

Girls in Action

Supporting girls to lead change their way

CARE’s Girls in Action model supports girls to build movements for change on the issues that matter to them most by combining girls’ leadership with social norms approaches.

WHAT is Girls in Action?

Girls in Action is CARE’s model for girl-led action to shift social norms. It helps girls voice their choices and opinions and come together as a movement to advocate for their rights.

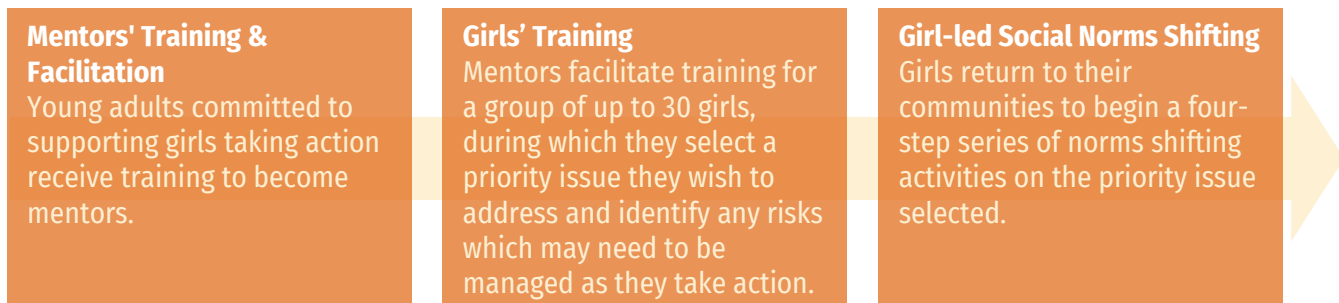
Working with mentors drawn from their own communities, girls are taken through a four-step process where they decide what they wish to address and together are supported to implement their actions, monitor progress and evaluate their efforts.

WHY is girl-led action important?

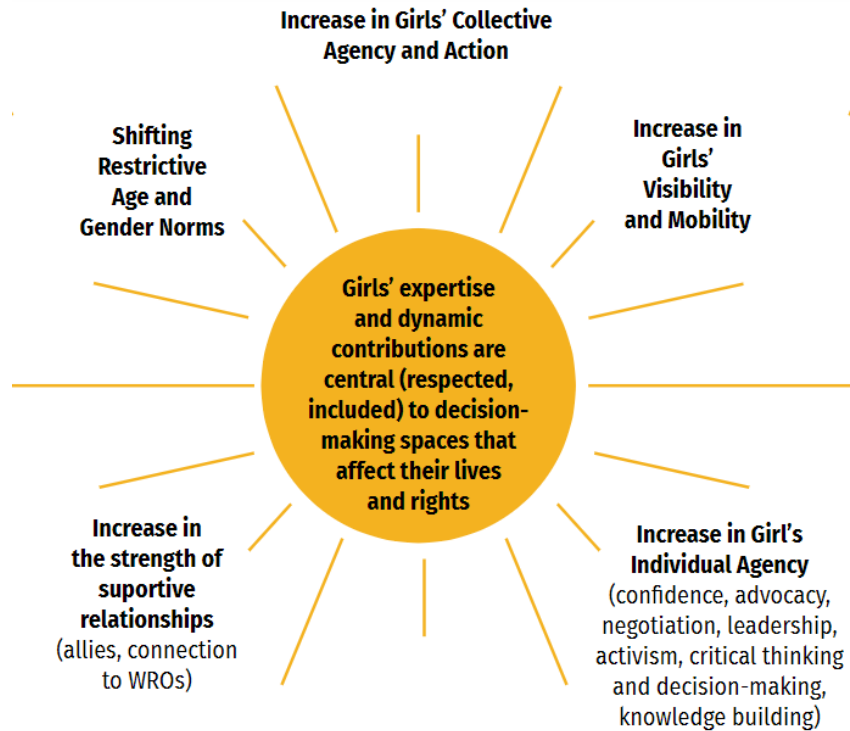
Girls face many barriers to choosing their own path and many of these are rooted in social norms which restrict their rights. Not being valued equally alongside their brothers, being expected to have decisions made for them by men, or needing to seek permission or have a male companion when leaving home are just a few of the norms girls may face – and these can have far-reaching implications for their ability to go to school, earn an income, make decisions about their body, or even choose who and when they marry.

Each community and society has norms specific to its unique context, which is why girl-led action is so important. It ensures actions address the specific challenges holding girls back by centering their expertise and engagement. Girls in Action aims to create a space that nurtures and empowers girls as leaders and decision-makers.

HOW does Girls in Action work?



The simple act of girls identifying a problem they want to address is their first step in shifting norms around their roles. Girls often do not enjoy the power and agency to make decisions in their households, schools, and communities. This transition to speak about what matters to them is an important step for girls as individuals.



DEVELOPMENT OF CARE'S GIRLS IN ACTION MODEL

Girls in Action (also known as Learning Communities on the Move or LCOM) was originally developed in South Asia in partnership with the [EMPower Foundation](#). Within CARE's Tipping Point initiative, which aimed to address child, early and forced marriage in Nepal and Bangladesh, the model has contributed to girl-led changes including reduced child marriage, increased mobility and

The model has already been adapted for use in West Africa and piloted for use in emergency contexts in North-west Syria.

IN PRACTICE

Under the former name of LCOM, the Girls in Action model was successfully used by adolescent girls in Nepal to advocate for changes within their communities.

Many groups succeeded in shifting social norms around girls marrying before 18, having freedom to move around outside their homes unaccompanied, and continuing with their education.

In particular, girls in Lumbini Province were so successful in their engagements with decision-makers in their communities that they were able to persuade local authorities to allocate budget to support adolescent girls.

A series of four norms-shifting activities guide girls to take action in their communities. These are:



Data collection on the priority issue.



Sharing data with key stakeholders, including parents and community leaders.



A **community-level norms shifting event** to raise awareness and foster critical dialogue on the issue.



A graduation event where girls come together with parents and decisionmakers to **advocate for solutions to their priority issue**.

The toolkit includes a **girl-led monitoring and evaluation** component which helps girls to gather data, analyze and present data. This ensures activities remains centered on girls' priorities; but more than this, it is an important part of the norms-shifting process as it helps girls gain confidence in presenting, advocating and influencing.

Complementary components

There are two additional complementary components which can be added to further support Girls in Action.



Structured Allyship Training is a series of sessions for adolescent boys and parents which aims to reinforce understanding of gender and girls' rights. It has a particular emphasis on the difference between protector and ally before ensure that adolescent boys and parents promote girls' leadership in their actions and not take over the process.



Connecting Girls to the Women's Right Movement uses a series of dialogue-based activities to build connections between girl activists and actors within the feminist movement advocating for girls' rights and empowerment.

WHEN can Girls in Action be used?

Girls in Action can be layered onto existing programs, particularly where girls' groups already exist. It has been adapted for low literacy settings and used in both development and humanitarian programming.

The process takes from 6-18 months, which is a relatively short implementation period. All is led and facilitated by girls with a strong element of local leadership, meaning timelines may be influenced by their needs and priorities.

The aim is for Girls in Action to build the groundwork for long-term norms shifts by creating a movement in the community which is facilitating the change.

For more information contact

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