



Channels of Hope for Gender

World Vision

Solomon Islands

Affirming the worth and dignity of women and men

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Introduction

Faith leaders are often amongst the most influential members of communities in Solomon Islands, a nation which is 97 percent Christian. Their personal beliefs and values can inspire an entire community to care for one another and to take responsibility and collective action over issues that concern them. However ill-conceived theologies can contribute to negative messages that stigmatise and discriminate against people based on their gender or HIV status. Such messages contradict the calling of faith leaders to provide loving care and safe spaces to all members of society without prejudice. The Channels of Hope model equips faith and community leaders to individually and collectively respond to core issues that compromise the well-being of children, their families and communities, whether these be health or gender injustices. These partnerships with faith leaders are a key step towards positive social transformation in conjunction with work in collaboration with police, service providers and other stakeholders.

What is the 'Channels of Hope' approach?

The Channels of Hope approach is more than just training or education, it is the transformation of ideas and subsequently of behaviour. Training is designed to engage with participants in a manner that challenges their attitudes and knowledge, inspires a change of heart and behaviour, and motivates a sustained and effective response to issues that threaten the wellbeing of communities.

People trained in the Channels of Hope approach are equipped with the knowledge and the tools to mobilise their faith congregations and other groups to make a positive change. They instigate the formation of volunteer groups that begin to introduce communities to gender injustice or HIV and AIDS. The same groups also form networks that support the most vulnerable in their communities.

How did Channels of Hope for Gender emerge?

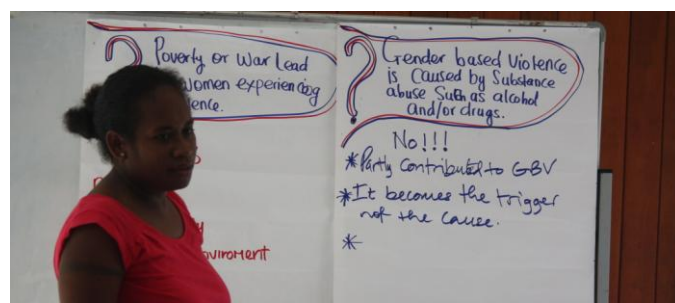
Channels of Hope for Gender emerged from World Vision's work with church and community leaders in HIV & AIDS prevention, care and advocacy. Statistics and realities from the field depicted a higher HIV & AIDS infection rate of women in comparison to men. Studies attributed this disparity to a number of factors, including gender injustice. Unfortunately, religion and culture were identified as factors that tend to subtly discriminate against women and girls rendering them unable to have control over choices regarding their sexual and reproductive health. Consequently the need arose for a program that would help create platforms for open and respectful conversations about gender while relating it to the Bible and culture.

"If our business is to fight poverty, then we must address the endemic issue of Gender Based Violence in Solomon Islands by using The Channels of Hope methodology which has proven effective in positively transforming people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding gender relations." – Andrew Catford, World Vision Solomon Islands Country Director.

"CoH for Gender is based on biblical principles, it's simple and interactive. I have seen that the CoH approach is improving gender equality and reducing violence against women and girls. I am convinced that this tool is appropriate for community gender mobilization"- Koisau Sade, World Vision Solomon Islands Gender Coordinator.

"Before attending CoH I did some bad things in my own life and towards my wife. I was not a good man. This project of World Vision changed me as a person and this is why I am sharing this in my church and community...I am now a better man and husband because of this Gender project. You can ask my wife about this, she will tell you."
-Fred Sikini, Community/Faith Leader, Sun Valley.

"The CoH workshop is very interesting and a real eye opener for most of us church leaders and I'm happy that all our Anglican Bishops have also attended this training because our Mission is to look after the victims of Domestic Violence. That is why we have the Christian Care Centre."-Anglican Archbishop David Vunagi.



Channels of Hope for Gender

Key Partners & Stakeholders

World Vision Solomon Islands partners with a variety of government agencies, NGOs, community groups and churches.

- ◆ Churches and Pastors in Honiara
- ◆ Temotu and Guadalcanal Province
- ◆ Solomon Islands Christian Association (SICA)
- ◆ Chiefs and Community Leaders
- ◆ Ministry of Women, Youth and Children Affairs (MWYCA)
- ◆ Legal Agents: Public Solicitors Office, Solomon Islands Bar Association and Director of Public Prosecution
- ◆ Service Providers: Health Care, Social Welfare, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and the Christian Care Centre

The Solomon Islands has a Human Development Index of 0.510. This ranks it 142nd out of 187 countries and makes it one of the least developed countries in the Pacific region (UNDP). Despite positive progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, gender-based violence still remains a core underlying development issue.

The Solomon Islands Demographic and Health survey of 2006-2007 reported that two out of three women have experienced physical and/or violence from an intimate partner, with 38% of women stating that their first sexual experience was forced.

As part of the Honiara Community Vision for Change project, a baseline survey was conducted by World Vision in partnership with the Australian National University (ANU). The results supported the SIG's 2009 study, finding that 36% of women knew of instances of family violence in the last week, and over 50% of all arguments between husband and wife lead to physical violence.

World Vision Solomon Islands Gender Projects

Our Gender projects provide church leaders, community leaders, police and service providers with improved capabilities for addressing and reducing Gender-base Violence in their communities.

Honiara Community Vision for Change

The Honiara Community Vision for Change project is aimed at reducing gender-based violence in five communities in Honiara by 2015 using the Channels of Hope for Gender methodology. The five targeted communities in Honiara are, Sun Valley Community, Burns Creek Community, Fulisango Community, Lord Howe Community and White River Community. The project began in May 2011 and will end in September 2014. The Honiara Community Vision for Change Project is funded by World Vision Australia (WVA) and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

Temotu and Weathercoast Community Channels of Hope

The Temotu and Weathercoast Community Channels of Hope project is aimed at reducing gender-based violence in 30 communities across the two Provinces (Temotu and Weathercoast) in Solomon Islands.

The project will address the endemic issue of Gender-based Violence using the tested faith-based methodology, Channels of Hope, by working with churches and community leaders using Christian texts. The approach has proven effective in positively transforming people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding gender relations. This project is a two-year project which started April 2013 and will end in March 2015. It is funded by the Australian Aid Program and World Vision Australia.

Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Project

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force project is aimed at providing Channels of Hope training to members of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force executive and community police force in Honiara. This project is for one year, initially, and is funded by the Australian Federal Police.

Church Partnerships to Strengthen the Christian Care Centre

This is a Church partnership project to strengthen the Christian Care Centre to enable it to effectively provide survivors of violence and child abuse access to a safe place and access to appropriate, quality support. The project is a three year project which began in April 2013 and ends in September 2015. The project is funded by WVA.

