GBV and are consequently aware of the harm caused by GBV to the perpetrator and household concerned.

¹⁶ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2010/cr10312.pdf>

The women interviewed in various FGDs and KIIs in the programme area attributed a reduction of GBV in their households to joint planning and decision making in the family which creates a healthy domestic environment for the family and even frees-up invaluable resource that can be useful in tackling GBV at both the psychological and physical level. The female respondents were in consensus that through increased sensitization in the matter of GBV incidents would be reduced. The women respondents also called for the advocating to the competent authorities for the victims of GBV.

6.4.1 Attitudes of women towards their exposure to GBV (domestic violence, harassment)

Table 22 Attitude of women towards women's exposure to GBV (%)

	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Total No of women
Baseline	A wife should tolerate being beaten by her husband/partner to keep the family together.	34.9	37.5	5.7	17	5	100	584
Endline		21.3	28	6	31.5	9.9	100	517
Baseline	There are important advantages for a circumcised girl.	16.5	12.8	55.3	8.6	6.8	100	584
Endline		35.6	46	1.4	10.8	4.3	100	517
Baseline	A girl is never too young to be married if a good husband is found.	35.8	42.3	4.6	13.9	3.4	100	584
Endline		4.1	18	4.6	49.9	21.7	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that a wife is justified in refusing to have sex with her husband/partner when she is tired or not in the mood. ²	16.5	44.3	11.7	15.3	12.2	100	584
Endline		11	41.6	7	24	12	100	517
Baseline	If a wife goes out without telling her husband/partner, he is justified in hitting or beating her.	20.1	36.9	4.6	29.9	8.4	100	584
Endline		6	17.4	0.6	43.3	30.6	100	517
Baseline	A girl should be circumcised in order to preserve her virginity before marriage.	22.5	11.4	58.8	5.2	2.3	100	584
Endline		40.2	40.6	1.5	11	4.1	100	517
Baseline	It is wrong to say that women should choose themselves whom they want to marry.	27.7	51.1	2.8	9.4	9.0	100	584
Endline		3.9	12.4	4.6	45.1	32.9	100	517
Baseline	It is better to send a son to school than it is to send a daughter.	38.6	39.1	0.5	13.1	8.7	100	584
Endline		26.3	44.3	10.4	12	5.4	100	517
Baseline	If a wife burns the food, it is only proper that her husband/partner discipline her by beating her.	30.1	43.9	3.6	15.4	6.9	100	584
Endline		22.1	43.9	3.3	19.9	9.9	100	517
Baseline	If a woman was raped, in most cases that means she must have done something to provoke it.	28.6	42.6	13.5	11.1	4.2	100	584
Endline		4.4	21.3	1.4	46.2	25.1	100	517

Table 23 Attitudes of women towards women's exposure to GBV (%)

Statements	Stage	Average score
A wife should tolerate being beaten by her husband/partner in order to keep the family together.	Baseline	2.20
	Endline	2.71
There are important advantages for a circumcised girl.	Baseline	2.76
	Endline	1.97
A girl is never too young to be married if a good husband is found.	Baseline	2.07
	Endline	3.62
It is wrong to say that a wife is justified in refusing to have sex with her husband/partner when she is tired or not in the mood. ²	Baseline	2.62
	Endline	2.71
It is wrong to say that if a wife goes out without telling her husband/partner, he is justified in hitting or beating her.	Baseline	2.70
	Endline	2.49
A girl should be circumcised in order to preserve her virginity before marriage.	Baseline	2.53
	Endline	1.90
It is wrong to say that women should choose themselves whom they want to marry.	Baseline	2.21
	Endline	3.87
It is better to send a son to school than it is to send a daughter.	Baseline	2.14
	Endline	2.21
If a wife burns the food, it is only proper that her husband/partner discipline her by hitting or beating her.	Baseline	2.25
	Endline	2.49
If a woman was raped, in most cases that means she must have done something to provoke it.	Baseline	2.20
	Endline	3.62
Average indicator 9 Attitudes on GBV Baseline 2.36 Endline 2.88 * High scores indicate acceptance of GBV on a scale 1-5		

At endline stage women are less positive about GBV issues (with scores of 2.88 compared to baseline average Likert score of 2.36). In relation to circumcision for examples attitudes at endline remained similar to baseline with 15% agreeing that there are important advantages for a circumcised girl. Women are also more likely to accept that domestic violence happens, with more women agreeing that a wife should tolerate being beaten by her husband or partner in order to keep the family together (average score at endline 2.71, compared to 2.20 at baseline); or that if a wife burns the food it is only proper that a wife is disciplined by being beaten (average Likert score at endline 2.49, compared to 2.25). The study recognized that women are the main victims of GBV, this the respondents in FGDs attributed to a multiplicity of factors chief amongst which include; culture and the perceived physical vulnerability of women. The unequal power relations between men and women in their communities underpin this. The prevalence of GBV and harassment of women according to the FGD respondents results from the general attitude members of the community towards gender relations. The MSCs also fully support the versions presented during the FGD and KII sessions.

Today, despite the fact that certain elements of culture remain a threat for those women willing to claim their rights; fearing the reaction of the wider community, there has been increased SG member's awareness and participation in challenging social and cultural norms that promote GBV. As the baseline study identified, for women who are victims of GBV returning to her family of origin in case of conflict is followed, by her repudiation from the marital home, this act is seen as a failure in the education given to the woman by her parents and a great shame to her family. Submission hence becomes an obligation in the absence of any alternative and it is accompanied by a feeling of fear "*where will I go?*" The baseline report suggests that this fear of the unknown is a factor in sustaining GBV so that she can guarantee of a shelter for herself and her children.

Young women interviewed were asked about what types of violence affect them. They reported that the types of GBV that affect women and girls are: rape; assault and battery. They feel that the root causes are traditional customs and cultural barriers; impunity; and corruption. Young women in focus groups felt that some cultural norms remain that limit the ability of men, boys and local leaders in defending the rights of women. In some parts, there may be social cleavages that make people in this category can not help those of another class; partisanship following the multiparty, plus the widening gaps between the rich and the poor. They felt that the family has a very large share of responsibility in the construction of gender norms, because from an early age already they begin to show the boys children, either by action or by words, they are superior to girl children, regardless of the age of their sisters. Similarly, women felt that within decision-making structures, when trying to make an objective comparison, one can easily see that women do not have enough freedom of expression, *“In churches, we are taught to lead by example, but in most churches you will find that women are not represented in decision-making bodies. In schools, teachers (es) often tend to ask questions to boys and girls; this allows boys to develop a spirit of inquiry and competition to be able to score in everything they do and will do in their lives.”*

The study recognized that culture is still a key factor in GBV, the more participatory approach adopted by UMWIZERO II Programme where men play a role as key partners in prevention and management of GBV issues has contributed to a gradual turnaround. The Abatangamuco were singled out during the various KIIs and FGDs as being instrumental in changing attitudes amongst men who were perpetrators of GBV. One member of the Abatangamuco explains how they have changed attitudes throughout the project during an FGD involving male activists he says, “ As a group of activists our strong testimonials as one time perpetrators acts as a powerful magnet attracting men who wish to learn how to change for the better. Through localized drama shows we generate awareness on the dangers of GBV. At the end of the show, community members ask us individually to explain how we have changed for the better so they can follow our examples”.

In the context of agency, relation and structure women who have been economically empowered and also participate in household decision-making suffer less incidence of GBV. There are other good practices that can be attributed to the reduction in GBV incidents in the respondents household, these include the Role of male activists (Abatangamuco). This according to the GBV survivors the role of male activists also known as the Abatangamuco is very important since it will encourage attitude change.

In order to ensure that GBV is reduced significantly, the KIIs and FGDs recommend that the SGs undergo further training in conflict resolution. This will contribute to improved skills in conflict management and resolution within both the household and community. The respondents in the FGDs and KIIs explained that the UMWIZERO II Programme SG members were trained in conflict for resolution this training went beyond the group into the households. This skill acquired in conflict resolution contributed to a reduction in the incidence of GBV in their households. They however called for more training to reinforce their knowledge and capacity. In terms of attitude, there has been a gradual shift towards an understanding of the dangers of GBV. The women are encouraged to open up and discussions with case managers and local authorities are now the norm according to KIIs and FGDs in the programme area.

6.4.2 Training the local authorities

A physical violence or rape receives medical assistance in the health centre; it can be transferred to another centre or hospital depending on the severity of the victim’s condition. Psychosocial assistance is provided at Community level by psychosocial assistants trained by CARE and other associations; activists, community leaders. Legal assistance begins at the community level through the hill and administration at municipal level and the case can be transferred at the home court. In cases of rape, the victim files a complaint with the OPJ but unfortunately the practice of impunity is observed in cases of rape.

The study established that throughout the programme area, there is a call for more training for both local authorities and SGs on matters of GBV. The FGDs and KIIs suggest that the training provide systematically specialised training to the local authorities and themselves (SGs), on how to investigate cases of rape, sexual violence and other forms of GBV including domestic violence, and on how to deal with victims of such acts; including concrete ways of improving the behaviour of perpetrators.

Some respondents to the qualitative research feel that local authorities are not doing enough to reduce cases of GBV because they are not models in the community (some concubines); others are not sufficiently sensitive to the issue of gender and still attached to cultural norms and are themselves the violence in their households. Respondents feel that local government should be involved in the fight against GBV, show more commitment to protect women's rights, influence that the perpetrators are punished, holding outreach meetings men for women's rights, be role models in the community,

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

Economic security

The UMWIZERO II Programme end-line study shows a number of significant findings these include; the study established that in the four provinces of Kirundo, Kayanza, Ngozi and Muyinga, a large cross section of respondents reported increased income. This is in tandem with the objectives of the programme at start. Most significantly, the respondents attributed their increased income directly to participation in the UMWIZERO II programme.

The FGDs and KIIs indicate that the role of the Abatangamuco in promoting behaviour change to allow women to claim their economic rights is essential. This means that the work of the Abatangamuco must be promoted even more so that the attitude change that has been registered amongst men in the programme area is sustained. The Abatangamuco are both a formal organization and, less formally, a movement of rural men in Burundi. The main task these men have set themselves is to challenge traditional gender-role expectations in their communities through personal change, testimonies and local community outreach activities. The name 'Abatangamuco' literally means 'those who shine light', and men involved in the organization see themselves as individuals who have realized the errors of their old ways, have 'seen the light' in terms of how they ought to live, and wish to spread this knowledge and outlook to as many others as possible. Throughout the programme area, the Abatangamuco were singled out as key movers of attitude change amongst men over issues such as economic security, GBV and SRH of women.

In light of the dangers of population growth and lack of arable land, it is essential that greater focus be turned to key areas that are non-agro based. Burundi's agricultural sector benefits from a mild climate. This is due to high elevation of the land and regular rainfall. However, deforestation and poor farming methods have caused extensive soil erosion and depletion. It is estimated that there will be no more arable land left in Burundi by 2020, at current depletion rates.¹⁷ This study recommends a shift from reliance on agriculture to other non-agro based IGAs. Economic impacts of weather related extremes - and the costs of these to the growth and development in East Africa and Burundi - are already significant. Increased average temperatures and changes in annual and seasonal rainfall will be felt across key economic sectors, possibly affecting agricultural production, health status, water availability, energy use, infrastructure, biodiversity and ecosystem services (including forestry and tourism). Impacts are likely to have disproportionately strong effects on the poor as such vulnerable groups have fewer resources to adapt to climatic change.¹⁸ This study recommends a focus on how to support vulnerable groups (women) who are more susceptible to the ravages of climate change.

Women's political participation and access to the public sphere

Burundi is recovering from conflict and is located in the great lakes region of Africa. According to a study undertaken by International Alert¹⁹, focusing on the assessment of the implementation of the 30 per cent women's representation quota in political institutions, the authors argue that; "It appears that, despite the fact that quotas significantly increased the number of women in decision-making bodies at all levels, including local governance, this did not necessarily lead to substantial and effective representation of women or to significant reduction in inequalities between men and women. The report highlights and mirrors the finding of this study, that the increased representation of women in state institutions may be

¹⁷ <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Africa/Burundi-AGRICULTURE.html#ixzz36Fwrs15L>

¹⁸ <http://weadapt.org/knowledge-base/economics-of-adaptation/economics-of-adaptation-burundi>

¹⁹ Women's political participation and economic empowerment in post-conflict countries Lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa- International Alert 2012.

having gradual positive effects on social transformation in Burundi. It seems that women are progressively building up self-confidence, resulting in their increased access to speech within the public sphere, as well as higher social respect. The UMWIZERO II endline study also established that women in the programme area have a much higher sense of self-esteem and confidence, more willing to participate in local leadership positions. The difference however is that in the case of UMWIZERO II the respondents attributed their increased participation to the sensitization by the programme and not the opportunity offered by the 30% quota legally reserved for women.