

UNLOCKING  
HERPOTENTIAL



# Girls' Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihoods (GEWEL) Project in Zambia

Operational Innovations to Address Gender Gaps in Human  
Capital in the COVID-19 Pandemic

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# GEWEL is pioneering in its explicit focus on girls' and women's empowerment

## Supporting Women's Livelihoods (SWL)

Gov-implemented econ inclusion package  
Female breadwinners from SCT hhs

## Keeping Girls in School (KGS)

Secondary school bursaries  
Adolescent girls from SCT hhs

## Social Cash Transfers (SCT)

UCTs for extremely poor households  
Launched in 2003 and reaching 600,000+ hh nationwide

# COVID Response through GEWEL

- **COVID materials** for secondary schools in target districts to open safely
- **Radio outreach** encouraging girls to return to school once schools opened
- **Preparation of GEWEL AF2** to provide timely and predictable Social Cash Transfers expanding to almost 1 million households in the next 18 months



# Engaging Men to Empower and Protect Women

- Targeting women can have **unintended consequences** by reinforcing traditional gender norms, exacerbating time poverty, or increasing gender-based violence
- Recent qualitative research has found a **temporary increase in violence** against SWL beneficiaries at the start of the project, mainly verbal abuse and controlling behavior from intimate partners

→ Partnered with BRAC\* to design and pilot **“nimble” engaging men activities**:

## Joint sessions

- Orientation get husbands’ buy-in and support with care work
- “Family Vision” to set common goals and negotiate contributions

## Community dialogue

- Public forum to explain objectives and address concerns
- Local champions to promote broader norms change

# School-Based Safe Spaces for Adolescent Girls

- Adolescent girls face particular risks, including **high dropout rates, early marriage and childbearing** as well as **increased vulnerability to GBV**
- KGS assessment confirmed that **SRGBV is prevalent** and that the poorest are particularly vulnerable (unsafe boarding arrangements, transactional sex)

→ **Empowerment pilot** to reduce SRGBV and empower girls through an ecological approach:

## Safe spaces

- In parallel for boys and girls in the same schools
- Share information (life skills, SRH) and facilitate dialogue

## School engagement

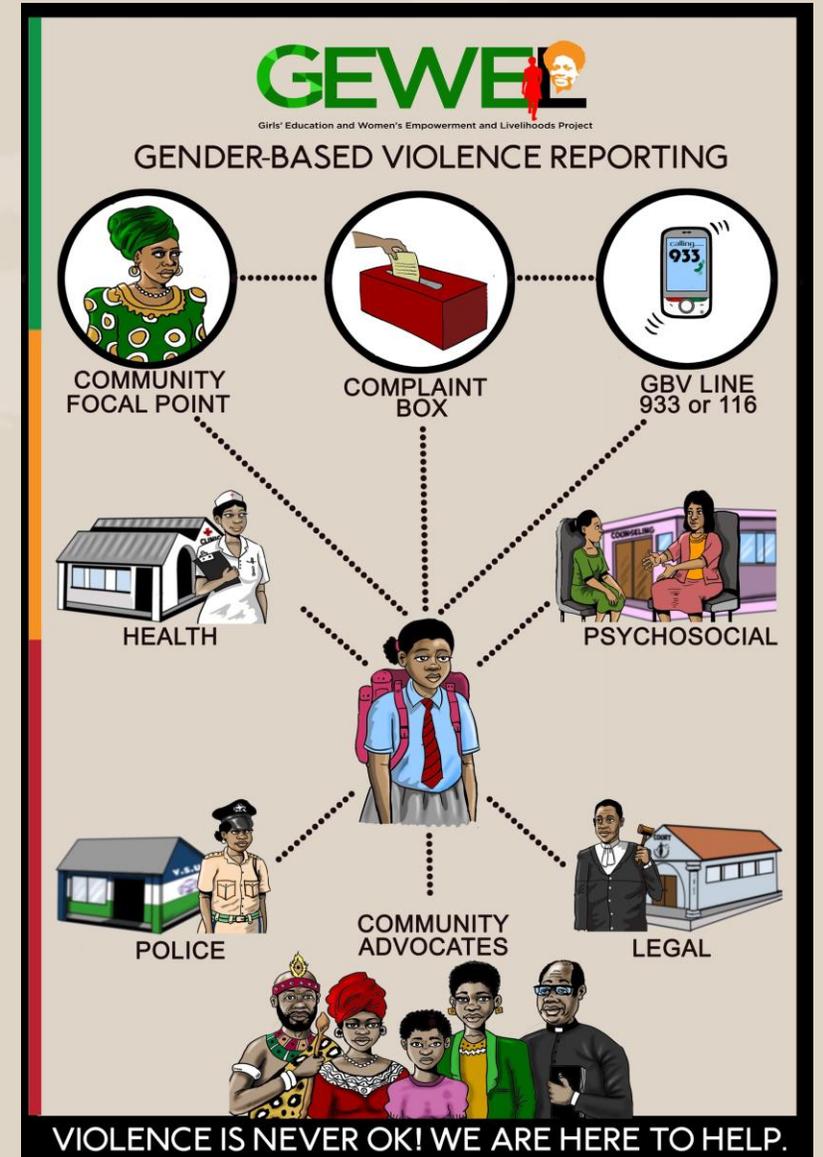
- Link to PTA, school leadership, giving adolescents a role in DM
- Sensitization of teachers and school staff

## Community engagement

- Community conversations to shift norms

# Enhanced GRM to Respond to GBV

- The GRM consists of **three different channels**:
  - locked boxes into which written complaints can be submitted anonymously;
  - complaints reported in person to trusted community focal points;
  - telephone hotline for GBV complaints in collaboration with an established NGO.
- The rollout of the GRM is accompanied by a **robust awareness raising campaign** as well as comprehensive training of frontline staff.
- A **GBV referral pathway mapping** was also conducted to identify available services at district level, with the main challenge being the **lack of response services** in most of the remote rural areas where the project operates.



*“When I finish school, I want to be a nurse. I also want my child to have a decent education. I urge all girls in Zambia to return to school because education is key to empowerment of women.”*

Anita Hamukombo, KGS  
beneficiary, Mungwi District



*“I never imagined that a time would come when I will be independent and contributing substantially to the affairs at home. My wish is to see every vulnerable woman receive this empowerment to uplift the plight of women in my village”*

Sarah Mubanga, SWL  
beneficiary, Mungwi District

# Thank You