

Research report on discriminatory
social norms – based on findings in
two communities in Vehari District,
Punjab, Pakistan



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Acronyms

BIAAG	Because I am a Girl (Plan International campaign)
CBO	Community based organisation
CCCD	Child centred community development
CDF	Community Development Facilitator
CP	Child protection
CSP	Country strategic plan
CO	Country office
DFID	Department for International Development (UK Government)
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECCD	early child care and development
ECE	early child education
FGD	Focus group discussion
FTLC	Fast track learning centre
GESA	Gender equality self assessment
GPP	Girl Power Programme (funded by Plan Netherlands)
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
KII	Key informant interview
LHW	Lady Health Worker
MER	Monitoring evaluation and research
MTR	Mid-term review
NFE	Non-formal education
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme (National NGO in Pakistan and Plan partner)
PPA	Programme Partnership Agreement (DFID supported programme with Plan UK)
PSM	Programme Strategy Manager
PU	Programme unit
RASTI	Research, Advocacy and Social Training Institute (National NGO in Pakistan and Plan partner)
TBA	Traditional birth attendant
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Introduction

Plan UK commissioned research in Pakistan, Egypt and Bangladesh in order to have a better understanding of how Plan's programmes are responsive to girls' needs and rights in relation to violence as a result of discriminatory norms in each country context. Egypt and Bangladesh were selected due to having received support from the Girls' Fund, a resource created by Plan UK for supporting gender transformative work. Plan Pakistan was selected due to its work on girls' education, supported by Plan UK's DFID funded PPA programme on addressing the barriers to adolescent girls' to access and remain in secondary education.

In particular the research was to explore:

- How discriminatory norms in Bangladesh, Egypt and Pakistan are defined and enforced, and how they affect young girls (9-12 years old), adolescent girls (13-16 years old) and young women (17-20 years old);
- How these are different to girls' life stages compared to boys?
- Based on girls' and boys' experiences (those who Plan works with and those who do not), what are the central challenges in tackling discriminatory norms, what support do they have in addressing these challenges and what are some of the key strategies / actions they see as ways of overcoming these barrier?
- How violence as a result of these norms is being addressed by Plan and other actors, what are the challenges, successes and lessons learned from these interventions?

A team of three consultants worked together to refine the research questions and develop a methodology for the work. It was agreed that it was not possible in the scope of the research to assess the different approaches of Plan to addressing social norms and the research would not evaluate Plan's work but would prioritise hearing from the different groups in the communities around their experiences of what is changing and their priorities for change. Each consultant visited a different country. The approach taken was to facilitate participatory research, with staff or volunteers in each country taking the lead to facilitate the research. Hence, in each country the approach was adapted to respond to staff interests, priorities and the local context. This report details the findings from the research undertaken in collaboration with staff from Plan Pakistan. Key findings and learning from all three countries are summarised in a separate report.

Acknowledgements

The researcher would like to express thanks to Omer Mirza, the MER Manager in Plan Pakistan who facilitated the work before and during the visit to Pakistan as well as Farrah Naz, Iffat Jamil and other staff based in the CO who contributed energy and ideas in the workshops and meetings. The logistics involved in facilitating the research were significant, especially given the special security arrangements that were required. The researcher is indebted to Asad Mehdi, the Vehari PUM, and Hamid Ali, the CDF Coordinator and the CDF group with whom the researcher worked closely – Shaista Nargis, Lubna Saeed, Fatima Zahoor, Aqueel Quereshi and a special thank you to Zahid Zarif for his patient interpreting over long days. Thanks also to Farzana Qasim who translated on the final day in the field.

The CDFs demonstrated considerable commitment, interest and skills in facilitating participatory research. The PUM enabled the researcher to stay in Vehari for most of the research, which avoided four hours of travel a day and allowed two hours more for the field work each day. The organisation that this change of plan involved, given the security complications and the number of staff who were engaged in ensuring that the researcher was safe and looked after, is hugely appreciated. Finally thank you to the girls, boys and men and women in the communities who

gave freely of their time to enable the team to learn from them.

1) Country context

Pakistan's constitution affords equal rights to men and women however in practice women and girls experience inequality at all levels – within the family, community and in wider society. In the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, 2013, Pakistan had the second lowest ranking (above Yemen) in the report's overall measure of gender-based biases, although, it ranked 64 out of 136 countries when it came to political empowerment of women. The report placed Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal in the group which had both large education gender gaps as well as economic gaps. Over the last seven years, Pakistan's rankings have shown little change. Plan Pakistan's mid-term review report on its Girl Power Programme notes that according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 80% of young women are not aware of their basic legal rights. Every two hours a woman is raped, hundreds of women are victims of 'honour' killings, domestic violence, burnings and murder. Whilst girls' enrolment in primary school has significantly increased, the numbers who complete primary school and enter secondary school remain low.

The country has seen many changes in the last two decades in security and mind-set. Extremism has filtered down to different levels resulting in sectarian conflict and different interpretations of women's roles and their rights. Various issues are discussed in the media and brought to people's attention e.g. the current debate on child marriage and agreeing a minimum age for marriage and the law around polygamy which states that a wife's permission is needed for a husband to take another wife. A document is to be drawn up with clear reasons set out, a law which the Council of Islamic Ideology is criticising as being un-Islamic. The tension between Shari'a and established human rights standards and women's rights is well documented.

1.1) Background on Plan's work in Pakistan

Plan has been operating in Pakistan for 15 years. It currently has four Programme Units in Chakwal, Vehari, Thatta and Islamabad. It implements its sponsorship programmes in all units, through its child centred community development approach which involves establishing community forums to draw up community development plans funded through sponsorship resources. In addition, it implements grant funded programmes in several districts of five provinces which range from emergency response, WASH programmes, livelihood, the Girl Power Programme, the DFID funded PPA programme on adolescent girls' education, a new programme on Preventing Child Marriage and several advocacy campaigns, including Learn without Fear and Because I am a Girl.

Its current **Country Strategic Plan (2011 – 2015)** prioritises five thematic areas: enabling environment for good governance; right to education; right to adequate standard of living (livelihoods); right to health; disaster risk reduction. The Strategy identifies gender inequality and discrimination as one of the major causes of poverty and violation of rights of the girl child. This leads to a lack of opportunities for women and girls to access education, health care, vocational skills and hence livelihood opportunities. The Strategy document notes that the general attitude in society of seeing girls as an economic burden and a liability leads to minimal investments in creating opportunities for girls at all levels. The same thinking is reflected at the policy and planning level within the government.

Plan Pakistan's Gender Equality Self Assessment Report (GESAR, conducted in July 2013), states that gender equity is a cross-cutting theme in all of Plan Pakistan's programmes. In relation to its policies, procedures, organizational culture, accountability and learning, Plan Pakistan was ranked gender transformative by staff, as recorded in the GESAR report. It was noted that the leadership and organizational culture was considered very conducive for gender equality, however top

management is alive to the fact that gender issues are not discussed as a priority at senior level meetings. The programmes were ranked 'low gender responsive' in relation to their achievement of change, it was also noted that a framework for gender accountability in programmes and activities was missing from the policy and planning documents. Staff consulted during the research added that gender training has been fairly recent for most of them, i.e. in the last two years and that gender as a principle for strategy and policy making was introduced at the end of 2010. The PSM-Strategy reported that all PUs have had two levels of gender training – including advanced and CO staff have had basic training. She felt that this has been important as people are open to share information and discuss gender issues. As a consequence of the GESA, the Gender Advisor has developed an action plan to address the priorities identified. She has the support of a Gender Coordinator (40% of his time) and they also build capacity of Gender focal points at PU level.

Feedback from a selection of CO staff from different thematic areas of Plan's work and specific programmes (including the PPA and GPP) identified the following **barriers to gender equality which Plan address through their programmes**: gender based discrimination, early child birth, sexual abuse, high infant mortality rate, reproductive health complications, child marriage, lack of protection for women and girls, lack of women's livelihoods options, poor access to education for girls. Some of the work Plan is doing to address these barriers includes education targeting adolescent girls through fast track learning centres (FTLCs) and non formal education (NFE) centres, programmes focused on health, livelihoods, WASH, early marriage, awareness raising on women and girls' rights and advocacy on legislation, development of life skills curriculum, establishing community surveillance committees focusing on sexual harassment. It was not possible within the time available to explore all the different approaches adopted by Plan Pakistan to tackle these issues and discuss how effective people felt these were. The most important root causes for these problems were explored through a pair wise ranking exercise and the priority root causes identified were:

- Lack of education (this is was meant as the general lack of education of men and women which impacts on women's poverty, health, awareness of rights, ability to listen to others' views and reflect)
- Lack of legislation and weak implementation of legislation
- Poverty

Staff talked about the importance of educating people and enhancing education levels as this contributes to increasing the debate on rights. One staff member highlighted that education gives people the ability to listen to others' views. They also see livelihoods as very important, for example, in communities where the only intervention has been the milk livelihood project, they found all indicators improved i.e. girls accessing schools and healthcare.

Problems facing women and girls which were identified by staff as not being addressed by Plan included: domestic violence, inhibited mobility, inheritance issues, lack of a gender sensitive curriculum, (except in ECCD and lifeskills in NFE where Plan and its partners have developed the curricula), lack of decision making in families and communities, acid throwing, bride burning, trafficking. In a prioritising exercise, gender norms such as male dominated patriarchal society, cultural barriers, rigid religious interpretations, were considered important, but it was agreed that they are not being systematically or explicitly addressed by Plan through its work. Some of the reasons for this include:

- **Religious interpretation** - Plan do not want to get involved in religious interpretation as they are not qualified to tackle this. Instead they highlight the commitments Pakistan has made eg. to the UNCRC and conduct advocacy related to these commitments. There are many religious sects and it would be a waste of resources to try and tackle all the different religious interpretations. Instead, Plan participates with other NGOs on religious issues and tries to engage liberal minded religious leaders.
- **Cultural barriers** such as perceptions around protection from violence and honour - they are trying to work around this by strengthening surveillance in communities to address sexual harassment in the street.
- **The individual family culture** – they can't change this, however for Plan sponsored children, it is mandatory for all children in that family to attend school. At family level it was

noted that more impact is achieved when they have engaged more closely with the family.

Some of these issues and their implications are explored in further detail in section 7.

2) Vehari PU Context

In Vehari PU, 5 CDFs (3 women, 2 men) and the CDF Coordinator (male) who were consulted identified a number of changes they want to bring about for women and girls (included in the box opposite). Staff recognised that this is an ambitious list, requiring specialised approaches. However, it was not possible in the time available to explore to what extent these issues are addressed through the work of the CDFs (child sponsorship) or the Plan grant funded programmes implemented by Vehari PU, or to what extent they are aspirational. Nor was there time to identify what staff have learned from the approaches utilised or explore what they think works well or should be done differently. (The intention was to spend a day with PU staff to cover these issues but the timing of a Public holiday meant this was not feasible). This is unfortunate as understanding staffs' views on, and learning from, the work they do is essential in order to build up a picture of Plan's influence on gender equality in communities and to identify where staff may need more support and resources.

The key discriminatory social norms identified by the CDFs are:

- Culture in relation to early marriage, exchange marriage
- Girls viewed as property of men
- Family honour
- Misinformed Islamic teaching
- Weak implementation of legislation that protect girls' and women's rights.

Changes CDFs in Vehari want to achieve for women and girls:

- Participation in decision making in families and communities
- Girls and women are aware about their rights (this was identified by 4 staff)
- Women can assume the role of the Numberdar (kind of semi govt community leader)
- Protection from violence for women and girls
- Zero discrimination towards women and girls
- Prevention of early marriage (Plan have just started an intervention on early marriage)
- Women have a share in property/land
- Girls attend secondary education
- Out of school girls attend school
- Women and girls access health facilities
- Increased livelihood opportunities
- Increased access to and control over financial resources.

They highlighted some of the main changes they have seen in relation to addressing discriminatory social norms, which they attribute to Plan's work -

- **Girls' education** - Increased access to education (through Plan's GPP programme which sets up FTLCs in communities); increased literacy of girls.
- **Increased employment opportunities for women and girls** - In a few communities women aged 20-25 are getting jobs in e.g. schools, Plan partner organisations, local NGOs etc.; increased livelihoods – for those women involved in the Milk value chain project or those who have accessed training in embroidery; increased access for women to financial resources.
- **Reduced early marriage** - this is thought to be because they are in education for longer.
- **Increased voice/ respect for girls** - a few girls are raising their voices against rights violations (there was not time to discuss which kinds of rights violations and whether there are repercussions for the girls who do this); Some parents (males and females) have started listening to girls (these are adults in some of the CBOs Plan sets up or in the children's forums).
- **Increased mobility of women and girls** - It was not clear if all the staff consulted felt that mobility was increasing. They noted that girls have to move in groups, whether from house to house or from house to school or from the village to the city; one CDF spoke about a small number of girls who ride bicycles to schools outside a community, accompanied by their brothers.

- **Increase in birth registration of girls** - previously fathers would not want to register girls as they would not want them to have any claim on property. It was not clear if the staff felt this change was due to Plan's work or not¹.

In general, the feeling amongst the CDFs is that **change in a positive direction is happening slowly**. They all consider education to be crucial - "*if you educate a girl it will be different for her daughter.*" In some communities, girls are already going outside to study and there are rare cases of girls who run away because they are so empowered. They therefore view Plan's provision of NFE through partner organisations as significant. They reported that in some rural areas women have complete control over how resources are spent and decisions around marriage ceremonies. This money is not always their husband's money. They sell eggs, some have grocery shops, and others work as cotton pickers.

The CDFs acknowledged that trying to bring about changes in these areas is hugely challenging, especially given that they do not focus on gender equality but it is one of many issues which they work on with the community groups they support. The women staff talked about the problems they themselves face in balancing their domestic responsibilities and Plan work and the extent of decision making power they have in their own lives. Different female staff have varied experiences of autonomy for decision making and different experiences of living with extended family or not, depending if they have moved to Vehari for work and therefore are no longer living with their husband's wider family. The women staff face many barriers in terms of attitudes and expectations around women's roles and freedom of choice and reflected that given the challenges they face in their personal lives, it is hard to go into communities and talk about gender equality.

CDFs identified the following areas where there has been little or no change in the communities where they work –

- **Marriage choice** - Girls still have very little choice about who they marry or when.²
- **Health** – often preference is given to boys in relation to accessing health care and elders often refer women to the TBAs rather than the health centre. There is no family planning in the communities and one of the CDFs said that girls do not know about personal hygiene or puberty etc. This reflects discussions in the CO about the complete lack of information on health, adolescence and family planning, because mothers do not talk to their daughters about these issues and they enter marriage completely unaware. (*It was understood that Plan is implementing health programmes in Vehari, however not in the communities where the CDFs consulted are working.*)
- **Violence** – it is very difficult to work on this issue because it is not spoken about openly. The CP committees do identify and try and resolve violence issues but even sexual abuse cases are not referred to the police. There are no support services in communities for women who have experienced violence. (*CO staff mentioned the GPP which has national help lines and referrals can be made through this. However to date, more boys are calling than girls and they are asking for information on sexual and reproductive health issues. Calls reporting violence are low in number.*)
- **Property/ inheritance** – CDFs said that Plan is not working on this but they do talk about this in their gender sessions (*Although other CO staff reported that Plan promote birth registration in programme communities and in the GPP*)

3) The context of the villages selected for the research

The two villages selected for the research are located in the Punjab province in District Vehari. Plan has worked for a similar amount of time (approximately 11 years) in both villages. 212 EB is

¹ Staff who reviewed the draft report subsequently added that there has been considerable contribution by Plan to increasing awareness on birth registration and capacity building of 89 Union Council secretaries on birth registration

² This is a reflection of CDFs the researcher spoke with about the specific communities where the CDFs work.

much smaller in terms of population size and all families in the village are involved in Plan's sponsorship work. Plan has supported the local Tanzeem (CBO set up by the community) since it began working in the village. This group has developed a number of community development plans over the years, which Plan has contributed to. Although Plan has implemented several projects in Community 83 WB, similar to those in 212 EB and also implements its sponsorship programme here, the CDFs report that it has been more difficult to work in this community and bring women and men together to identify development priorities. The men's forum is fairly active but not the women's forum and men are still not willing to meet together with women, after all these years. The FTLC established by Plan in this community had such poor attendance that it was closed down. Due to time constraints it was not possible to meet with the relevant CDFs to explore in detail how they have approached such challenges in their work.

In both communities people are heavily dependent on agricultural production – cotton, wheat, sugarcane and livestock including cows and goats. In community 83WB there are a greater number of shops, including clothes shops and grocery stores. In 212 EB, there are a few small stalls including a couple of tea stalls, which have TVs and are locally known as 'hotels'.

A household poverty assessment had not been conducted in the two villages, however, staff involved in the research suggested that community 212 EB is poorer than community 83 WB and that the amount of land owned by individuals in this community tended to be less than in 83 WB. 212 EB is also further from Vehari and has fewer amenities. A number of participants in FGDs in 212 EB highlighted that at least 50% of families have male family members who work in the Middle East, a practice that has been evident for the last 30 years and this was acknowledged as having a significant impact on the incomes of these families. This was not a practice which was identified in community 83 WB, however in this community focus group participants reported that in the past few years an increasing number of women are going outside of the community for work (e.g. as teachers, health workers), whereas in 212 EB, those consulted said that no (or according to a few adolescent girls aged 12-15: one or two), women go out of the community for paid jobs.

Some CDFs thought that the greater level of perceived poverty and smaller size of community 212 EB could be an important factor influencing the collaboration amongst male and female community members who are working together to bring about changes through the Tanzeem. Information on the range of caste groups living in the communities was not available for both communities. It would also be useful to understand land ownership and the power and decision making structures in the two communities as well as to gather information on the key individuals in the communities the CDFs have developed relationships with and how these relationships were developed. This would enhance interpretation of the similarities and differences between the communities.

One of the biggest challenges to girls' education in the province is the lack of government schools – both primary and secondary schools and this is an issue for both of the research communities. The Vehari PUM reported that many children, both boys and girls are out of school in the villages where Plan works because there are more children than there are places in the local primary schools. In addition to this, for the last three years, the Provincial Government has changed all schools to English language medium, which means the teachers have to teach in English and use an English language syllabus and teaching materials. This is an enormous challenge as many of the teachers do not speak English themselves and many staff and teachers have questions about the value of such an education. Furthermore this could potentially change after 2015 when this scheme will come to an end.

Another priority concern in both communities, mentioned more often by boys and men than women and girls is the issue of clean drinking water as both communities suffer from contaminated drinking water. In 212 EB they also have a problem with open sewage which some hope Plan will be able to resolve. In 83 WB the contaminated drinking water is a priority for the Numberdar³ and he would like Plan's support on this and in 212 EB, the Tanzeem has included this issue as a priority in their CDP and had submitted a proposal to the Provincial Government to fund the work

³ The Numberdar is the head of the village and is recognised by government. The role of the Numberdar is to collect taxes for land and property and to resolve problems; this is an inherited role.

needed.

The *Watta Satta* or exchange marriage is common occurrence in these communities. The practice involves the mutual exchange of daughters between two families, with each girl being swapped for the purposes of marrying a son in the recipient family.

A timeline of key events which have impacted on each community's development was drawn up with older members of the community in each location. These timelines are attached in 2. A summary profile of the two villages is included in the tables overleaf.

Table 1: Key characteristics recorded by Plan for each location:

Comm.	Popn.	Approx. length of Plan engagement	School/ health facilities	Community groups/ orgs	Self-help initiatives in community	Main concerns of community
83 WB	7200	12 yrs	Girls middle school, boys primary school, 2 private schools (incl. 1 girls secondary), health facilities available	Supported by Plan – men's forum (women's forum (not very active)), children's forum, sponsorship committee, Health & envt committee, Education committee Others: Tanzeem	Street improvement scheme	Contaminated water supply
212 EB	1900	11.5 yrs	Girls primary, boys elementary RHC at UC level (4km), LHW in the community	Supported by Plan: men's forum, women's forum, children's forum, CBO, sponsorship committee, HEC-Health & Envt Committee (not working effectively). Others: Mosque Committee, Fund Committee	Salary of feeder teacher, construction of EID GAAH, Community share collection by women during sanitation work, cleanliness campaign, enrolment campaign by Plan Children Forum	Availability of safe drinking water, maintenance/rehab of sewage system

Table 2: Summary of Plan's past and current interventions and gender related work in the two communities

Comm.	Past Plan programmes implemented	Current Plan projects	Gender related work
212 EB	Plan milk value chain project (PMVCP) establishment of NFE Centre, 7 hardware projects (eg. latrines construction)	ECCD, FTLC (GPP), WES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genders session for different Plan groups (e.g. forums) Women's events for promoting their participation at village level Bamboo shoot training with children's forum including girls
83 WB	Plan milk value chain project (PMVCP) Asian development bank project (ADB) (provision of livelihood trainings/opportunities/provision of equipment to women for making milk by products) School improvement programme NFE; Hand pumps, play equipment; Skills for poor families	ECCD, child protection, birth registration, enrolment campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender sessions for different Plan groups (eg. forums) Child protection committee formation Theatre performance on CP within community Bamboo shoot training with children's forum including girls

4) The research methodology and limitations of the research

Plan UK commissioned this qualitative research and during initial discussions with the research team, it was agreed that the scope of the research would be to learn from boys and girls and men and women what is changing for them and what is not changing in relation to discriminatory social norms and what their priorities are. Plan UK had conducted initial conversations with staff in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Egypt and provided a number of country specific Plan documents to the researchers. The researchers then followed up individually with key CO staff to understand their thinking in relation to the research and their expectations.

A set of draft guiding research questions were developed by the consultant team in response to the Research ToR, these included questions for Plan staff and others for the groups in the community (attached in Appendix 1). These questions were discussed with the MER Manager in Plan Pakistan and at a later stage also with the PSM-Strategy. The consultants identified a number of participatory exercises and drew up guidelines relating to how these exercises could be used and defined related questions for discussion as part of these exercises.

It was suggested by the Consultant team to select two communities – one where there had been significant progress in work on gender equality and gender discrimination and one where there had been much less progress or where Plan had experienced challenges to gender transformative work. The Vehari PU then selected two communities, which are described in Section 3 above. The following age groups for consultation in the community were defined following discussion with the Vehari PU team: 12-15, 15-18, 18-24 and 25-60. There was discussion about organising separate groups of married and unmarried women aged 18-24 but the CDFs felt this would be challenging. It was also not possible to meet with the older group of men and women in both communities due to time constraints. In one community there was a shorter meeting with an older group of women but it was decided to develop a community timeline with this group instead of a focus group discussion on the core questions.

The suggestion was that the groups should contain a mixture of people involved in Plan groups and projects and those not involved in Plan initiatives. The CDFs asked local contacts who were Plan forum members to invite participants to the groups. There were criteria for selection of the focus group participants outlined by Plan⁴, however the facilitators did not have a profile of the individuals selected and there was not time to explore individuals' backgrounds or experiences at the start of the discussions. What was clear is that in Community 212 EB, the FGDs for the research took place in the FTLC which is supported by Plan as part of the GPP and the groups were convened by the FTLC teacher and many of the female participants in the focus groups also attend the FTLC, whilst some of the male FGD participants were members of the men's forum or CBO (although not the 15-18 year old males). This was very different in Community 83 WB where Plan is no longer running an NFE Centre and where only a few of the younger girls were from a Plan forum. More of the boys were forum members, but aside from these, the focus group participants in this community appeared to be less familiar with Plan and its work. A summary of the groups consulted and interviews conducted are included in the tables below.

Table 3: Profile of the groups consulted and key observations

83 WB	212 EB
Boys aged 12 – 15 (9 boys): 6 members of the boys' forum Plan set up. <i>[Oldest boy did most of the talking and one younger boy (forum members)]</i>	Boys 12 – 15: (10 boys): 2 forum members (accompanied by adult male forum member)

⁴A mixed group for each FGD i.e. participants who are direct participants of Plan interventions and vice versa; participants who have the time for FGDs; willing and readiness for the subject research study; vocal and openly express their views and opinions.

Girls aged 12 – 15 (10 girls): 4 forum members [very shy]	Girls aged 12 – 15 (9 girls): 4 forum members, 6 FTLC members, 1 girl is not a member of any Plan group
Boys aged 15 -18 [10 boys]: 2 are members of the forum, the others not	Boys aged 15 – 18 (8 boys): None in Plan forum
Girls aged 15 – 18: (8 girls): 1 in 1 st year, 1 in 3 rd year, 2 in class 9, one studying, 3 in the house	Girls aged 15 – 18 (8 girls) All in FTLC, all have completed primary education (class 7) None are married
Men aged 18 – 25 (9 men) 3 male forum members, 1 is married, 1 is in the 9 th grade, one is in University <i>[All very shy compared to the younger boys, except for the University student].</i>	Men aged 18 – 24 (8 boys): 2 completed middle class, 2 in G5, 1 in G8, 1 in G10, 2 in G12 2 are married - 1 arranged, 1 love
Women aged 18 – 24: (8 women): 1 forum member 2 married (love marriages) One woman works for Bedari and is studying for a clinical diploma), the others are in the household	Women aged 18 – 24 (8 girls): 3 in FTLC - completed class 7, 2 completed Class 10, 1 is in class 11, 2 are in Class 12 in a nearby village) None are married. <i>[These girls were much more confident than the 15 – 18 year olds and had much stronger views about the need for root causes to change. They have had more exposure to cable TV, some go outside the community to school, 5 have had more education than grade 7].</i>

Table 4: Other consultations and interviews

83 WB	212 EB
8 Female teachers in the middle school 3 teachers live in the community, the others are from outside. They have worked in the school for the following number of years: 6y, 10y, 6y, 1.5y, 5y, 3y, 18y, 10y (head teacher) <i>[The teacher who had only been there for 1.5y spoke good English and did a huge amount of talking at the beginning. After a while others started speaking and lots of them were talking at the same time. However the women were not shy to disagree.]</i>	Individual interviews 1) FTLC Teacher 2) IDI – Milk value chain project beneficiary (female over 50) 3) Head teacher from Government Girls Primary School in the village (the other female teacher was also present) The head had been in the school for 4 years, the teacher for 3.
Meeting with Plan partners working in the community: NRSP – male and female staff RASTI – 2 social organisers and a Caregiver from the ECCD Centre Community timeline with 10 – 12 older women: 3 are grandmothers. All are based in the household	Community Timeline – 2 older men and 2 older women (over 50 although the women did not know their age) <i>[They were joined towards the end by the Tanzeem president who took over the speaking]</i>
Interview with the main Numberdar and the Chowkidar⁵	

The approach agreed upon was that the Plan CDFs would facilitate the participatory exercises and discussions. There were four CDFs available to do this work (3 women and 1 man), usually working in pairs. In addition there was a male CDF translating. In the first community the researcher sometimes co-facilitated with the CDFs, particularly in the discussion phase. Given there was little time to practice facilitating the exercises in advance of the field work, this kind of mentoring approach was deemed the most appropriate.

⁵ The role of the Chowkidar is to assist the Numberdar in various tasks that a Numberdar has to perform at village level being the custodian and representative of the government. Key duties of Numberdar are: 1. To look after all property of the District Government which falls under his area of jurisdiction; 2. To collect taxes from farmers; 3. To arrange gatherings/meetings for revenue departments/police and others as per requirements; 4. To convey different messages to local communities received from various departments; 5. To resolve conflicts at local levels; 6. To act and on behalf of the Government being the representative.

Following the field work, a workshop was conducted with a number of Plan partners in Vehari to share initial findings from the research and explore participants' views on the work they are involved in on tackling discriminatory social norms and what is working well and less well. These included the following partners: Farmers integrated Development association (1m, 1f), Rasti (f) NRSP (2 fs), Pakistan Girl Guides Association (2 fs), Bedari (2 fs), Family Planning Association of Pakistan (f).

Prior to the field work, two workshops were facilitated in the CO with a range of participants from the Programmes Department. Not everyone was able to attend both sessions. These were active and informative sessions and there was a high level of interest and participation from those present. Following the research in Vehari, some of the same staff attended a feedback meeting along with some others who had not attended the previous meetings. In addition, the researcher conducted interviews with the Gender Advisor, the Islamabad PUM and had a brief meeting with the Advocacy Manager.

Limitations

In addition to the limitations included above the following issues should also be taken into account. The intention was to spend 3-4 days in each community in order to undertake the FGDs and individual interviews with key informants. Due to staff commitments, travel time for the consultant and a public holiday, this was not possible in the timeframe for the visit. This meant that fewer focus groups were undertaken and very few key informant interviews (KIs) were organised. It was also not possible to access some of the individuals proposed for the KIs, for example local Imams. The groups and interviews were fixed shortly before the research began in each community and it was not always clear who had agreed to attend the individual interviews. However the team was very flexible and it was possible to adapt the programme for example to meet with a group of female teachers in the first community and to meet with a group of older women. Also the research in the communities started a day earlier than originally scheduled, this meant a day was lost for working with staff in advance of the field work to gain a deeper understanding of their work in the communities and prepare the methodology. Whilst this meeting was re-scheduled for the final day, due to many of the partner staff arriving late for the partner workshop, this was not possible.

In the planning stages, the MER Manager suggested that an independent interpreter be contracted to accompany the field work. It was not clear to the consultant whether there was a budget for this from Plan UK and she suggested the alternative of being accompanied by a staff member who speaks English. This was the solution agreed and one of the male CDFs acted as interpreter. He did an excellent job at translating but this is challenging work for anyone and sometimes resulted in him also facilitating some of the discussions on top of interpreting. For this kind of work in future, it would be easier to have a professional external interpreter as advised by the CO, who could also interpret for debriefs with the team. Also it would be beneficial to schedule a day between the work in the two communities to debrief, reflect and make adjustments to the methodology. Another factor which is significant but was not possible to avoid was the presence of male staff during the female focus group discussions. The team reflected that it would probably be better not to have male staff present because the girls and women were so shy to speak in front of men, however given that the interpreter was a male, in this instance it could not be avoided.

At one point it was suggested that the Gender Advisor would accompany some of the research and it was unfortunate that it was not possible to meet with the Gender Advisor until after the field research due to timing of annual leave. Clearly there are issues around staff availability with any kind of research exercise and Plan Pakistan engages in several research initiatives during the year which places a burden on staff on top of their existing workloads. There are many benefits of a staff member accompanying this kind of participatory research both in terms of taking forward and embedding the learning and in being able to discuss emerging issues with the researcher during the field work, which would have enriched the process. Unfortunately due to language constraints, in-depth discussions with the CDFs were not possible in the same way.

5) Plan's approach to work on gender norms in the communities

Plan Pakistan's overall approach in communities is to create spaces for dialogue on gender issues. The intention is not to be confrontational but to ensure the space for dialogue is open and they can continue to engage and push for change. Hence it was explained that when working on issues like early marriage they may prioritise discussions about the health risks of early marriage, which are easier for people to understand and engage with.

5.1) How gender issues are addressed through Plan's sponsorship work

The approach undertaken through Plan's sponsorship work is termed '**social mobilisation**' which involves a male and female CDF setting up different forums for men, women and children. They also set up a Sponsorship committee and a Child Protection Committee (CPC) and if there are Plan programmes being implemented in the community, there could be a health committee, education committee, environment or DRR committee which the CDFs support. Eventually, they try and bring the men's and women's forums together into a CBO or if a CBO exists, to strengthen this group. This process works better if the community can see a benefit from being in these groups and it speaks to their interests. If there is such an incentive then this means men are more likely to agree to women and girls participating in these groups. In some villages people are all related so there is more coherence and acceptance of women's participation. Some women are excluded but they are able to reach these through the women who are members of the groups.

The CDFs main role is to follow up on 800-1000 sponsored children – collecting information and photos on individual children for reports to sponsors, following up on problems etc. In addition, the CDFs build the capacity of the committees and forums. They conduct one training in each quarter for each forum (e.g. for 4 communities per CDF, this is 12 per quarter). The trainings range from 1 – 3 days based on material developed by Plan Pakistan. Areas covered include CP, photography (for the Sponsorship Committee), gender ($\frac{1}{2}$ day according to some CDFs), record keeping, organisational management, Bamboo Shoots (for the Forums), CCCD (once a year). Sensitisation on the rights of children is related to the framework of the UNCRC. In the sessions on gender, they ask who is dominant and people share their issues. Women talk about decision making, gender violence (the CDFs explained that they only talk about violence indirectly). They talk about ownership of property – girls feel they should withdraw from their right to property and give to their brother because they are worried he will not survive. With the children's forums one CDF explained that they do a basic introduction to gender. Aside from this they collect gender sensitive information in relation to livelihoods, health and hygiene, education and some exploration of decision making.

Feedback from the CO emphasised that staff are aware of the risks and vulnerability issues and not exposing girls and women to risks. They have lots of discussion on the best interests of the child. The aim is to help children treat one another equally but not to push them in to actions.

At the stage of the CBO formation, men have to accept sitting in the same body as women. Sometimes this takes three years at least to get to this point so progress is slow. In addition, the issue of the number and types of groups, which increase if programmes are also being implemented in the same communities, can lead to challenges. For example, even if men accept women's involvement in these different groups, they often have too much work/ domestic duties to be able to participate in the meetings and activities, especially as it is often the same women who

are members of the different groups.

The CDFs support the CBO to develop a community development plan (CDP) and these tend to focus on infrastructure or immediate needs, so whilst these may endeavour to be gender sensitive they are not prioritising gender transformative actions, which in fact would be too radical and confrontational, given the context. The CDFs are also involved in linking community groups with the duty bearers and other NGOs/ networks. For example CDPs or School Development Plans or WASH plans, are consolidated and integrated into district level annual development planning exercises and this is where gender analysis often gets diluted due to Government priorities.

5.2) Gender sensitive and gender transformative programming

In addition to its social mobilisation work, Plan implements a number of grant funded programmes, financed by different Plan National Offices, some of which are specifically focused on gender issues such as the Plan Netherlands funded Girl Power Programme and the DFID funded Building Skills for Life, PPA programme and Pakistan child marriage (preventive) initiative (PACMPI). The programme approaches adopted by Plan relevant to the communities involved in the research include the following:

- **Promoting education for adolescent girls** is considered a key priority and is also seen as an important element in preventing child marriage. Plan is promoting adolescent girls' education through NFE provision - targeting adolescent girls who are out of school through enrolling them in FTLCs as part of the GPP. These centres are established by Plan partner NRSP. The NRSP Social organisers introduce the GPP in the communities – they do not talk about 'girl power' – "*it is easier for people to talk about education and skills*" (quote from female NRSP Social organiser). They identify female learners, aged 10-24, who are not in school. They should have reached the 3rd grade minimum before dropping out. In the initial meeting some girls are identifiable. NRSP do an assessment and select 30 girls to attend an FTLC. They then identify a female teacher from the community. They have a MoU with Government and can organise evening classes in primary school buildings. They have 89 FTLCs in government schools in the evening shift. They always use the same Open University curriculum which is more participatory and learner centred than the Government curriculum. The challenges for girls are the lack of availability of Government schools and the English medium. In community 212 EB, the manager of the FTLC goes door to door to invite girls to attend the centre and encourage their families to commit to send them. The GPP is designed in the context of gender disparities and they give this message in community meetings, they talk about discrimination in relation to enrolment and early marriage and not being able to contribute to nation building. They have 200 FTLCs in total and set up Village Education Committees with 7 members. Most of the members are mothers i.e. of 1400 committee members, around 1000 are mothers. This is because fathers and brothers are less interested. NRSP think that going through the mothers is better as they are more responsible.
- **Child Protection** - In the GPP, Plan is also working on child protection prevention and response. In community 212 EB, the FTLC established by Plan is part of the GPP, however the child protection prevention and response component of GPP was not being implemented in this particular community however, it is worth noting how this issue is addressed in the wider GPP. A total of 40 CPCs have been established. Each CPC has male and female members from their respective villages. In some villages male and females have joint meetings but this practice is going on in a very few villages. "*In most of the villages male and female members of the CPCs organize separate meetings due to the social norms.*" (Bedari GPP female staff member). Bedari also run a helpline and receive cases from the whole district and they also have walk-in clients. In 2013, Bedari received 200 cases of violence against women or girls from District Vehari, which included domestic violence, sexual abuse, divorce and torture. There were three cases of acid throwing in

2012 and 2013. Bedari helps victims of violence with counselling and through referral to relevant organizations and to lawyers for legal aid. There are a number of cases of rape, although most of the cases concern divorce and domestic violence. The challenges of this work on violence are discussed in Section 7.2. Bedari have learned after three years of working with Plan and others that lecturing people does not work so they organise other activities – e.g. cricket for boys and girls, a cooking competition for boys – they have found this is a good way to engage young people and to explore gender issues.

- **Empowerment of women and girls** – raising awareness of consequences of eg. child marriage. The education interventions around NFE and life skills through the GPP as well as though livelihood and skills development projects like the Youth economic empowerment programme, focus on girls' and women's empowerment with a view to creating an enabling environment where girls and women can pursue education, employment etc. This will have a direct/ indirect impact on their self esteem, confidence, status in the home and their age of marriage. In both communities visited, Plan had implemented the Milk value chain project which targeted rural women livestock farmers, supporting them with improved livestock rearing and milk production skills, in order to increase their household income.

Plan's work on health and in particular the gender dimensions of this work were also discussed at CO level but work in this area is not currently being implemented in the communities selected for the research. In addition, Plan has recently begun implementing a new **programme on Child Marriage** but not in the communities selected for the research. This is based on the framework which came out of the research commissioned by Plan through ICRW in India, Bangladesh and Nepal. A gender Coordinator started three months ago and he manages the programme (60% of his time). The Child marriage initiative has 2 pillars – awareness in communities and work on advocacy – to raise the age for marriage for girls from 16 to 18 and to increase the punishment for under age marriage and compulsion to require an ID card at the time of marriage and registration of the marriage. Alongside this, the intention is to enable girls to access secondary education. Their partner on this project is the Family Planning Association of Pakistan. They run health clinics and focus on awareness and attitudinal change. The awareness work will communicate the message that there is no difference between girls and boys and that parents should not consider their daughters a burden and should not succumb to tribal pressure to use girls as a commodity. They plan to use youth theatre, local media and work with male and female youth groups. The project is being implemented in three districts with a collective cause for the province.

Advocacy work on gender - Plan's programme work on gender issues is supported at local, provincial and national level by its advocacy work. They have an elaborate advocacy strategy – being emphatic and strong with advocacy without confronting the Government. They are working to strengthen Government capacities to better deliver rights to rights holders. Plan focus on three advocacy goals relating to three campaigns: Count Every Child , Learn Without Fear and more recently – Because I am a Girl (BIAAG). Also in Thatta, they are working on birth registration and in Multan, on inheritance rights of women (they do this here because of feudal system and land not being given to girls). They have two targets - raising the marriage age of girls from 16 to 18 (legal reform) and increasing the budget allocation for girls' education at all levels. This work is very difficult in Pakistan because there are over 1500 Parliamentarians. Also, they have to work with Provincial Governments. They sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Provincial Government e.g. on 13th March they signed one which includes Plan's commitment to train government officials on girl friendly budgeting and in turn the Government committed to increase its allocation and spell out the processes for allocating the budget at Provincial and district level. Plan engages in provincial and national media campaigns and talk shows on issues such as early marriage. Plan understands the importance of working at all levels of decision making – district, provincial and national and it is also a member of coalitions and networks, which focus on issues such as child marriage. At the local level, they run school enrolment campaigns.

6) The key findings from the communities around the priority gender issues

6.1) What is changing and what has enabled change?

i) Girls' Education

Overall feedback from the different groups in both communities suggests that greater numbers of girls are accessing primary education and secondary education than in the past and that parents increasingly recognise the value of educating both boys and girls. Those individuals more familiar with Plan initiatives such as the ECCD centres, FTLC and forums, highlighted the influence of Plan in raising awareness of the importance of education. The fact that there is increased availability of education within the community in the form of ECCDs and the FTLC (this is only in community 212 EB) is significant, especially as there has not been much change in attitudes to the mobility of girls in terms of them going outside of the community to continue their education. One of the NRSP staff interviewed highlighted that in the two years they have been working on the GPP, issues of access and poverty are the mains issues affecting girls' education. He noted that when they open an FTLC, this is welcomed by men in the communities and added that media influences people to send girls to school – “*before girls only had religious education.*”

In 212 EB, which is further from the district town of Vehari, feedback was that few girls go outside the community to continue their education beyond primary level. Some are able to go on motorbikes with relatives or in a van with a group of girls (one of the 12 – 15 year old girls travels in this way) but not all can afford this or would be allowed this freedom. Some of the 15 to 18 year old girls reported that girls have not gone to middle school in other communities because their parents do not allow them to go out and there is also a transport issue – “*they could go on a motorcycle but the drivers (usually male family members) of the motorbikes are busy.*” However the men (aged 18-25) consulted said that more adolescent girls go to secondary school than boys and that for boys/young men aged 15-20, this is usually the age when they go to work in the Middle East. There were also mixed views in this community about those families which have relatives working abroad (usually as manual labourers, barbers, drivers, electricians etc.). One or two said these families are richer and are not bothered about education but want their sons to work. The FTLC teacher said that these families rent houses in Vehari for their daughters to be educated in the city.

In Community 83 WB, it was generally reported that only a few girls travelled outside to continue their education. However those who can afford it attend the private high school in the village. In this community, some men and women of different ages spoke about increasing recognition of the link between education and employment and people seeing educated women coming from outside of the village and wanting the same for their daughters.

In both communities people spoke about the influence of TV in raising awareness of the importance of education. Cable and satellite TV has been present in both communities for a year to 18 months, although not all households in 212 EB have access to this and within different households attitudes vary regarding which channels boys and girls can or should watch, although when fathers and brothers are out, adolescent girls in both communities talked about watching channels of their choice – usually Indian films or dramas. Detailed feedback from the different groups consulted in relation to changes in girls' access to education and the reasons for this, are included in tables in Appendix 3.

ii) Early marriage and decision making regarding marriage

There were mixed views about whether the practice of early marriage is changing in both communities and it was hard to get a sense of the extent of change and what people thought were the reasons for the changes. Many of those consulted were not yet married so did not have first hand experience but reflected on cases they knew of in their families. Generally in both communities there was an overall sense that the practice of early marriage was declining and that there is greater awareness of the health risks related to early marriage. In community 212 EB, one boy in a focus group had married when he was 15 to a girl aged 14 and his brother of 17 then had to marry the sister of his brother's wife in an exchange marriage, which was against his wishes. In both communities exchange marriages were mentioned as being common – in community 83 WB as a way of keeping land within the family but in community 212 EB, as a way of sharing land between families.

Both male and female respondents of different ages in both communities talked about young men and women having more influence over marriage than in the past, particularly for those children who are educated as they are afforded more respect by their parents. However others disagreed with this in both communities and felt that ultimately it is the father's or parents' decision. In both communities one or two respondents talked of having a love marriage, in both cases with a cousin, which is not surprising as young women have very little opportunity to meet men from outside their families. More focused discussions on this issue would be needed with older men and women and religious leaders in the community to really understand what the current practices are around arranged marriages, the extent to which these are arranged when a girl is born or very young, current views of the appropriate age of marriage, how much choice young men and women have in determining marriage partners and the role of dowry, land and exchange marriages in determining a girl's future.

In Community 83 WB, the Numberdar stated that "*Early marriage is not a problem – 99% of early marriages have been abolished in the last 20 years*", although this contradicts what other respondents said from this community. He suggested that media and TV has a role in changing attitudes but that experience also counts. He said the age difference is only 5-6 years between husbands and wives. He acknowledged that the practice of marriage between cousins is a problem, highlighting that this can lead to certain diseases and disabilities. He said people are now learning that marrying cousins is not a good idea and that this is due to different TV programmes and talk shows. Boys (aged 12 – 15) thought that people are more aware about the problems with early marriage – one highlighted that Plan had organised a role play on early marriage being bad for health.

In this community the teachers from the primary school said that men are much older than their wives. One woman spoke of a 13 year old girl who married a man of 40, although others said the common difference is now for men to be 10-12 years older. They said the marrying age for girls used to be age 10-12 but now it is 15-20. They also said that the practice of men having more than one wife was common in the village. Amongst the women consulted (aged 18 – 24), two were married. This group said that in the past when their grandmothers were young, the marriage age was when a girl reached puberty i.e. 14 – 16. The older women (aged 30+) said that now there are fewer early marriages. They said they see good messages in Pakistani TV shows and dramas which show early marriage and violence being a bad thing. They are not so keen on songs and music, which they said girls shouldn't listen to as they are very religious. They mainly watch Islamic channels – QTV and Madni Channel. They watch dramas on ARY Channel.

Fewer respondents in community 212 EB identified early marriage as a practice they were concerned about but they did talk about decision making in relation to marriage. Amongst the 12 – 15 year old girls, one or two girls think that early marriage has reduced. Girls aged 15 – 18 reported that some girls marry at this age but more from the age range 20 to 24. Women aged 18 – 24 reflected that there was early marriage when their grandmothers were young and there are still some cases nowadays as people are unaware of this issue and girls still have less education.

They also talked about separation of husbands and wives and the reasons for this. They explained that this happens sometimes because the wife has not had children; it is also due to exchange marriages - in some exchange marriages, if the husband doesn't give land to the wife then she does not stay with him. Separation is also caused by a difficult relationship between a mother-in-law and wife. However, they said that separation is not common in the village and when it happens, it is usually due to disagreements about property. They said that women get married again after divorce (although the CDFs later said that divorced women face a lot of stigma and were unlikely to re-marry). Quotes from different women in the group below on the issue of polygamy:

- *There are a few men here with more than one wife (7) – this happens, they all live together happily.*
- *My uncle has 2 wives because his first wife doesn't have children.*
- *Two men have taken second wives because their first wives only gave birth to daughters.*
- *I have an uncle with a wife who didn't have any children but he hasn't married a second wife because his first wife is very powerful – She is so empowered she didn't give him permission to marry another woman.*

Decision making relating to marriage:

In community 83 WB, there were a range of views about the extent to which consent is sought from a girl in relation to marriage. Girls aged 12 – 15 said that the father and mother decides on the marriage; some added that parents do ask the consent of their daughters but the final decision is with the parents. In contrast, some women aged 18 – 25 said that there is already consent for marriage from daughters in the village, so this is not something which needs to change. On further discussion, some in this group agreed that daughters and sons are able to influence the mother in relation to marriage but not the father. One of the two women in this group who had had a love marriage did not have parents who were alive so she told her aunt of her wishes. The other told her mother and her father did not disagree. In this community, the teachers from the primary school said that for 25% of women, the decision is a mutual decision and in 75% of cases the fathers decide and the consent of the daughter is not sought. Older women (aged 30+) said that elders are aware that children are more mature and nowadays more parents are asking children for consent for marriage because they trust their children as they are mature and are educated.

In Community 212 EB, girls aged 15 – 18 said that some parents ask their daughters for their views on the man the parents propose and that the practice of exchange marriage is common. Men aged 18 – 24 reported that in older times parents' wishes were followed. They think that now 50% of families give the daughter a choice (this is in contrast to the women consulted of the same age-group who felt this occurs in only 5% of families). The men agreed that parents now accept love marriages due to literacy and education. "*The parents sometimes realise that something bad could happen if they don't respond to their children's wishes i.e. they could run away*" (quote from one man who spoke of cases of teenagers running away from the village). In this community girls can marry outside of their castes. According to the two older men and women consulted this practice began in 1992, before this, marriage was within castes.

In contrast, many respondents in 83 WB explained that marriage is only within the caste and others said it is within the same family – some people in different groups said that this is to keep the land within families. "*Women have to marry within the same blood family*" (quote from primary school teacher). Boys aged 15 – 18 in this community said that most girls get married inside the community (99% within the community) and within the caste (there are 5 main castes). Girls of the same age pointed out that boys can marry someone from any caste but girls have to marry within the caste, however they did not express a view as to whether they think this practice should change. The boys explained that after marriage, the woman goes to live with the parents of the man, which is the same for all castes. They said that the elders and the parents decide on the marriage and that some marriages are exchange marriages. "*In no families do parents seek consent*" (quote from one boy) – there was some disagreement on this – some said they do, others said that girls have to obey their parents. Men aged 18 – 25 when reflecting on marriage compared to when their grandfathers were young, said that when they like someone different from their

parents' choice, because they are educated they can influence their parents. They agreed that they, as young men, have more freedom of who to marry since their grandfather's generation and that this is a good change.

iii) Women's workload and expanding women's economic activities

In both communities women and girls are engaged in agricultural activities – growing wheat, cotton, maize, vegetables and rice and rearing livestock, some on their own land and others as daily wage earners (it was understood that it is poor people who work as daily labourers). Agricultural labour is mainly divided into different work undertaken by men and women, for example it is women and girls who do the cotton picking but women cannot sell livestock. Women and girls have always been involved in this kind of work although they do not necessarily perceive it as an economic activity and aspirations from older women in both communities was for their sons and daughters not to have to work in agriculture. In addition to agricultural labour, women and girls undertake all the household work. In both communities girls and women talked of getting up at 4am to begin the household work and food preparation, whilst men and boys may get up at the same time but to pray, not to work in the house. Boys also can do their school homework in the early morning, whilst their sisters are busy helping their mothers.

In Community 83 WB, respondents spoke of more women now working outside the home than in the past, however in Community 212 EB a number of respondents in the different groups thought that no women from their village were in actual fact working outside the community (only one or two girls aged 12-15 thought that two women were working outside as teachers and two as health workers and that their brothers take them to their workplace). Males and females in both communities talked about having to do things by hand in the past, which can now be done by machines more quickly and in community 212 EB, women aged 18 – 24 noted that when their grandmothers were younger, women used to spend lots of time in the fields alongside their husbands, ploughing by hand but that now this has changed and they are in the house more. However whether this means they are at home with more leisure time on their hands was not particularly evident as discussed further in section 6.2 below.

In community 83 WB, girls aged 12 – 15 in this community said that in their grandparents' time, women did all the household work, but that now men help a bit. They said that their Grandmothers did not have permission to go out of the house. Another added "*Before women were not allowed to do jobs but now this is allowed.*" Other respondents talked of women working as teachers and Lady Health Workers (LHWs) outside the community and we met with a local woman who was working for a Plan partner organisation. Boys (aged 15 – 18) said that some women who are married work and around 10 women from the village are teachers. In this community, some of the girls and young women talked about undertaking sewing work in the house to earn money, which they fit around their other household chores. Boys (aged 15 – 18) said that when a girl leaves school (aged 15 – 20) she starts home-based vocational work to earn money – sewing or embroidery, adding that some parents pressurise girls to get vocational training in these skills. They said other girls who remain in school also do this work in the house but not so consistently, just in their spare-time.

Girls aged 15 – 18 in 83 WB said that some girls had accessed training in beauty parlour skills. Three years ago there was a Plan partner who came in to the community as well as the Plan CDFs and they told them the importance of vocational training and this was offered to some girls (according to a Plan CDF, in addition to beautician skills, they learned sewing, glass painting, art and craft, tie dye. Boys learned how to repair mobile phones, motor mechanics and refrigeration). A few girls mentioned vocational training as being important.

Women aged 18 -24 highlighted that in the past, women were illiterate and spent more time in the field and now there are educated working women. "*Before women went out for agricultural labour but now they can study or go out for other types of work.*" This group also said that parents need

to see the nature of the job before they decide to allow it. They say that the majority of parents are open to the idea of the girls going out for work. The Numberdar had a very optimistic view of the extent of change – he said that 60-70% of women go outside of the village. “*It wasn’t like this before and has changed now*”. He added that, “*educated women are authorised to get jobs.*”

In community 212 EB, some girls and boys spoke of the need for vocational training for young people as there are little opportunities for them once they leave school. One woman interviewed had participated in Plan’s Milk value chain project. She talked about the difficulties she faced in the past. Her husband went to Saudi Arabia for 6 years and it was difficult looking after her children. He sent money after the first 2-3 months. He was working as a labourer there but the money wasn’t enough. She also worked to earn money harvesting wheat. However, when he came back life improved, the money was more and he helped in the food production. She educated her children – two girls got to Grade 10 and two attended religious education and three boys reached Grade 10. She moved her two daughters to the city for religious education – this was her choice. They wanted to go to school but she wanted them to have religious education, for them to have good moral values and to please Allah.

Through community meetings the woman interviewed got involved in Plan’s milk value chain project, known locally as the “chiller” project. In the meetings she learned that if she looks after her cattle they will give more milk. They learned about medicines, mixing fodder differently and vaccinations. She had 10 days training and on a regular basis Plan came and had monthly meetings with them and checked the progress of the milk production. Before Plan came they sold their milk for Rs. 25 per litre but Plan negotiated with the company so they could sell for a fixed rate of Rs. 40-45 per litre. The milk became better quality. Now the project is over, they are still selling at the same rate. All families who have cattle have benefitted from this initiative. She said that the benefit from the project had been an improved livelihood. With the increased income people spend the money on children’s schooling, save it for their daughters’ dowry and marriage. However, they do not discuss issues like dowry or gender as part of this project.

iv) Empowerment

Most of the girls and women did not speak of feeling empowered directly but they identified many barriers they face which impact on their empowerment, in particular their freedom of movement (this was the challenge which adolescent girls in particular talked about most) and their freedom to exercise decisions in important issues affecting them. These issues are explored more in section 6.2.

Only one group (women aged 18 – 24 in community 83 WB) felt that they had increased mobility than in the past due to access to transport. They said that everyone has a motorbike so they can go out with their family for special occasions. They said they can go out with their father or brother; before they had to go on buses and before that on a horse and cart. At the age they are now they said they can go where they want with the consent of their parents.

As discussed earlier, whilst some felt that that more girls and women are consulted in relation to decisions on marriage, others did not think this had changed. Many focus group participants recognised the importance of education in terms of giving them confidence and more respect from their elders and this was an area where some respondents felt there has been some changes for educated girls and women in their communities. Some talked about earning money and having control over these resources, whereas others said that they did not have control over these. Many talked about the right of property for women and girls. Both males and females in both communities recognised that women have an equal right to property as men, however they noted that the custom is for girls to offer up their share to their brothers. The majority felt that this practice was not changing although there were some examples of where women did have an equal share, for example in a particular segment of the community in 83 WB.

When exploring what is meant by a powerful boy or girl, young people in Community 83 WB identified what makes a powerful boy or powerful girl, identifying factors such as being educated, healthy, respecting teachers and parents. Boys aged 12 – 15 in this community thought that the proportion of powerful girls in the community is increasing, due to more girls accessing education. Another change they identified is that five years ago the girls who weren't at school were at home using a sewing machine. One said that girls now have less work in the house and now are cooking rather than sewing. Views on what constitutes a powerful girl and boy in community 83 WB from the two groups consulted are included in *Appendix 3*.

Girls aged 12-15 in 212 EB were asked to explain what they understand by rights, given that four were forum members and six attending the FTLC. However they found this difficult; one said that rights should be distributed equally amongst boys and girls. They said that they learn about rights in events conducted by Plan and RASTI and the TV and radio also raise awareness.

v) Violence prevention

There was very little mention of violence issues by the focus groups and therefore it is difficult to assess whether violence against women and girls is increasing or decreasing. This is not surprising given the approach of the research, which was to explore differences in the lives of men and women, girls and boys and reflect on these differences and explore what is changing in relation to these differences. In some of the groups there was time to focus more on some of the challenges faced by women and girls and it was in these discussions that the issue of violence was raised and in groups where women and girls were more confident. Where respondents identified some changes was in relation to violence in schools. The teachers in the middle school in 83 WB said that in the past few years, they have made the environment more secure so girls feel safer and this has impacted positively on school attendance. One of the girls (aged 12-15) also highlighted that due to corporal punishment being reduced, girls are less afraid to come to school.

Similarly, in 212 EB, the teachers in the girls' primary school spoke about the fact that there is no corporal punishment in the school and mentioned 'Learn Without Fear' but did not elaborate further on this. The 12-15 year old girls in 212 EB said that violence against children has reduced in the house (beating of boys and girls). They also noted that corporal punishment is not allowed in Government schools and they said the Government are very focused on this. One girl who is Captain of the Children's forum (who attended global youth speaker award (GYSA) said that awareness has increased – "*Plan say that a child is below 18 and they shouldn't be beaten.*" One of the girls (aged 18-24) in this community expressed her priority wish to abolish violence against women.

6.2) What is not changing and what are people's priorities for change

i) Education

In community 83 WB, teachers from the girls' middle school stated early marriage as the main reason for drop out of girls from the school. They also spoke about a lack of interest in education, girls' domestic workload in the house and economic problems. "*Education is not the first priority for people because they have financial problems.*" There is also seasonal drop-out at the time of harvesting. (This was also a problem in the girls' primary school in Community 212 EB in relation to cotton picking and wheat harvesting). Teachers in 83 WB said that they go to see families when girls have dropped out to convince them and they arrange parents' meetings and call the mothers to these meetings. They also help poor students with uniforms.

Interestingly apart from some of the men in community 212 EB and the teachers, none of the other respondents in either community raised concerns about the quality of the teaching in schools and the fact that the teaching medium was changed to English language three years ago. Teachers in the Middle school in 83 WB expressed interest in accessing gender sensitive teaching materials and were particularly interested in guidance on sexual and reproductive health issues. The two teachers from the girls' primary school in 212 EB found it difficult to respond to questions about gender equality issues initially but did talk about the lack of confidence amongst girl students in the school and the need to empower girls. The Head teacher was particularly concerned about the English language curriculum and there were many brand new and unused English language text books stored in the classroom. Also there was very little mention about there being insufficient schools for the population size at primary level, however a number of respondents saw the lack of secondary schools for girls in the communities as a concern. For example, priorities for men (aged 18-25) in community 83 WB are to have a secondary school and higher school in the village and vocational training centres - "*These are scientific times and we should have computers and labs in schools, especially in girls' schools, as they should have the same chances as boys.*"

In both communities, a key concern for girls and women of all age-groups but especially girls aged 15 – 18 related to mobility. This impacts on their social life, their friendships and their confidence as well as on their access to education and to employment. There are some girls who are going outside of the community for education and work but these are a minority. In community 212 EB where fewer women were reported as going outside of the community for work, there was concern from some girls attending the FTLC about education not leading to work which led them to question the value of continuing with their education.

Girls aged 15 -18 in community 212 EB also said that a priority for them is that son preference for education should change: "*Plan should help with this – those who can't get education should have a scholarship*" (quote from one girl). Another of the girls said that people don't have the money for school uniforms so that is a barrier to them accessing education.

Boys aged 15 – 18 in 83 WB highlighted that there is a reluctance to let girls go outside for secondary school which they said is due to customs (where particularly adolescent and young women are not meant to be seen by outsiders) and lack of available transport. They said that half of the girls drop out between the age of 15 and 20 because there is no high school in the village, only a private tuition centre which not all can afford. They estimated that 25% of the girls go outside the village for education. They noted that if transport is available then a family member will accompany them. They said it was difficult to answer if they agree with the customs – "*they want girls to have equal rights and so do others but the problem is with the transport and the external environment, an educational institute in the village would be better.*" In relation to their future daughters – "*We need to trust our daughters first, then could send them out. The problem is that boys chase and tease girls. If this practice was eradicated then it would be ok for them to go out of the village.*" (Some said this teasing has diminished in the last 10 years.) These boys also said that they want equality and to bring this about, there is a need to raise awareness with parents. As individuals they have to be prepared themselves and to be role models. They said they can raise awareness with their friends.

Girls of the same age group in this community spoke about what needs to change still from their perspective. They said that first they must change themselves but they are not sure how. They talked of education and being role models and changing the minds of their parents. One girl said her parents allow her to do a job and she is a caregiver early childhood education centre in the village. She sometimes goes alone and sometimes with her brother to work which is located on the same street where she lives. Another said it is important to create an interest in studying amongst girls. One girl suggested that there could be programmes to raise parents' awareness in the village and with educated girls and boys performing activities to show to others they are role models. They were asked who else would be able to influence their parents. The girl who is not educated (not allowed to go to school) said the she should tell other parents what the impact on their children will be of not being educated. Men (aged 18 – 25) who were consulted in the same

community said it is the duty of brothers to tell parents how things should change and they should tell them the benefits of girls' education and decision making.

ii) Early marriage and consent for marriage

As described above, there were mixed views as to whether women have greater involvement in decision making around marriage than in the past in both communities. There was a sense that the more educated a woman is, the more influence she has over her parents' decisions on her marriage age and choice of husband. However, women aged 18 – 24 in Community 212 EB felt that consent in marriage is not changing much. "*Women can't speak for their choice in marriage*" (quote from one woman). They said that before it was like a taboo to talk about marriage but now they can talk about it at least. In their Grandmothers' time, some men were 20 years older than their wives and 6-7 years older in most cases – this situation is still the same today. "*Only educated people get the consent of their daughters – 5% of families – the rest marry their girls without asking their consent.*" Others said that some mothers are sympathetic but cannot impose their will on the husbands. "*In relation to marriage, if the husband goes along with the wife he will say 'If anything happens in future to your daughter – I am not responsible'*".

Girls (aged 12 – 15) in community 83 WB talked about the age they want to marry. One said her sister married at 35. Another said she wanted to marry at 28, one at 20 and others from 20-25 years. In Community 83 WB, the teachers talked about the practice of men taking more than one wife being common, especially when they only have female children with their first wife. The Numberdar stated that '*this is very rare*' and that it is only when men don't have any children that they take a second wife. He himself has two wives because his first wife didn't have any children. He said in only 10% of families do men take a second wife because their first wife only had girls. He also acknowledged that the first wife may have problems with her husband marrying a second time and she comes to the Panchayat who allocate money to her. They also give religious advice to the woman – "*Four wives are allowed in Islam*" (he did not mention the legal requirement of the woman giving her written consent to the marriage or that in Islam the husband is supposed to be able to provide for all wives equally).

iii) Expanding women's economic opportunities

In spite of the increased mechanisation making agricultural and household chores easier and shorter, the daily time use exercises undertaken by both boys and girls (aged 12 – 15) in both communities revealed that women and girls have very little leisure time, only around 2-3 hours in a day which starts at 4am for most and ends at 9-10pm. It would have been interesting to explore further whether the introduction of machinery has meant that women and girls have taken on more work or a greater range of agricultural work. For example, in one community they talked about women and girls doing sewing and embroidery work as an income generating activity, so this may be possible due to saving time with household tasks. It was also noted by one or two respondents, that in households where some members are out working, this creates a greater burden of household work on their siblings but it was not possible to explore this issue further.

In community 212 EB, girls (aged 15-18) found it difficult to recognise the burden of work carried by women and girls. In discussions of the lifelines they conducted for males and females of different ages, they attached importance to the work boys and men do outside of the home but struggled to identify that in fact, they had far less leisure time and spent more time working than men and boys. They described the typical life of adolescent girls and women as follows:

- *Aged 15 – 20: Some girls marry at this age, they sew for themselves and some to earn money. They say prayers. They attend school and college. Many girls finish school at this age. Some pick cotton and the seeds for hair oil. They are less free to go out at this age because they are more grown up and have a greater household burden. They use their parents mobile phones. They watch TV.*

- **Aged 20 – 30:** They get married, have babies (age 20-24 most get married). They work at home, offer prayer, give religious education to their siblings, look after their children. Some married women work in the houses of others (only married women can do this if their husbands allow). Some work in the fields. They said there are no married women who go outside the village to work (unlike the boys aged 15-18 who said that 4 women do), but some who go to the city for education.

This group did not identify that girls and women in the community were accessing economic opportunities.

In the older group in this community (women aged 18 – 24), six out of eight of the women were still in education (3 in the FTLC and the others elsewhere) and none were in paid work. Three of these women said they do not have permission to get a job. One said her parents would allow her but not her brother (he is in the CBO and Men's forum and runs a small hotel in the village). Because her father has died, he is the head of the family. "*I have an education (until Class 10) but can't get a job due to my brother*". She added that if she gets married then it will depend on her husband whether she can work. Another girl added that only when families have financial crises then women are allowed to go out to work.

In community 83 WB, girls aged 12-15 found it hard to explain why girls and boys had different roles and responsibilities. One girl finally concluded – "*It is the custom in this village, from childhood, we are part of this, it is an inbuilt system and we are used to it.*" Boys aged 15-18 when reflecting on the differences said that "*boys have their own will but girls don't. Girls have to have their parents' consent to do things. Boys have some pressure to work and earn aged 20-25*".

iv) Empowerment

Girls did not talk about feeling empowered, except for one girl in community 212 EB (Captain of the Children's Forum and a member of Plan's Global Speakers Panel) who Plan had supported to attend the global youth speaker award (GYSA) meetings in New York a few weeks prior to the research. This girl was visibly more confident than her peers in the focus group who all deferred to her so often that the researcher had to remind the facilitators to ask other girls for their views. Most of the girls in all the focus groups in both communities were very shy and quiet and mainly looked at the floor. In the group work they talked more amongst themselves but when feeding back or in discussions they conferred quietly amongst themselves and relied on one or two members of the group to speak on their behalf. These were almost always the most educated individuals in the group. Some of the women in this community aged 18 – 24, were optimistic about things changing in the future. They said that media has come in to their lives – they watch TV and adapt in new ways. E.g. in relation to women's rights, they have learned about this through the Islamic channels on cable TV (6 out of 8 of the women in this group have cable). For example, they have learned about property rights on TV and it says that there should not be a dowry system and they have learned about the consequences of the dowry system. The dowry system still exists but they think their parents will be influenced by TV.

Boys (aged 12 – 15) in 83 WB when discussing issues of power, recognised that boys have more freedom, highlighting that right from birth they are freer as their parents bring them up like that. In terms of decisions boys can make which girls can't – "*boys would control income generation and when they are married.*" The middle school teachers consulted in this community noted that in relation to decision making women can take decisions but there are limits. They can decide on food, health, care and education of children. They said a mother decides by herself about her daughter's education. Another woman said that the husband or elder brother get the last word and that if they are uneducated themselves they are less likely to see the value in educating their daughters. They said that parents feel the girl is their property. The Numberdar in this community felt that girls' involvement in decision making is not changing – "*Girls do not have freedom to make decisions, nor women. 50% of women have control of their own salaries, the others share this with their husbands.*"

In Community 83 WB, the issue of where girls and women are allowed to go out is not changing much – clearly there are some girls who are going outside of the community for education and women who go for work but these are a minority and these decisions are ultimately taken by their fathers or parents and it is rare for adolescent girls to go outside the community without being accompanied by a male relative. Even inside the community, girls are accompanied by brothers or fathers and can only go in groups of girls to a few places. Women older than 20 and women who are married have more freedom to move around in the village, whilst adolescent girls in the 15-18 age group are the most restricted. Women still do not sit in meetings with men, and in fact, women do not raise this as a concern even though Plan have tried to change this practice during 12 years of working in the community.

In addition, women's share in property is not changing, there are only a few cases where women have this share. One teacher in this community explained – “*fathers love their daughters but it is a problem in case of decision making and sharing property*”. The teachers said only 10% of families give a share of the property to their daughters (both at community level and society level). In the segment of the community where one of the teachers lives she said that all families give a share to the girls. Even in this segment not that many girls go out. “*If men don't allow girls to go outside – they provide everything they need in the home and respect their daughters.*”

The mobility and property issues are similar in community 212 EB, however in this community women and men do sit together in the meetings of the Tanzeem. Women (aged 18-24) highlighted that there were no property rights before and now there has been little change in relation to this; according to them, only eight women in the village have got property. The boys (aged 12 – 15) consulted in 212 EB noted that girls can go and visit relatives, but they do not go anywhere alone, only with the mother, brother or father and that as girls progress through adolescence they are able to go out less and less and will be exposed only to close family. These boys feel that their sisters lives are fine as they are and nothing needs to change. When asked what they know of child rights they spoke of equal rights of boys and girls, birth registration, to say Allah's name in the child's ear when he or she is born, to give a child religious education, to have access to health. However, boys of the same age in Community 83 WB and boys aged 15 – 18 were more serious and talked about wanting girls and boys to have equal rights.

Girls aged 12 – 15 in 212 EB said that the parents don't allow them out of the house. Some said educated parents do allow the girls to go out but to visit relatives only and girls are able to play with their cousins. The reason they think they are not allowed out is because parents think the environment is not good for girls - “*because the boys tease the girls – they sit in the hotels.*” However the girls say they are not afraid and could go outside. A few (4-5) said they try and persuade their parents to let them out. Two girls said that they ask their parents who sometimes accept but they have to go out with an elder family member.

In Community 83 WB, the teachers reflected on the reasons there is less freedom for younger girls to go out within the village or outside of the village. They said that in the village this is due to the boys hanging around on the street. The school Head added that it is about protection of honour. *Islamic teaching says that they should avoid stuff on cable TV, mobiles etc. and they shouldn't talk to other girls openly or alone.*

Another issue which respondents felt where they were not seeing any change related to control over their time and freedom to choose what to do. The adolescent girls tended to see this as an example of inequality whereas the older women described it as being 'the way things are' and to be less concerned about this changing. For example, older women (age 30+) consulted in community 83 WB said in relation to decision making - “*men can't do anything without women and vice versa – they are like 2 wheels of the one cart*”. (When asked which wheel of the cart is the biggest, they were quick to answer – “*the men, because they are the family leader and are earning*”). However they do not see a need to change this –

- *We live peacefully. We all say yes to each other.*
- *We need more financial resources so especially want our girls to get jobs.*

- *Women here don't get a share in property.* (One woman said they give a share to the daughters and wives adding that girls used to give up their share but now they want it. 3 others said they got a share in the property.)

In relation to household work and leisure time and freedom to choose what to do in their leisure time, girls aged 12 – 15 in Community 212 EB recounted that the boys get up at the same time as they do but they don't do any housework like the girls and after school they play for 2 hours while the girls are at home doing housework. They noted that boys sometimes get the groceries and care for the animals. In the evening the boys get to play for an hour after dinner when the girls are working. The girls don't have mobiles, whereas most boys get their own mobiles aged 15-17. The girls said they don't get to play very much, they only watch TV in their spare time. Their household responsibilities mean they can't play. If they had a choice they would like to play badminton. Some play 'peetugarm'. The majority of these girls think boys have a lot of enjoyment compared to girls.

Some of the specific challenges faced by girls and women and their priorities for change which impact on how empowered they feel and their agency are included in a table in *Appendix 3*.

v) Violence prevention

There was no mention of work being done on violence prevention in the communities and aside from a few respondents mentioning a reduction in corporal punishment, there was little mention of other types of violence having declined. The most common form of violence mentioned by both males and females was teasing or taunting of adolescent girls by males in the community hanging around on street corners. In 212 EB some boys mentioned that there are men and boys who smoke hashish and drink alcohol.

Girls (aged 15-18) in 83 WB talked about where they feel safe to go within the village. They said they do not go to the shopping store; their brothers or fathers go instead. This is because their families think it is not a good place for girls to go. One girl talked of being shy and lacking in confidence. Another said there are boys standing there who call them names and whistle. They said they are allowed to go to the shop up until they are 10 years old but beyond that, parents don't want them to go because of the boys calling names. All these girls began by saying that they would like to be able to go out alone but that there is fear in their own minds and their parents' minds. There was some discussion about what could be done in order to address this problem and one girl said that she had complained to her mother about the boys, another suggested talking to the Numberdar. Finally they said that even if the bad boys were sent out of the community the girls still wouldn't go out alone because their parents won't allow it as they think this makes them seem like vagabonds. There was discussion about whether they would be more confident if they had mobile phones. Most said they would be more confident, one disagreed and said that even if she had a mobile and there were no boys in the street she would not go out as she is only allowed out to study. They also said some girls have made mistakes when they have gone out from the house so that is in parents' minds – three or four times, girls have run away with their lover. When asked why they did this, they thought maybe from the influence of the TV. They said these girls were not educated, that they go crop-picking and have a low literacy rate.

Girls aged 12-15 in 212 EB talked about community level violence which they experience - verbal abuse from neighbours (both men and women) and on rare cases – men beat them with a stick. They said that men verbally abuse their wives and occasionally, they pull their hair. Men (aged 18-24) in this community acknowledged that there is a problem with men hanging around in the hotels and teasing girls. They said that this was partly due to movies and dramas on TV – "*they don't reflect our culture. In movies they show the actor smoking and drinking and teasing girls and young people are copying this. There are other Islamic channels (and sports and news) but people are not interested to watch these*". They talked about the need to be responsible and watch the right TV channels. They said there are very few programmes where women are treated with respect

and where women and men have equal rights. Boys (aged 15-18) also admitted that boys should not chase the girls but said that they disobey their parents and continue to do this.

The group of teachers in 83 WB talked about other dimensions of violence. One of the teachers talked about it in the context of exploitation. She said she lives in a part of the village where the practice is that women get up at 5 am and men at 8 am. Although this was only one person's view and cannot be generalised, it is fact that women get up earlier than men. Before the men wake up, the women have taken care of the animals, made breakfast and worked in the field. They also talked about physical torture in the form of slapping and stick beating from husband to wife. However, they said that fathers are not violent to their daughters. The group felt that it is in less educated families where violence happens. The Numberdar in this community also stated that violence is only in poor and uneducated families. He also talked about inheritance issues which cause quarrels in families as men do not give an equal share to boys and girls. The reason they don't give girls their rightful share he says is poverty and illiteracy and illiterate men treat their wives differently.

7) Overall analysis and researcher's comments

This section draws on community FGD and interview findings, staff workshops and interviews, media articles and documents provided by Plan Pakistan.

7.1) How social norms are defined and affect different age groups of girls and boys, women and men

The girls and boys and men and women in the two communities generally found it difficult to identify the underlying social norms which result in the barriers to gender equality which emerged in their discussions. For example it was only a few people in the adolescent groups (both male and females) who identified that girls are less valued than boys or that they are seen as property of their parents. Very few were able to articulate that the fact that girls will eventually become the property of their husbands means that some parents do not see the point in educating them and do not want to give them property which they will take outside of the family. Nevertheless, girls and women in both communities felt strongly about girls having an equal share in property. This was something they knew they had a right to but that it was not happening in practice and they want this to change. The reasons why this situation is not changing are explored in Section 7.3.

The girls in both communities aged 12 – 18 spoke of wanting to do less household work, to have greater mobility and more choice of how to spend their leisure time, to have the same access to TV, computers and mobile phones as their brothers. Boys of this age group recognized that girls had less freedom and those in 83 WB (aged 12 – 15) talked about wanting their daughters to be equal to their sons in the future and to be able to go out of the house for work. Boys aged 15 – 18 in 83 WB talked about expectations for men aged 20 – 25. They said that as well as going to college young men do extra work to support the household. Men get jobs in workshops, work as teachers, work in shops, etc. They pointed out that boys are under some pressure from their families to work and earn at this age but at least they have their own will, unlike girls, who have to have their parents' consent to do things.

Girls aged 15 – 18 in both communities were those most constrained by beliefs around girls' mobility (reflecting that this is the age most are reaching puberty, so parents are more concerned about risk) and whilst some talked about wanting greater freedom to go out of the house, others were scared or lacked confidence to do so. Older women in both communities felt less strongly about workload and mobility and recognized that once married they had greater freedom of

movement.

Girls and women in both communities felt strongly about girls' education and a number of boys and men consulted were also supportive of this. Women who were not educated themselves saw educating their daughters as a priority. Two of the women (aged 18-25) in 212 EB who were still in education had aspirations to work – one as a teacher and another as an English professor. Older women in both communities spoke of wishing their daughters could have jobs and not have to work on the land.

A few of the older women spoke about decision making around having children. Those who are able to go to health clinics without their husbands have more opportunity to choose a family planning option than those who don't. Men in 83 WB (in the 18-25 age group) talked about families having fewer children nowadays but found it too uncomfortable to discuss family planning or where they access information on such issues.

7.2) What is changing and what is not.

i) Education

As described in detail in section 6, more girls are accessing education and continuing beyond primary school education than in the past. This finding supports the views of the Vehari CDFs consulted who highlighted increased literacy of girls and increased access to education through Plan NFE initiatives. Girls, boys, men and women consulted talked of the importance of education. In community 83 WB they emphasized the link between education and employment, but less so in 212 EB which is further from the city and where the girls attending non-formal education were less clear about this leading to employment. Some women talked about being able to influence their husbands and discuss decisions and that this is a result of men and women both being educated.

Access to secondary education is still a significant challenge for many girls. Not only do they face the problem of being able to afford transport to secondary schools outside of their communities but also they are dependent on being accompanied by a male relative and being granted permission to go out of the community to attend schools. The need to travel to school is unlikely to change, given that there are insufficient schools in the villages, especially beyond primary level, hence the local demand for education is not met.

Some adolescent boys and girls in both communities spoke of Plan's focus on education and there being greater awareness of the importance of education amongst parents. It was unspecified to what extent they thought increased awareness was due to Plan. They also talked about the influence of media and seeing working women coming from outside the community. Most of the adolescents consulted are from families where parents were not educated and they highlighted that they are afforded greater respect from their parents because they have been educated.

ii) Incidence of early marriage and decision making in relation to marriage

This was another change which people spoke about – there was a general perception that early forced marriage was declining. Not everyone was clear why this was changing, the CDFs consulted thought it was a consequence of more girls spending longer in education. Some talked about the influence of media and education and learning about the health risks of early marriage from Plan. No one mentioned the legislation or seemed aware that there is a proposal for a change in the legislation to raise the legal age of consent for girls from 16 to 18. It was less clear whether girls' ability to decide on marriage proposals was changing. In both communities some respondents felt that this was changing in educated families, but others did not think it was and this

was a priority for some girls and women e.g. women aged 18-24 in community 212 EB and girls aged 12 – 15 in 83 WB.

iii) Increased employment opportunities for women and girls

CDFs had highlighted that in a few communities women aged 20-25 are getting jobs in e.g. schools, Plan partner organisations, local NGOs etc. It was not that apparent from the research that employment opportunities were increasing for women and girls. In 83 WB, it was reported that more women were going outside of the community to work than in the past but this was still a minority. The general view was that as more women become educated, more of these will access work. However women's mobility remains a key barrier to women accessing work as well as the expectation that women will marry and manage the household, so some young women in both communities do not see their education as necessarily leading to employment opportunities. Those that are concerned to increase their livelihood options talked about the need for more vocational training in the villages and there was some awareness that vocational training initiatives had been implemented in the communities in the past through Plan. It was reported that those who had accessed such training had benefited and the one participant in Plan's milk value chain project who was interviewed in 212 EB, talked about the increased income for those women involved in the project, an increase which has been sustained since the project ended.

iv) Increased voice/ respect for girls/ empowerment

Feedback suggested that both girls and boys who are educated are more respected by their parents than those who aren't and that they are more likely to be consulted on issues such as marriage. Also there were examples of where girls or women were earning money and had some choice around how to spend this money. The more educated girls consulted displayed more confidence and greater aspirations for their futures. Plan CDFs spoke of the girls they work with in the forums speaking out in meetings even in front of adults; of those girls and women encountered in the research, the Captain of the Children's forum in 212 EB was very confident, along with one or two women who had jobs or a higher level of education in 83 WB. Most of the women in the group of teachers in 83 WB, (three of whom live in the community) had lots to say and were comfortable talking about sensitive issues such as violence. These were a minority however, most of the girls and women involved in the research were extremely shy and unconfident and found it difficult to express their own opinions and talk about their hopes for change. When they did this eventually after a lot of coaxing, they said they would like to have greater freedom of movement, increased decision making power, particularly in relation to marriage and they would like to access their right to property. Those boys who were members of the Plan forum in 83 WB showed respect for girls and knowledge of rights. The middle group of boys in this community (aged 15 – 18) were the most confident and engaged in the discussions (only 2 of these were members of the Plan forum), the young and older groups were shyer but interested in discussing the issues nonetheless. Boys and men in 212 EB were not shy, particularly the 15 – 18 year olds. Several of these were noisy and joked around and were less able to talk about rights and equality, in spite of a number of them belonging to the Plan forum and CBO.

v) Mobility of adolescent girls

This was something that most respondents in the communities did not feel was changing. In 83 WB there were examples of women going out of the community to work but there were many examples of girls not being able to go out of the communities to continue their schooling due to it not being safe (due to the actual or perceived threat of violence or risk to their honour), or transport

not being available or it not being allowed according to custom or religion. Some of the CDFs consulted had suggested that mobility was increasing but it was not clear if they felt this was a result of Plan's interventions or not and none of the feedback in the community referred to efforts to address this issue. It was also not apparent if respondents felt that freedom of movement was in fact diminishing due to increased concerns for girls' safety and worries about the influence of media and mobile phones. It was suggested by other staff and an independent gender consultant that the increased levels of violence in the country over the past few years, along with the increased reporting of violence against women and girls in the media, has led to greater concerns for the safety of women and girls and a culture of fear. The gender consultant said she herself was anxious to go out in the street without being fully veiled and would not let her young daughters go outside.

vi) Violence

As described previously, a few respondents in both communities talked about a decline in violence in schools and the absence of corporal punishment. It was difficult to get a sense of whether the incidence of domestic violence is changing. Types of violence which occur were mentioned by one or two groups and questions were asked about how violence is resolved and whether there are any support services for victims of violence, but the response in the communities was that these issues are resolved within the family. Other types of violence of concern to adolescent girls in both communities related to taunting by males within the community. Whilst the men consulted recognized that their behaviour goes against religious teaching, beyond suggesting exercising better self-control they expressed little commitment to change, particularly in community 212 EB. In one group of boys (aged 15 – 18), some of the boys were busy playing on their mobile phones and taking photos of the researcher during the discussion and the CDF facilitator (female) said she found it difficult to manage the behaviour of the group.

A Bedari staff member (female) reported that awareness of violence issues is at least changing – before no one was aware of child protection issues but now people consider this an issue. The younger generation see this as a problem and that something should be done. However she herself faces constant threats from people in the communities related to the violence cases she is involved in resolving. These include threats to her personally and to her office. She receives security support from Plan and from Bedari but said that this is not enough and she needs further security arrangements. In the GPP mid term review it was reported that girls and women from all age groups perceive they continue to experience violence against them and that the reported prevalence of violence has not changed since the start of the programme.

vii) Access to property rights

As mentioned in detail in Section 6, this was an area where girls and women felt that there has been little change and although boys and men recognized this as being unjust, there was little sense that there is commitment to change this. People in the communities did not mention birth registration as being an important factor and Plan's campaign on birth registration which had been conducted in 83 WB was not referred to⁶.

viii) Family planning and access to health care

A few respondents talked about family size diminishing and women having better access to clinics for advice on family planning and to deliver their babies rather than being dependent on traditional

⁶ It should be noted that the facilitators did not ask questions on the issue of birth registration in relation to property rights, the research was participatory and respondents identified the issues of importance to them. It is nevertheless interesting that this issue was not mentioned by them.

birth attendants. People talked about the government having established a system of Lady Health workers (LHW) and in each village there is a LHW who mainly administer vaccinations for babies and provide other and child health support. In Community 212 EB they talked about wanting funding to construct a building for the LHW and to establish a dispensary.

7.3) What is enabling change and for whom and what are the barriers to change (How the norms are upheld or are being challenged)

This section focuses on issues emerging from the research, informed by community consultations, Plan staff, local partners.

i) Increased value given to girls' education

Girls spoke about wanting to continue in education and wanting their daughters to be educated. Both males and females of different ages reported increased awareness of the value of education for both boys and girls but it was not clear from the feedback, the extent to which Plan has been instrumental in generating this awareness in the 11 years of engagement in the communities. The girls (aged 12-15) in 212 EB suggested that parents' awareness of the value of education for girls has increased as a result of the enrolment campaign (Plan), banners and rallies and that the establishment of the FTLC has been the main reason for the change.

It was clear that for girls and women consulted, they see education as fundamental in building their confidence and in increasing their status in their families. The preference for boys' education was still acknowledged but it was felt that this is declining and that both men and women have seen the value of educating both their sons and daughters, in part because those that work are able to support their parents. In addition, the promotion of education is generally not seen as controversial as it reflects Islamic values.

Plan's partner NRSP offers access to non-formal education for girls post primary, which is free and available in community 212 EB, therefore overcoming the challenge of girls having to go outside the community. In most cases NRSP reported that the NFE centres are very popular in the different communities where it establishes them. In spite of this, the NFE centre in 83 WB suffered from lack of attendance; none of the respondents in this community mentioned this centre however. Some girls and women consulted in this community spoke about not being allowed to access education by their parents, suggesting that some parents still have not changed their attitudes towards educating their daughters.

ii) Negative customs/traditions

The customs and beliefs around women's roles and expectations around their behaviour and the lack of clarity about whether Islam dictates a particular practice or behaviour are significant barriers to change as are girls' own lack of confidence and timidity. When asked why girls are perceived as less valued than boys, or why girls have to undertake household work whilst generally boys do not undertake household work, adolescent girls and boys would answer that '*it has always been this way*' or that '*it is the custom*'. Boys (aged 15 – 18) in 83 WB highlighted that the work girls do in the house from the age of 10 – 15 is to prepare them for managing a household after they marry. Occasionally respondents talked about the custom in their family group being different than the wider practice in the village, such as one of the teachers in community 83 WB or the FTLC teacher in 212 EB and a couple of the girls in 212 EB who said that their brothers do help around the

house, but overall, respondents found it hard to talk about customs, explain where they originated, whether they were widespread or particular to the village or caste.

In 83 WB, people could not explain why men and women were not able to come together in meetings, nor did any of those consulted talk about this as being something which needs to change. Even the Numberdar in 83 WB selected to attribute this issue solely to the lack of a formal mechanism for women and men to come together. He spoke of a system established in Musharraf's time whereby 12 villages would come together under a Union Council and this council included 16 members, 4 of whom were women. However this system never got to the stage of functioning, so currently there is no mechanism for women to participate in village level decision making and clearly there is no incentive to change things. Finally, he said there should be a women's forum – it was not apparent if he was aware that Plan has already established a women's forum in the community (staff said this is less active than the men's forum). On the other hand, the male members of the Tanzeem in 212 EB were open to including women in the group on Plan's suggestion at their very first meeting with Plan.

There were also mixed views about certain customs and traditions and whether these need to change amongst PU staff in Vehari. One of the PU staff (male), questioned whether girls actually want changes in relation to having more control over their free time and choice over being able to go outside to play, and suggested that the facilitators were somehow biasing the discussions. He feels that girls do enjoy themselves and mentioned the fact that they stay in the house in their recreation time as being part of the culture and tradition. In spite of this being the culture and tradition, there were a number of adolescent girls in 83 WB who would like to go outside to play cricket for example. Others in both communities would like to be able to visit friends of their choice and do less work in the household and be able to play when their brothers have free time, instead of undertake household chores. In relation to freedom to go out, some women in the community said that the view in their families is that there is no need for them to go out, as their fathers provide everything they need in the home. One woman in 83 WB lamented the loss of the custom of the female members of the village meeting together in one woman's house at the end of the day to share with one another and discuss issues, which she said was an important space for women. She said that this no longer happens because people watch TV in their houses instead.

On the subject of women's participation in decision making over how to spend resources, a male staff member explained "*Bread and butter is the responsibility of the man according to the Qur'an, and even if the woman is earning something, she is not liable to spend the money*". He highlighted that less educated men don't know this, so men spend the money on bad habits and do not necessarily spend the money on what their wives or households need. Some women in 83 WB who were earning an income talked about spending some of the money on their household and personal needs and also contributing money to their mother-in-laws or husbands, others handed over their earnings to the head of the household. However, most of those who earned money, felt that this was giving women greater control over resources than in the past.

iii) Different religious interpretations

There was often a lack of clarity amongst individuals about whether a particular practice is supported by Islam or not which makes it very difficult to assess the role of religion in enabling or hindering changes to gender equality. In some cases respondents were clear that the Qur'an states one thing but that the custom is different. For example the girls (aged 15-18) in 212 EB explained that boys are breastfed for two years but girls only for 1.5 years although the Qur'an says it should be two years for both. A number of respondents of different ages emphasized that girls and boys are equal according to Islam, but they also pointed out the different treatment of boys and girls which begins before birth in spite of this. For example, the teachers in 83 WB said that when a girl is born people moan and cry, whereas when a boy is born, they use flour to make symbols by the gate and celebrate. They said that if three to four girls are born in a family, people give the girls names like '*Allah Mafi*' which means 'no more girls'.

The Islamabad PUM shared some interesting reflections on her experience of working with slum communities in the city, many of which are Christian communities. She noted that even though men and women mix more in urban communities, decision making power remains with men in relation to women's mobility/schooling/ control etc. So from her perspective, the psyche has not changed. In the Christian communities, most men are sanitary workers eg. in Government jobs – hospitals, schools etc. Many work in two to three jobs in one day and women also work as sanitary workers and as domestic workers; they may work in more than one home and in a school or hospital. Therefore both men and women are going out to work, they both sit in Plan groups and meetings, but the women seldom talk and they generally agree with the men's opinions, so in the PUM's view, the underlying inequality issues remain.

The CO Health Advisor also highlighted the need to be clear that cultural practices are not religious practices, adding that Hindus and Christians have many of the same practices as Muslims and he noted that the cultural practices in Pakistan originally come from India and are practised by both Muslims and Hindus.

Many in the research communities stated that according to Islam, girls and boys have an equal right to property⁷, however the practice over many generations has been for girls to offer up their share to their brothers and this tradition creates an expectation for girls to behave in this way. Although women and girls want this to be different, many find it difficult to claim what is rightfully theirs. Girls in 212 EB (aged 15 – 18) explained how it works in their community – “*A few parents do offer property to their daughters but they don't want it and they give it to their brothers.*” When asked if they would like to have their share of the land, they said they are happy with the way it is because otherwise they would sacrifice their relationships with their brothers. The boys (aged 12-15) in 83 WB when asked why girls do not access their right to property, responded – “*Sisters love their brothers and give their share to them*”. The Numberdar in 83 WB explained that men collect the members of their family together and they ask the daughters if they want to give their share to their brothers and they have the right to say no. It was suggested this may create some social pressure on the girl, but he responded that the Head of the family is religious so they won't pressurise the girl because he would have to answer to Allah.

There are some areas where it is easier to see that religious interpretation is challenging change, for example in relation to early marriage. Religious scholars state that girls and boys can marry at an age when they achieve 'maturity' but this is interpreted narrowly i.e. only in the physical sense so when girls and boys reach puberty this is considered sufficient, regardless of their emotional maturity and ability to manage a family etc. In addition, moral values which are influenced by religion, mean that relationships are seen as sinful and marriage as a way of legitimising relationships, or if done early, it is considered a way of avoiding this sinful life. In relation to legislation on polygamy, which is currently being discussed by policy makers, the position of the Islamic Ideology Council is that the law around seeking a wife's permission for polygamy is against Sharia Law.

Views of religious teaching varied in the communities according to the education level of individuals. Some respondents quoted phrases which they said were from the Qur'an but others disagreed with these. A male University student in the 18-25 aged group in 83 WB said that “*Islam gives equal opportunities for women and men but people are very conservative and the interpretation of Islam is narrow*”. He said society is very conservative so girls don't access opportunities. There were mixed views amongst respondents about whether girls should be able to use mobile phones and watch certain TV channels – some stating that the influence of these is un-Islamic, others highlighting that the music and TV shows portray a different culture which

⁷ Generally a daughter's share is half that of her brother's: "Allah commands you regarding your children. For the male a share equivalent to that of two females. " [Quran 4:11]. However when girls and boys spoke of this, it was translated as 'equal rights' to property. It was not clear whether respondents were actually saying girls and boys should have equal rights or if they meant that they should access their existing rights.

negatively influences the behaviour of both adolescent boys and girls. However, no one raised concerns about some of the very conservative religious channels on TV or pointed out that not all religious channels are communicating the same messages.

The Vehari PUM clearly articulated the challenges related to religious interpretation – essentially anyone can establish themselves as an Imam in a community and set up a Madrassa – “*There are no criteria for becoming an Imam in a mosque – anyone can do this if they build a mosque and grow a beard. People are very influenced by appearance.*” He added that there is no standardisation of the education offered in Madrassas. He explained that this means that many Imams are poorly educated and do not understand the true teachings of the Qur'an and there are many different schools of religious teaching. Hence, Imams may use religion to perpetuate discriminatory views and practices and people accept this because the majority of people are ignorant of the religion. Also the Qur'an is in Arabic and although Urdu and Arabic words are the same, the meanings are different; difference in opinion arises from the translation of the Qur'an. Similarly the Islamabad PUM highlighted that people don't know their religion, “*Religious leaders of mosques are influential although these are often illiterate.*” She noted that in urban areas people are not so religious and do not practice their religion. “*People can't differentiate between custom and religion e.g. property – in religion it is a right for women to inherit property but in custom this is not the case, but this issue is now being presented by people as part of the religion.*”

iv) Increasingly conservative mind-set

This was mentioned by some staff and other individuals consulted. The PSM-Strategy reflected that there has been lots of changes in the last two decades in security, mind-set and extremism has filtered down to different levels resulting in sectarian conflict and different interpretations of women's roles and their rights. It was also recognised by CO staff who participated in developing a timeline for the country - they noted that from 2009, schools were destroyed in attacks in KPK (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, formerly called the North-west frontier Province) including girls' schools, which gives a clear message against girls' education, especially in Malakand the Taliban hub in Pakistan. Then more recently, in 2012 there was the attack on Malala Yusuf. The MER Manager reflected that people in general have become more conservative and more rigid in their views in the last few years.

There has been and continues to be much discussion and analysis in the country's print media in relation to violence against women and girls and gender inequality and how these issues are shaped by mind-set and long held customs and traditions. A female politician who the researcher met talked about what she described as the '*Talibanisation*' of the mind-set, especially in young men. She has been trying to get the media interested in this issue but said “*People don't want to talk about it*”.

Not all agreed with this picture. The Gender Advisor does not think that people in the country are becoming more conservative or '*Talibanised*' in their views. She highlighted that people follow their local religious leaders or local politicians; this may well be the case, however, local religious leaders and politicians are also influenced by the wider environment. On the other hand, she noted that people are suspicious of international NGOs and think they are not fair to Pakistan and are providing information to the Americans, which means that people are wary of the messages being peddled by international organisations. This is a significant issue for Plan when talking about principles of child rights and gender equality in the context of international conventions and particularly when talking about the age at which someone is considered a child.

v) Weak implementation of the law

This was a barrier that was highlighted by both CO and PU staff and partner staff but was not mentioned by local people in the communities. Even during the development of timelines for the community, participants talked of being unaffected by national level policy changes and events. The PUM in Vehari feels strongly that if there were laws which are implemented for long enough then things would change, “*Any person who is not literate will follow the law*”. He thinks the weak implementation of the law will change with a strong role of the judiciary and added that the High Court and Supreme Court are becoming stronger – “*This is a ray of hope that if the judiciary is allowed to play their role, the police will have to improve (currently they don't do good quality work). People have no faith in the police so just make settlements with abusers in the case of rape or sexual abuse.*”

vi) The issue of family ‘honour’

This was highlighted as an important issue by Plan staff and is explored extensively in research undertaken by Plan and others and is the subject of much discussion in the country’s national newspapers; yet no one in the communities, except for one of the head teachers mentioned it, even though it is a key factor influencing the freedom of girls and women to go out from the house and is closely linked to early marriage. Girls themselves struggled to explain why they are not able to go out unaccompanied beyond their parents’ fear that something bad will happen to them and for some, their own lack of confidence. Boys talked about girls not being able to go out because that is what Islam dictates. For example one of the boys aged 12-15 in 83 WB said in explanation of why men can go out and women can’t, “*it is not allowed in the religion – the holy book won't allow us nor the holy teaching and this is against the social custom*”, however not all in the group agreed with this view. In relation to expectations around behaviour, some girls in both communities for example, talked about watching Hindi movies on TV, but only when their fathers were not in the house. Honour is so intrinsic to early marriage and girls’ mobility and to views of what is acceptable behaviour by women and girls but those consulted in the communities found it difficult to explain how expectations around behaviour are upheld.

The PUM in Islamabad explained that some families do understand gender and rights and support their daughters but they are also worried about what others will say about their daughters’ behaviour, so they do it quietly in their own way. For example, they recently carried out training on life skills for young people and one girl said her brother would not allow her to continue the course. Plan went to talk to the brother and as a result, they arranged a taxi and called him when she left the training so he would know that she was coming straight back. With these arrangements in place, she was able to complete the 13 days of training with her reputation intact.

vii) Lack of incentive for men to change

It was clear that there is very little incentive for men to want to challenge social norms themselves, particularly older men. A staff member from Plan’s partner Bedari working in the GPP said that in her experience they have not felt any change in men’s behaviour after three years, although men under 20 understand the issues more easily. “*With older men it is difficult and they do not apply what they learn in their homes - it is a challenge for their authority.*” A Plan staff member (female) shared: “*In Pakistan men have two personalities: outside the home they are polite, gender sensitive and inside the home is another story*”.

The Islamabad PUM gave an example of a family with 11 children in the slum. The elder daughters are not allowed to go to school by the father (even though there is a Plan centre behind the house). The younger children go to school in a community one hour’s walk away because they are so poor the local school did not admit them. They asked the girl why she doesn’t challenge her

father to attend the Plan skills centre. The mother showed them her leg which was very badly beaten by her husband. The three year old boy said about his sister, “*If she takes one step outside of the house, my father will kill her*”. The PUM highlighted that this illustrates that gender socialisation starts at an early age and even in the urban area the mind-set of men is not changing. There are some positive stories nonetheless – the girl who graduated from the FTLC and then did a hotel management programme and has now been offered a job in Dubai in a big hotel, who had her family’s support throughout this process. The PUM added, “*There are many good stories as well but male dominance is still there and not just in the slums, also in elite homes – men are not willing to give up power.*”

The PSM-Strategy in the CO explained that men have to feel it is the ‘right’ thing to do rather than having to let go of power. There is a need to do justice to different relationships and treat women with respect – daughters, wives, mothers etc. It is important to involve men and boys for them to understand how treating people differently affects wider society i.e. making the world more secure for their sisters and enabling women to have the ability and freedom to make choices and freedom to access services equally when they are available. This was reflected by some of the adolescent boys’ views who were consulted in the research communities, particularly in 83 WB. They said that change should start with themselves and they should be responsible to change their own behaviour i.e. in relation to teasing women and that they should also talk to their parents to encourage them to treat their sons and daughters equally.

Some staff referred to the existence of a feudal mind-set in communities which results in power relations between boys and their fathers and hierarchy between men in the village. The PSM-Implementation stressed the need to change perceptions of the value of power. “*Everybody loves to hang on to power so we need to convince men of the benefits of having empowered women.*” All recognised that this is a process which takes time and making space and time for staff to reflect on different approaches and the learning and challenges which emerge, is also important.

viii) Lack of confidence and aspirations amongst girls and women

Many of the girls consulted talked about wanting to do less household work but could not see how this situation could be changed given the cultural context; many who talked about wanting more freedom were at a loss as to how to change the mind-sets of male relatives. The GPP has been implemented in 212 EB for two years but in the limited time spent with the girls in the FGDs, it was not evident that the girls in 212 EB were more confident than their counterparts in 83 WB and the goal of girls’ empowerment seems a distant dream. It took most of the time allocated to the discussions for girls and women to feel comfortable on reflecting on the differences in the lives of girls and boys and to begin exploring why those differences exist and how they feel about them. All of the groups consulted said that they had not had these kinds of conversations before and this was new to them. Talking about their feelings and opinions was particularly challenging as it is not something they are used to. Teachers in both communities talked about girls’ lack of confidence and self-esteem and this was evident for most girls in the groups, only those who were in secondary education or in jobs had more confidence in voicing their opinions and wishes for the future. This suggests that for many, the lack of belief in the possibility of changing long held customs and low level of aspirations, are significant challenges.

ix) Influence of the media

In the last 15 years there has been increasing access to numerous private TV channels (over 40) and around 20 radio stations and people generally acknowledged that nowadays public opinion is affected by media on a much wider scale. There are around 15 – 20 Pakistani channels. Staff noted that issues of gender inequality are raised on some of the Pakistani channels and some girls watch these programmes. Plan itself has produced TV clips on child marriage and talk shows on

the radio and TV. On the radio, the hosts took live calls, shared information on educational opportunities and responded to calls from people asking where to get support for child marriage. The PUM for Islamabad spoke of the power of the media: “*There has been a big change in the last few years, learning used to happen from within the family, now media/internet and friends are huge influences on young people rather than their families. Before there was control by the family but now there is more influence from external sources and this can be both positive and negative.*” Boys and girls in the research communities talked about access to TV. Girls’ viewing is more tightly controlled than boys, but many girls in both communities talked about watching channels of their choice when their brothers and fathers were absent. However the gender role models portrayed on many of the Indian movie channels are rarely positive, as one respondent noted and if as has been said, people are ignorant of religion, then they will not be that discerning when faced with the many religious channels on offer.

x) *Slow rate of change with ‘gender transformation’*

It should not be forgotten that change takes a long time and is influenced by many factors, some of which are part of wider social and political change in the country (e.g. the rise in the marriage age, decline in family size or the increasing number of women in work). One staff member highlighted the enormity of the task, “*We are in small communities and social norms are bigger than one community. We need to see things at the local level, the province and the country. What control does one INGO have with a certain amount of resources? We have 40-60 CDFs and lots of work going on at the district and national level. In the last 10 years there are so many influences in the policy and the media. There are multiple levels we are trying to influence.*”

Some staff stressed the need for deeper and longer term engagement on gender issues with community members and groups to be more effective in bringing about change at this level; this will be explored further in the section below on Plan’s approach.

7.4) Issues to consider in relation to Plan’s approach to work on gender equality

i) *organisational culture and approach to gender mainstreaming*

There were differing views around Plan’s approach to tackling gender issues. This is not surprising given that it is only fairly recently that Plan Pakistan has prioritised gender mainstreaming in its work and staff have had training on gender issues. As mentioned in section 5, feedback from the majority of staff consulted in the CO and PU is that Plan does not try to tackle gender inequality and discrimination head on. “*In Plan they work more in pockets with a particular approach and methodology and are not very vocal about girls’ rights.*” (quote from CO staff member). Others in the CO however felt that they are addressing issues explicitly such as education for girls and equal access to appropriate health care for women and girls. One staff member observed – “*Plan is explicitly addressing social norms but we are saying it in a way which is palatable*”. Another noted that there are risks in being explicit which were evident from the research, in the form of threats against partner staff who are working on gender based violence.

The Gender Advisor explained Plan’s priorities in relation to gender issues: “*Gender is a cross-cutting issue like advocacy. Plan wants to address gaps in gender equality at all levels. The next CSP will be much stronger on gender.* She added that “*gender work does not need to be confrontational, first conceptual clarity is needed and to know your values, i.e. why you are working on issues so there is a need to first work on the mind-sets of staff which is more challenging than in communities*”. Her observation is that PUs are very centralised, they look to the boss to lead (all

the PUMs except one are men). Amongst the 8 or 9 advisers, there is an attitude that gender is a fashion, however the Senior management team is very strong on Gender. It was also evident that there are different understandings of gender issues and perspectives on its importance in the Vehari PU. Some said that there were so many development priorities and gender is just one of these, whereas others were clearer that all development issues have gender dimensions. For example there was heated discussion amongst some of the PU staff in relation to whether the dowry system is a gender issue. Some of the male staff suggested that it is not a gender issue but a social issue because it affects all families.

The PSM-Strategy emphasised that Plan's core approach is CCCD and one of the principles is gender equality and another is non-discrimination and inclusion, which also includes gender equality. *"If we look at CCCD and the Plan Global Strategy, it looks at the root causes of poverty and gender equality is one of the causes. Plan being rights based should therefore focus on this."* The PSM-Strategy believes that if Plan talk about social injustice or gender equality in the context of the UNCRC as written in the Constitution of Pakistan, then they won't alienate communities, as it will help them see the need for healthy relationships in the family and community, if they are willing to invest the time. Rather than worrying about alienating communities (an issue raised by some staff), she thinks the issue is more about staff confidence and capacity to be able to say at a given moment in time – *'Now I am not competent to talk about this issue'*. However, she acknowledged that there may be a lack of confidence amongst staff to put something into a rights framework and that there is a fear of being seen as anti-religious or being seen as westernised. It was clear that Plan staff at different levels recognised this need to build staff understanding and confidence in working on gender issues.

The Gender advisor highlighted the importance of understanding that gender is an issue of power and control, therefore it is important to understand the relational aspects. The manifestation of this power imbalance impacts women and girls disproportionately and maintains their subordination. For this reason much of the work does need to focus on girls and women but it is important to ensure that men and boys are engaged in supporting gender equality goals. CDFs in Vehari and the PUM in Islamabad talked of the importance of understanding context and working within the context in communities, recognising that beginning with an approach of telling adolescent boys and girls they have equal rights is meaningless.

Gender mainstreaming - Plan Pakistan has a Gender Policy (this was not available at the time of the research). The Gender Advisor explained that they are very conscious to mainstream gender at all levels i.e. in programmes, HR, financial policies etc. They are ready to initiate the necessary steps and measures to identify the gaps and address the issues. She highlighted it is a tough and complex process for two reasons – 1) Due to Plan's structure as a child sponsorship organisation. In the last CSP they consciously shifted towards a rights based approach and they now also have grants as well as sponsorship work. 2) Capacity and understanding of staff – the mind-sets of staff are used to hierarchy, authority etc. and it is easy to say that you work for social justice and inclusion but if you are not convinced as an individual – you can't promote these principles with others. The Gender Advisor recognises that this change in the organisation comes through processes and takes time, it is not a question of facilitating two to three workshops on gender. So they are reviewing and defining their understanding and approach to gender. This is no small task and she feels that to mainstream gender through all of Plan Pakistan's work and structures, the current resources of one to two people taking on this work is insufficient. They need more human resources and financial resources, for example to deliver training. They also need more space and time for discussion and application of learning. One of the PUMs consulted did a course on tackling exclusion which also means gender and raised the concern of the expectations placed on staff: *"This is now another layer. We need to combine rights, gender and now exclusion. Different teams are supporting different issues, no one is talking about how we will do all this together."*

ii) Building staff capacity on gender issues

The aim is to provide information and awareness and a sense of responsibility. Plan do this through the *Planting Gender Equalities and Child Rights (IH manual)*, which the Gender Advisor considers to be very effective. Before she joined in 2012, three people had attended this international training, including the Vehari PUM. They then rolled this out at a national workshop for other staff. During 2013, they conducted the training for around 40% of staff. They are now in the second phase of that training – the staff sharing what they have learned in communities, using tools and techniques in the field to mainstream gender. The Gender Advisor's view is that, "As a whole, slowly and gradually they are working on the positive side."

The Islamabad PUM shared a different perspective pointing out that the CDFs attend so many trainings that people can't retain everything. She noted that staff have different understandings and opinions on gender. She raised the following key points: *The challenge in Plan is not just time management, it is also the capacity of the CDFs –they can't be experts in everything.*" She explained that CDFs are supposed to undertake a gender analysis in their communities but in November 2013, she realised they were not doing it because they did not feel equipped and confident. Each CDF was doing it in their own way so it was difficult to bring the learning together. She said they are still building capacity of staff and this is a long process. She thinks that on-the job training would be better for them: "*They did the three days Planting Gender Equalities training on the concepts but different skills are needed in the field – you have to know the context, norms, cultures and what you can and cannot ask.*" Enabling more reflection and sharing amongst staff on the issues which emerge for them and building confidence on ways to deepen discussions in communities on gender equality and discrimination, is an important element of building capacity.

iii) Staff overload, siloed ways of working and lack of time and space for reflection

Feedback from CDFs and from two PUMs recognised the huge workload of CDFs (each responsible for 800 – 1000 families in four to six communities), alongside their work to establish or train and support a number of Plan committees in the community and their follow-up to Plan programmes operating in their communities. This suggests that opportunity for intensive engagement with families or indeed key allies or opponents to gender equality in communities is limited.

The issues are similar for the Islamabad PU. Here one community mobiliser is fully responsible for the community, there are 5 CDFs (3 are women) and 2 Assistant CDFs; they don't need to work in pairs like in rural areas as women can also work with men and vice versa. They work in 11 slum communities, 8 are Christian and 3 are Muslim. "*CDFs work on education – trying to find educational opportunities for girls through Plan centres and government admission. They also work with family members on childcare. They work with groups of pregnant women. This is through a sponsorship funded project – this is delivered through the same CDFs – not extra staff. Ultimately this means we are compromising on quality.*" On top of this, the PUM noted that the sponsorship budget is shrinking day by day, yet the staff are funded through this – all the CDFs, the Sponsorship Coordinator, PUM etc. "*The CDFs have to wear many hats and are juggling. The Gender PU focal point is also struggling, they were initially supposed to lead the gender mainstreaming process and support CDFs, however this person needs more assistance to become confident in supporting colleagues.*" She added that "*Plan is trying to accommodate so many things and spreading themselves and chasing numbers. CDFs are frustrated as they have too much work and burden. Their files are incomplete, they are not able to follow up cases properly eg. ensuring a disabled child gets to access the support they need.*"

The Gender Advisor talked about her plan to develop a ToR for the gender network which will involve the Gender focal points. The PUM pointed out that there are so many networks on different themes. She said Plan strategy is to cut resources but this means that the work will be less deep. There is also a CP focal CDF who has to look after all the CP issues in the community as well as

manage their own caseload of work and the same for education. “*There is a need for a larger CDF network rather than being burdened by so many things.*”

iv) Social mobilisation approach (sponsorship)

CDFs fed back that they give training on gender issues for around half a day to the different groups they work with and that this is not enough but it is the start of increasing understanding and awareness of the issues. However they do not have time for the level of engagement required to continue the dialogue with the different groups on gender issues; they said that this work should be more in-depth, but their workload does not allow this as highlighted above.

Staff were also concerned about the length of time Plan remains in communities due to sponsorship requirements and they talked about this approach creating dependency on the organisation. This was evident in 212 EB where the FTLC teacher talked of people expecting Plan to sort out the problems with the sewage. One CO staff member suggested that they should phase out of a community after four years as after five years the interest of the community drops – the suggestion was that at this stage the CBOs which have been set up or strengthened by Plan should find their own funds, but the problem is that Plan cannot do this because they have 80-90 sponsored families with whom they have to maintain a relationship with for years because of the sponsors – hence they remain in communities. On the other hand if Plan has a long term presence in the communities, there is an opportunity to work over the long term on challenging gender inequality and discrimination, however staff would need support to prioritise this work which would not be possible given the current CDF workloads.

v) Programmatic approaches

Plan’s programmes which specifically focus on gender issues are fairly recent so learning from these programmes is in its early stages and staff are yet to form clear views on what is working well and less well. How much the different programmes such as the PPA, GPP and the new Child Marriage programme overlap in approaches, geographical focus etc. were not explored as part of this research but are important factors in terms of shaping the opportunities for learning and sharing learning from these different programmes. Plan works with a range of partners to implement its programmes each with its own organisational culture and different levels of capacity to mainstream gender into their work. Some are specialist agencies focusing on gender issues such as Bedari, others are more broad in focus. It was outside the scope of the research to assess partners’ understanding and approaches to work on gender. Some partner staff consulted talked of having had training and support from Plan on a range of topics, others talked about the need for increased spaces for learning and sharing. One female staff member talked about the difficulties in working in communities and balancing household responsibilities and work, in a similar vein to some of the Plan CDFs.

Some staff in the CO highlighted that donor funded projects with their short timeframes and donor interests can mean that projects are less in-depth than Plan’s engagement in communities through its sponsorship work, although not everyone agreed with this. For example, the Economic Empowerment Advisor feels that economic empowerment is key and that once women are earning a livelihood everything changes, so in his programme, establishing forums and groups has happened more quickly. Another concern raised by a CO staff member is that in a number of its programmes (80%), Plan is working in new communities where it has not been implementing its sponsorship work so it is not able to build on existing relationships and understanding of the communities and it has been harder to see results within project timeframes. This person added that Plan wants greater geographical coverage, visibility and response to need but ultimately this means the focus is on breadth not depth. This view was echoed by other staff, many recognising that work on social norms takes years and does not fit neatly into project timeframes.

There was also concern about the many different Plan forums and groups in communities, for example, one CO staff member explained, “*It is often the same 6-7 people in all the groups. All are volunteering their time which is challenging as they are busy, so in the end Plan is putting pressure on a few individuals in each community*”. This issue was also raised by some of the CDFs in Vehari, particularly in relation to women’s time to contribute to Plan groups.

Within the current funding environment, there is pressure for programmes to be extensive and multi-sectoral and to speak to donor interests in scale-up. Plan Pakistan is also under pressure to engage in different initiatives offered through Plan National offices which can result in siloed and disconnected programmes on similar issues. It can be seen that in many Plan programmes in different countries, the emphasis tends to be on numbers of girls in school or numbers of women who are economically empowered or who access improved healthcare, numbers of child protection or surveillance committees established etc., whilst the harder to measure changes of tackling attitudes and practices within the family, work which is painstaking and takes time, then become deprioritised. With so many groups and issues, work on gender becomes squeezed into training sessions and awareness raising events at community level which do not always connect with national level advocacy work. Evaluation frameworks dictated by donors are becoming increasingly quantitative and survey based – a method which does not lend itself to exploring issues of discrimination and violence and qualitative learning on what stakeholders think is working and why and whether the issues of key concern to them are being addressed, is often absent. Given the constraints of this funding and organisational environment, the challenge for Plan Pakistan is to determine priority gender issues, focused strategies to address these over the longer term and explore opportunities for achieving these, perhaps through a combination of grant and sponsorship funding.

vi) Ensuring adequate protection for female staff working on gender issues

The challenges and risks faced by female Plan or partner staff working on gender issues have been mentioned in other sections of this report. Continued monitoring of these risks is essential. If Plan intends to increase its focus on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, it will be important to take the risks to staff into account as well as risks to those who report violence and take adequate steps to protect such individuals, particularly given the lack of law enforcement in the country.

vii) Working with local perceptions and language and understanding is essential for connecting to people and discussing change

This is an important issue. Plan and partner staff are very aware of this issue in the way they approach their work on girls’ empowerment for example, couching terms and concepts in a language which makes sense to local people. However it was not clear how comfortable young people in the communities were in talking about rights in a way that makes sense to them as when staff asked them what they know about rights in the local language, those girls who are Forum members in 212 EB struggled with this and at one point, one said “Plan say that a child is below 18 and they shouldn’t be beaten”, which suggests that this concept was not owned by the speaker.

Some staff talked about entry points, for example, staff approaching the issue of early marriage by talking about the health risks as this is easier for people in communities to understand. It is also easier for staff themselves, who may find it hard to challenge customs and traditions and facilitate reflection on whether these customs are beneficial to boys and girls etc. This links to the issue of further building staff capacity and confidence to deepen and contextualise discussion of gender issues with people in communities.

viii) The need to work more systematically with religious leaders

For some staff, religion is a far more significant issue than Plan 'allows for' in its work. Plan staff are acutely aware of the importance of religion both in the CO and PUs. In spite of concerns at CO level that Plan is not qualified to engage in religious debate and there are so many religious schools of thought that it would be impossible to engage with them all, at PU level there were suggestions that more engagement is needed and examples of where such engagement had produced positive results. For example the Vehari PUM stressed that Illiteracy and not knowing the religion are important issues which Plan could take advantage of, because there is an opportunity to tell people – '*this is the right way*' according to the religion. He gave an example of some training they gave recently on open defecation for Imams. He said hardly any of them properly understand Arabic so giving them training on issues and linking these to the Qur'an is a way of influencing their own culture and opinions. They were motivated by cleanliness being an Islamic issue, they are now positive about the introduction of latrines and have begun endorsing the work Plan is doing.

In Islamabad, the PUM shared the following example in relation to work they are doing on adolescent reproductive health. They talked with all the religious leaders and shared their manual with them at the beginning of the initiative. They asked them to read it and to feed back on the changes they thought were needed. They involved them in training and had detailed discussions with them. One Imam is also on the Health Committee Plan established. The Imams' main concerns were about giving liberty to girls and boys and that they shouldn't know certain things at a certain age (15-16). In response, Plan showed the Imams concrete examples of what adolescents are doing in their communities and the need to educate them on these issues.

The MER Manager gave an example of work Plan is doing in one district in the North where they work with the Madrassas where the girls are coming for religious education. They have been able to agree on a regular curriculum to be adopted. People there don't like the idea of girls' education but these religious institutions are only teaching the recital of the Qur'an (not even the translation). He recognised the importance of these approaches to specific contexts but noted that they may have wider relevance across Plan's work than is given credit. Similarly, the MTR of the GPP reports that FTLCs have been established in mosques and madrassas in spite of actual and perceived resistance.

The risks of not working closely with religious leaders are too great as can be seen from the following experience in relation to the Child Marriage programme. A staff member reported that they have been working on reproductive health and age spacing for one year in a particular community but saw no significant change. Later they came to know that the religious leader was pronouncing against their teaching every Friday in the Mosque.

ix) The need to tailor approaches to the specific contexts of each community

Staff consulted gave a number of examples of where approaches have had to be adapted to the context of a specific community, particularly in Plan's work in the slum communities in Islamabad. In relation to the two communities selected for the research it was not possible to explore with the CDFs or project staff working in 83 WB how they had tried to address men's resistance to collaborating with women. It was clear that there are different customs and practices in both communities in relation to women's participation in decision making structures, marriage practices, property division and attitudes to women working and that some of these customs varied between one family group to another. It would be useful to have a more detailed understanding about these issues for each community, in addition to the extent and level of poverty and the impact in one community of the out migration of men in their 20s from what was said to be 50% of families to the Middle East. During the research it was not possible to meet with any of the Imams from either community and it was not clear if the religious teaching in both communities is similar or different. The practical reality of understanding these issues in greater depth means Plan staff would have to invest more time from the beginning in understanding the context and building relationships with

key stakeholders, as well as ensuring staff have time for learning and on-going monitoring in order to adapt approaches to better respond to the community contexts.

x) *Change is most possible with younger people*

This is something that Plan is well aware of, hence the importance of ECCD provision and the organisation's focus on adolescent boys and girls. They have also learned that younger people are more likely to listen, take action and affect the next generation. Also staff explained that if they run vocational training for girls they are trying to challenge gender stereotypes and for example, offer training on making batteries for mobile phones – “*this can change the possibilities for girls, they can make these at home*”. Plan also recognises that opinions and expectations are formed at a very early age. Partner staff involved in ECCD provision talked of the importance of gender sensitive approaches and the gender sensitive curriculum developed by Plan. A Rasti staff member reported that they conducted a survey in the ECCD centre and included children not attending the centre to assess the changes for the children in the centre. They found that the behaviour was better than their peers outside the centre and the children had improved confidence and there was better treatment by boys towards the girls. She added that if they look back, they had communities where people were closed to their daughters going to the ECCD or getting education, but now this has changed and people are happily sending their daughters.

xi) *Many social norms are really hard to change unless a significant number want to change them*

The need to identify influential people/ role models in the community and develop a relationship with them to engage them in inspiring change, in addition to the work Plan does to establish groups, was suggested by some. The Islamabad PUM explained that there is only one community where they cannot work with mixed groups of men and women. A female CDF can work with them but the women in that community cannot talk with the men. This is in Alipur where the people are migrants from Fatah and are not used to urban dynamics. “*This will take years to change*”. The day before, a woman from this community had told her that Plan should work more with men because they are the decision makers. The PUM thinks this is important and that Plan should work more with men in such contexts if they want to bring about change.

7.5) Learning Around the research process itself

i) *Benefits and challenges of the participatory/reflective methodology used by the research for staff and for learning*

Overall, staff in both the CO and PU from different levels, were interested to come together and talk openly and reflect on their gender work, in spite of the work pressure they faced.

The CDFs who facilitated the research in the communities gave positive feedback on the research approach and the importance of taking time to hear from community members the issues of importance to them. In spite of the very limited time to prepare with the team in advance they were able to respond effectively to mentoring and guidance on the first day in the field and became more confident and able to probe on issues rather than moving on to another question. Whilst familiar with some of the exercises such as developing a social map and daily time use, they had not used these exercises with a gender focus before and they were appreciative of the value of these approaches. The CDFs could see that the discussions with the focus groups were a good starting point from which to have further engagement on gender issues because much of the exercise was

about identifying differences in the lives, roles and expected behaviour of girls, boys, men and women. More time was needed to really explore these differences and the problems faced by the different groups which in a non-research setting could be pursued in follow up meetings.

The discussions also revealed the challenges in discussing some of the root causes of gender equality and the need to do more work to build confidence amongst participants and conduct more than one exercise on the same issues. It was important for the CDFs to explore different ways of probing on issues, rather than accepting lists of concerns or changes but to try and unpack these. Some of the CDFs have reported subsequent to the research that they have used these approaches effectively in their work with groups in other communities. The main challenge is that these approaches take time both to implement in the field and would benefit from time afterwards for staff to reflect amongst themselves on the approaches used and the learning and challenges which emerge. Even during the research this was not possible. The days were long and staff had to go home afterwards, so there was not an opportunity to meet and debrief on the work on a daily basis.

Feedback from some in the CO suggested that they appreciated participating in the initial workshops in the CO and in taking time to reflect and discuss the issues raised. The MER Manager noted that the meetings were a good starting point on which to base deeper discussions which could lead to determining priorities for the next CSP.

ii) Child protection issues

The CDF team in the PU reviewed the draft risk assessment prepared by the Consultant team in advance. They did this in detail and changes were made according to their guidance. The consultant did not have the opportunity to meet with the CO CP Advisor for a briefing on Plan Pakistan's CP policy or to discuss the risk assessment for the research.

The CDFs were careful to explain about the purpose of the research for each focus group for informed consent purposes and not all groups agreed to be photographed. In the first meeting with the boys in 212 EB, a local men's forum member who had gathered the group was present taking photos and participating in the beginning of the exercise. However the researcher explained that the participants would perhaps feel freer to speak if he was to leave and the CDFs handled this appropriately. In the second community a Plan staff member visiting from the CO entered the room in the middle of a FGD and also began taking photos and intervening in the discussion. This situation was harder to manage during the FGD but was resolved subsequently.

One issue which was overlooked was the issue of the researcher being accompanied by an armed police escort and more discussion of this in advance and the details of what it would entail, would have been useful in hindsight. It is difficult for the researcher to assess what kind of impact the armed escort would have on people in the communities and the level of comfort of the participants to be involved in the focus groups in this context. In the first community, the activities took place in the girls' school and the police remained in a section of the school grounds. In the second community the police mainly remained at the entrance to the FTLC compound, apart from on one day where one of the police officers (who was a new member of the team that day), positioned himself outside the room where the meetings were taking place, with a direct view into the room and where he seemed to be taking photos on his mobile phone. This incident was dealt with immediately by one of the CDFs.

Appendix I – Draft guiding questions for the research

The following questions were identified as a starting point from which to explore the issues with staff and in the communities:

1) To enable Plan staff (and partner staff) to step back from the work and reflect on:

- What they are doing on gender norms [or what work they are doing to address HTPs or issues around girls rights/needs – depending on what is appropriate in each context]?
- Why do they do the work the way they do?
- What changes they are trying to bring about for women and girls as a result of this work?
- What their experience is to date in different communities - what works well/less well and why?
- What is actually changing for women and girls, and what is not?
- What changes they see in the attitudes and behaviour of men and boys and the key community leaders?
- What are the biggest barriers to changing things in favour of women and girls and what enables change/what doesn't?
- What have they learned from their work on these issues so far and what are the priorities for the different groups of women and girls (or communities) they work with?
- How can they use this learning in their future work?

2) To learn from girls, boys, women and men:

- What issues do they think women and girls face in their families and communities that need to be changed? [or how do girls, boys, women and men feel about existing gender norms?]
- Which are the most significant issues (on gender inequality or lack of rights for girls or lack of access for girls to education etc.) in your community? [or what factors do they think influence and impact on the gender norms identified?]
- What involvement have they had with Plan, local Government, media and other agencies around these issues affecting women and girls?
- What is the Government and the church/mosque saying about the issues facing women and girls?
- What do they want to see changed in their lives and communities (in relation to ending e.g. child marriage, FGM, school dropout for girls, poverty of girls etc?) or [what, if anything, would they like to change about the gender norms they identified and why and what to them would represent transformation in their lives, community and society?]
- Is change happening – what is working, what isn't working to make change happen and why? Look at the role of new laws, TV and media influences, religious leaders, family members, household heads as well as Plan as sources of ideas and impetus for change)

Appendix 2 – Timelines

1.1. Timeline developed by CO staff

A timeline of the major events which have influenced positively and negatively on women's and girls rights, opportunities and gender equality in the last 20 years was developed by a smaller group of staff and presented to the wider group.

	Positive events	Negative events
1995 - 1999	<p>First woman Prime Minister of Pakistan 1995 – First Joint report on CEDAW to the UN (first time NGOs contributed and voicing issues). Youth Employment Plans and special quota for women Ministry of Women established Maternal newborn and child health programme Infrastructure development (motorway)</p> <p><i>The image of women changed with the female PM and generated public debate about whether a woman can be a PM. The women's movement gained momentum. There was a hope that the PM would address previous government's islamisation of laws but the govt was not stable enough to bring about this change. However there was more democratic space and debate on women's issues.</i></p>	<p>Energy crisis meant slow economic growth Govt policy on support to AfghanTaliban 1997 – Benazir Bhutto's govt ousted prematurely 1998 – Nuclear tests 1999 – Kargil war (between India & Pakistan) 1999 – Coup led by Gen. Musharraf. Martial Law imposed Economic sanctions by international community</p> <p><i>The sanctions meant cuts on social development budgets, impacting on women's and children's health. Lots of jobs were lost e.g. cottage industries, the textile industry. This meant more pressure on women and children as labour especially in the informal sector, leading to increased economic exploitation. (The movement of homebased workers started in the late 90s.)</i></p>
1999 - 2008	<p>1999 - Liberalisation of electronic media Open debate on burning issue (burning women), because of media influence 33% seats for women in govt at all levels 1999 – Women police officers and police code reformed so that women cannot be locked up overnight and a female officer has to undertake the investigation Gender desks established at district level 2000 onwards – schemes for scholarships for girls and food packages Boom in NGOs 2006 - Women protection Act Human Rights National Conference Compulsory Primary education Act Promotion of higher education 2005 onwards – increased foreign aid due to floods and earthquake</p>	<p>Martial Law period Reduction of exports due to closure of industry 2001 – 9/11 US forces in Afghanistan Radicalisation increasing after 9/11 Conflict/ tension and security concerns increased in tribal areas of Pakistan New Influx of Afghan refugees 2005 – Earthquake</p>
2008 - 2014	<p>2008 – Ban on corporal punishment 2009 – National Youth Policy 2010 – 18th Amendment – compulsory education up to grade 10 (5-16 years of</p>	<p>2009 – Malakand Operation starts against T.T.P Schools destroyed in attacks in KPK (including girls' schools – gives a clear</p>

<p>age)</p> <p>2010 – Decentralisation of Policy to provinces</p> <p>2010 - Sexual harassment at workplace bill</p> <p>Girls' education funding increased</p> <p>2011 – Prevention of anti women Act</p> <p>2011 – Best documentary award (Oscar) to a Pakistani woman (Sharmeen Chinoy) (Film about acid attack survivors)</p> <p>2012 – Plan of action on implementation of pro women laws</p> <p>2013 – lots of parliamentarians talking about child marriage</p> <p><i>Only in 2008 did people begin talking about girls rather than 'children' and there was realization that issues of girls had been overlooked. There is advocacy for increased budget and resources for girls' education. The government has so far just paid lip service to this and not taken specific steps. On 8th March 2014, the Punjab govt announced a package for women's empowerment with a point on age of marriage for girls.</i></p>	<p>message against girls' education, especially in Malakand the Taliban Hub in Pakistan).</p> <p>2010 – Super floods</p> <p>2012 – attack on Malala</p> <p><i>Malala is now a prominent figure to encourage youth. The Malala Fund has been established and funding still coming in. This has generated debate about why this issue occurred (some of this is negative in relation to Malala's family having CIA connections) and girls are using the symbolism in their struggle for education.</i></p>
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1.2) Timeline developed by a group of women (10-12) in 83 WB

The women helped develop a timeline for the village. Agreeing dates was very challenging. They began by talking about when their ancestors first came to the village. Women worked with the men on the land. Houses were built of mud. They had financial problems and only had money for food. From the beginning there were 2mosques and a madrassa. The mosque was originally built with mud but now with bricks. There were transport problems in these times and health issues – they had to go to the city on foot when they were ill. They had babies at home. The birth attendant came from another village.

The first school for boys was constructed around 1982 with a teacher from outside. Soon after a small scale girls' school was started in the Chairman's house, only rich families sent their girls to school. The female teacher came from outside the village. 10-15 girls attended. At that time people were very keen to send their girls. Then they got tired of this.

Zulfiqaer Ali Bhutto late father's time – land was divided amongst the poor – i.e. land ownership.

79-85 (late Dictator Zia's ul haq time)- some men had government jobs – maybe 15 – 20 men.. No women had jobs
Around 25 years ago the water was clean.

In the 1990s (Benaizir Bhutto's regime) – the EPI started, latrines were built and the sewage system was built and the water became contaminated.

Around 20 years back – electricity came to the village and everyone's home had electricity. One of the women present was the first one to get a TV at this time. Before that people had radios.

When mobiles first came in to the community they were very big. They also talked about agricultural machines which have made life easier I think.

1992 – before this time they used have hand pumps but then they sold goats and used the money to install electric motors.

1995 – first landline. – Office with a telephone for making calls

2002 – 08 (Musharraf) – women started working – 2 female teachers were working inside the community

1.3) Timeline developed by 2 men and 2 women in 212 EB

1982 – first person went abroad for work

1985 - 1987 (Zia regime) – there was no electricity or water at this time, the roads were muddy, there were around 100 hhs. People were farmers and lived from their farming which women and men did together using traditional methods and women did some sewing.

There was a boys school (girls also attended). People had radios, used a horse and cart for transport or bicycle. There was a mosque. Marriage age was 18 – 29 years and occurred within castes and included exchange marriages. Average family size was around 11.

1988 – 1992 (Benazir's 1st tenure) – A girls school was established following the community's request to the government. A water scheme was introduced and electricity. The main road near the village was built in bricks. Some got TVs. People started marrying outside the caste in 1992.

Nawaz Shareef's time – a middle school was established, the main road was changed to asphalt, people started using electric machines in their farming work e.g. an electric grinding machine. They got tractors. They could travel to the city by bus and motorcycle. They had not quack doctor or health worker. By this time there were 150 houses. Family size was 9 – 11.

1992 – 2000 (Benazir + Nawaz Shareef) – village streets became brick, the first tube well was sunk, hotels (small cafes) appeared where men and male youth sit, people had electric water motors and Satellite TV. There was a phone line which was a kind of wireless phone. Many of those with relatives overseas received calls on this phone and there was a loud speaker to announce their calls. They had to pay for receiving the call.

2000 – the Tanzeem (CBO) was established. This was for men only.

2000 – 2008 (Musharraf Regime) – first mobile phones.

2003 - Plan came and NRSP. The first meeting with Plan and the Tanzeem after which they included women and minority cast and children representatives in the CBO. (Benazir's assassination had no effect on them)

Plan sponsored 175 children (now 152 as some have graduated), Plan put in a drainage system, built 100 latrines in people's homes, a latrine block in the girls' school and provided furniture and school scholarships for boys and girls for those who were studying outside the village. The ECCD was set up and 2 NFE centres. The Tanzeem develops a community development plan (CDP), supported by Plan. Plan gives training in different areas. At one point through Plan there was a community health worker and at another point there was some vocational and technical training on computers, dressmaking, beautician skills. One or two girls who did these courses are doing dressmaking. The one who learnt to be a beautician left the village to marry. There was also the 2 year PMVCP (Chiller project). Plan currently operate the FTLC through NRSP (as part of GPP), they built the boundary wall in the school. The Tanzeem was registered in 2009. According to the CBO President, no women go outside the village for a job.

Appendix 3 – Detailed feedback from community groups on key issues

Table 2.1: Feedback from boys and men on girls' education

Comm 83 WB	Comm 212 EB
<p>Quotes from boys aged 12 – 15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now parents treat boys and girls equally in relation to education. This is due to Plan. • Teachers advise parents and say that they should treat boys and girls equally. • Parents are not educated. Now our parents value education. <p>Plan has set up an ECCD centre and improved the school buildings. They have given them awareness – they do this by gathering people together for a session. Some boys talked about Plan organising cricket tournaments for boys annually (at Union council level – several villages coming together). Plan also helps poor children who want to go to school though giving them utensils and scholarships.</p> <p>The boys did an exercise in which they showed the proportion of 'powerful' girls had increased in the last 5 years, which they said is due to education – "Before, girls and their parents were unaware and now they are and copy people from other villages."</p>	<p>Boys aged 12 – 15</p> <p>Girls' attendance at school used to be worse and girls had lower interest in education. Now there is an FTLC and 35 girls are attending. One said more girls want to attend than are able to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls don't want education but want vocational training like stitching and sewing (boy whose sister has a masters). • Plan has created an ECE centre – children are now learning instead of playing in the mud. • The behaviour of children and their parents has changed – parents were less interested in education, now they are more aware.
<p>Men aged 18 – 25:</p> <p>Boys in this group reported that when their grandfathers were young, education was not so common but now parents understand its importance –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women were kept only at home but now girls are free to get an education and now parents recognise the importance of girls' education so sisters go to school. • Grandmothers had low decision making power but now women have more. One boy said women are very much in power – e.g. "in the selection of dresses"! • Before, women had no right to decide the number of children. Now a woman can take a decision (N.B. only 1 of the men is married so they are not necessarily speaking from experience). • Now it is a mutual decision about children going to school and mothers have more power in this decision. The same in relation to whether their daughters work – the mother's decision is a priority. (Others (3) said that the father will share the situation with the whole family and he will have the final word.) 	<p>Quotes from men aged 18 – 25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls are more interested in education than boys. • Girls aged 15-20 go outside of the village for education but only 3 to 4 boys do that. • The general literacy rate is low and there is a lack of interest amongst the boys for education. • Due to fear of poverty boys leave the country to work in the Middle East. <p>The boys also said that the quality of education is poor and if boys fail in any subjects several times they end up leaving school.</p>

Table 2.2: Feedback from girls and women on girls' education

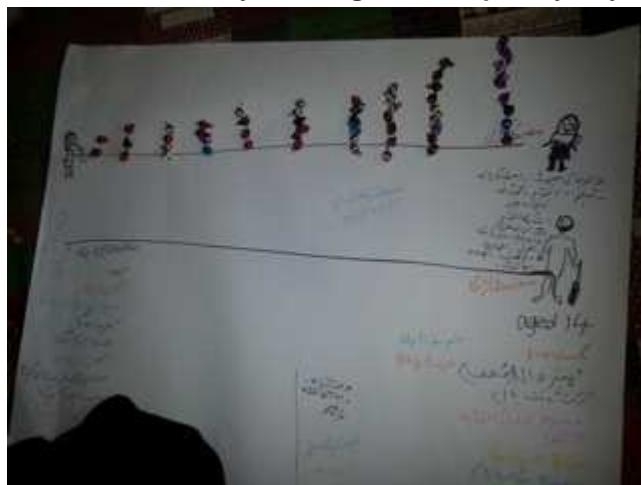
<p>Girls aged 12 – 15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have seen others progressing and feel that their daughters should go on the same track. • Plan and other agencies have come here. Due to corporal punishment being reduced girls are less afraid to come to school. 	<p>Girls aged 12 – 15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents awareness of the value of education for girls has increased as a result of the enrolment campaign (Plan), banners and rallies. • The FTLC has been the main reason for the change.
<p>Girls aged 15 – 18:</p> <p>The girls agreed that 5 years back things were different – fewer girls went to school and fewer girls were in work. They couldn't leave the village to study – now more parents agree to it. They say that most of their peers are in school, which wasn't the case 5 years back because there was no secondary school and now there is a private secondary school which was established 2-3 years ago, so the older girls in the group didn't have that choice. (Still those who cannot afford it are unable to attend). There were adverts on TV with messages about education being a right, even vocational training.</p>	<p>Girls aged 15 - 18</p> <p>All the girls in this focus group attend the FTLC. They said there are only a few girls of their age in the village who do not attend school. They also said that most girls in the village leave school between the ages of 15 to 20.</p>
<p>Women aged 18 – 25:</p> <p>The girls reflected on how times have changed since their grandmothers' time. In those education was not common, now it is – “It was prohibited for girls to be educated in those days.”</p> <p>The majority of the girls said that more awareness and education has changed things and watching TV (Cable TV has been in the community for 18 months). 2 out of the 8 women did not have cable, the others do).</p>	<p>Women aged 18 – 25:</p> <p>The women discussed the main changes since their grandmothers were young and highlighted that before there was no education for girls, now there is.</p>
<p>Teachers in the Middle school:</p> <p>The teachers said that parents did not like to send their girls to school in the past and if a girl was not smart and fell, behind they took her out of school. This has now changed due to awareness and also people want to improve their lifestyle so see education as a route to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has made the environment more secure so girls feel safer (Head teacher). • When the community see teachers coming from outside they feel that their girls should also get an education. • The teachers in the school are very motivated. 	<p>Vice-president of women's forum and teacher in GPP FTLC</p> <p>For the last 11 years Kausar has been working for Plan in different roles. When she got married the literacy rate in the village was very low. She has worked with girls over the years and most girls now have education. She thinks the attitudes of men and boys to girls' education has changed. She has told everyone in the village the importance of education; she went door to door when the FTLC started. They have also heard her daughter tell them education is important. Some people agreed to send their daughters to the FTLC. If they are resistant due to the boys sitting in the streets (who tease the girls) she suggests the girls can come in groups.</p>
<p>Older women (aged 30 upwards, including 3 grandmothers)</p> <p>Important changes for them – girls getting education. “Older girls are happy because they are more aware and get respect and are educated”. They talked of girls going outside the community and</p>	

coming back e.g. of a woman whose daughter has been educated to University level.	
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Table 2.3: Views on powerful girls and boys in Community 83 WB

Boys aged 12 – 15	Powerful girl aged 14 – supported by her parents, she is in education, she is healthy, she respects her teachers and her parents, she is well clothed and she likes to be educated, she has spirit and she follows rules – is obedient.	Least powerful girl – the opposite of the powerful girl
Boys aged 12 – 15:	Powerful boy aged 14 – has had some kind of training, is healthy, strong, confident, is attending secondary school outside the village, is intelligent and is respected and respects parents. They said that 2 boys in the village are powerful – one his father died but the mother prayed (This contradicts what they did later in relation to the proportion of powerful boys in the village).	Least powerful boy aged 14 – poor, with no training, has weak health, is not in school, does not access healthcare, would not respect his parents, would not eat healthy food, would be on streets and not at home and would not be able to read and write and would be unaware.
	Proportions of powerful boys - quite a few powerful boys and very few poor boys. “ <i>This is due to Plan coming to the village.</i> ” “ <i>Education has made a difference. 5 years ago 60% of children were out of school. Now 95% are in school, including girls.</i> ”	Proportions of powerful girls – this has increased in last 5 years due to education. Before, girls and their parents were unaware and now they are and copy people from other villages. Another change is that 5 years ago the girls who weren’t at school were at home using a sewing machine. One said that girls now have less work in the house and now are cooking rather than sewing.
Girls aged 15 – 18	Powerful girl aged 16 – she has a job and is studying, she goes outside the village, she is fearless – doesn’t care what others say (taunting), she is supported by her parents, she knows her rights, she is intelligent. (<i>The girls in the group think they have many of these characteristics</i>).	Least powerful girl – lack of confidence, less interested in education, no permission from parents, can’t move alone, does a lot of household work, has a lack of financial support.

Power line of a 14 year old girl developed by boys



Power line of a 16 year old girl developed by girls

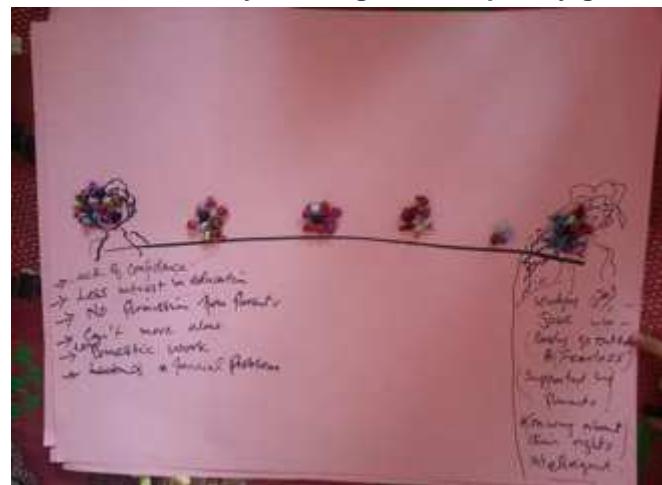


Table 2.4: Challenges faced by girls and women and priorities for change linked to empowerment

Community 212 EB	Community 83 WB
Girls aged 12 – 15 identified the following challenges which girls face at the individual and family level:	Girls aged 12 – 15: Key changes the group want to see in order of importance –
i) Individual level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worrying about the future • Girls who didn't get an education and when older feel that they have missed the chance • Lack of confidence • Shyness • Hesitation • Lack of trust in others (don't share with others) • Fear to express themselves 	1) Customs should change 2) They should be able to go outside of the house if they want to 3) They should be able to get jobs 4) The system should change and they should have freedom to speak 5) They should be able to give consent for marriage 6) Brothers should participate in household jobs
Family level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents prefer to educate boys • Parents don't allow girls to go outside • Less belief in the capacity of girls • Restriction from parents to do certain activity (e.g. driving) • Don't educate girls • Boys can play in the streets and ground but girls don't • Comparatively parents favour boys decisions • Little time for recreational activities for girls (sports and watching TV, playing) • Parents give more healthy food to boys 	The girls also talked about the age they want to marry. One said her sister married at 35. Another said she wanted to marry at 28, one at 20, others from 20-25 years. They said that the father and mother decides on the marriage – they do ask the consent of their daughters but the final decision is with the parents. They also talked about having a share of property.
The most important things they want to change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents not allowing girls to go outside • Not educating girls • Lack of clean drinking water in the village 	
Women aged 18 – 24 – In earlier times there was no respect for women – there is still no respect for girls who are not educated. What they want to change: They would like to have more FREEDOM They would like to be involved in deciding who to marry Magic wish (one each): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That all family members are educated (we have low education levels) • Want to get education and tell others – brothers and sisters • To change the mind of my brother – my mother wants me to have an education and a job • To stop early marriages and for girls not to be restricted for education • Freedom for decision making and to have our own choice e.g. for education or a job • Want my brother and parents to be good and give rights to property • Abolish violence against women • Parents to listen to children's views and have 	Women aged 18 – 24: They think the property issue is important as not many daughters get a share.

<p>friendly behaviour between parents and children and take their consent for marriage</p> <p>This group suggested using the media - internet, TV to raise their awareness on issues so they can talk with their parents (parents say "<i>this is not our culture</i>" when they see things on TV and "<i>You are younger, we have experience</i>".)</p>	
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