

# Change through Culture in the Girls' Holistic Development Programme

MAMADOU COULIBALY, GRANDMOTHER PROJECT



**GRANDMOTHER**  
PROJECT CHANGE THROUGH CULTURE

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

- ✓ The Girls' Holistic Development Programme
- ✓ The Cultural Parameters in the Girls' Holistic Development Programme (education of girls, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, FGC)
- ✓ Use of the Change Through Culture approach to shift social norms through Girls' Holistic Development
- ✓ Results and lessons learned

# THE GIRLS' HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

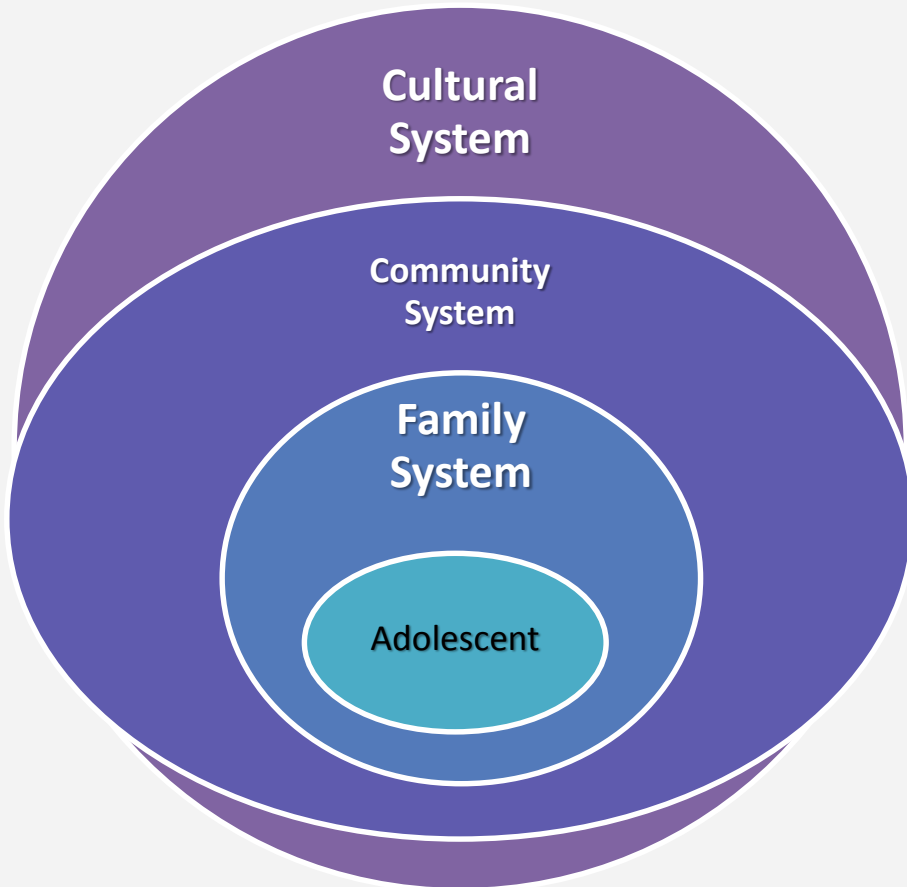
- ✓ An approach to reinforce community capacities for the development, well-being, rights and protection of girls
- ✓ The programme focuses on shifting norms around:
  - ✓ Girls' Education
  - ✓ Child Marriage
  - ✓ Adolescent Pregnancy
  - ✓ Female Genital cutting
  - ✓ Corporal punishment

# THE GIRLS' HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

- ✓ Involvement of grandmothers as change agents
- ✓ Improve intergenerational communication and communication between genders
- ✓ Improve community capacities especially of leaders
- ✓ Improve the relationship and link between communities and schools

# Cultural Context

## Ecological Model



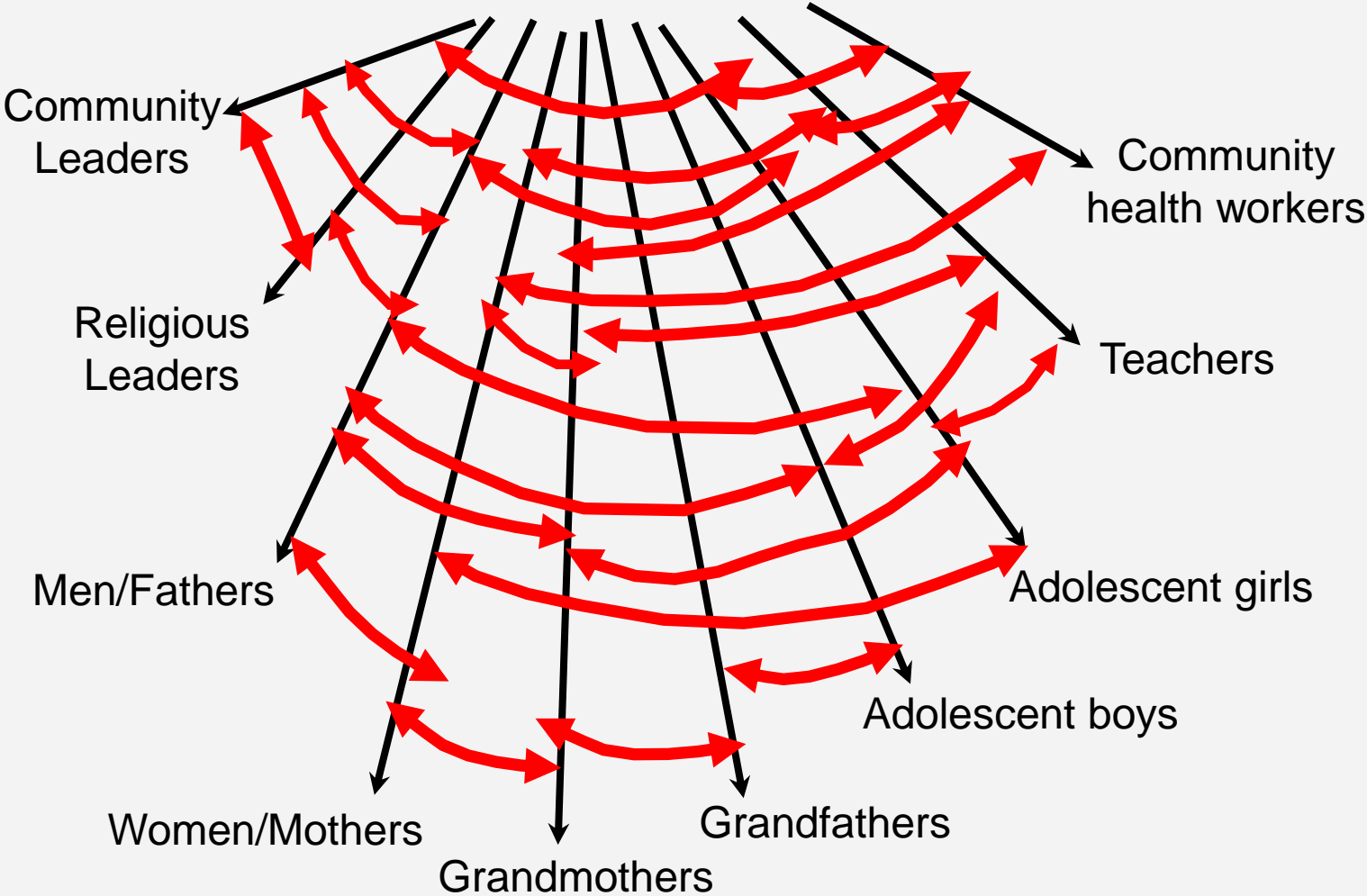
- ✓ In collectivist societies, adolescents are integrated into family, community and cultural systems

# Characteristics of collectivist cultures that influence social norms

- ✓ Adolescents are not isolated and rarely make their own decisions
- ✓ Families make decisions that influence adolescent well-being
- ✓ Older women, grandmothers, stepmothers and aunts play a large role in the socialization of young girls  
Gender roles exist
- ✓ Social norms defined by the elders (child marriage, FGC)

**CHANGE THROUGH CULTURE  
APPROACH TO SHIFT SOCIAL  
NORMS IN GIRLS' HOLISTIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

# Community dialogue to generate consensus on questions that arise in Girls' Holistic Development





# Why community dialogue?

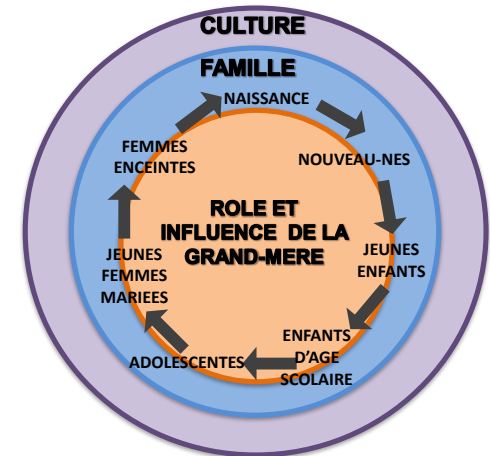
- ✓ Discuss traditional ideas and promote new ideas
- ✓ Reinforce existing lines of communication within the community
- ✓ Create new lines of communication within the community
- ✓ Favor systemic change

# Grandmothers key people for social norm change

## Why grandmothers?

- ✓ Cultural responsibility to pass on norms related to FGC and child marriage etc...
- ✓ Status/power within their family and community. They are listened to and respected
- ✓ Empathy towards well-being of young girls
- ✓ Strong influence on men/fathers
- ✓ Authority to change social norms

ROLE DES GRAND-MERES TOUT AU LONG DU CYCLE DE VIE DES ENFANTS, FILLES ET FEMMES



**GRANDMOTHER**  
PROJECT CHANGE THROUGH CULTURE

2013, Grandmother Project

**ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON  
DIALOGUE BETWEEN PEOPLE,  
GENDERS AND WITHIN GROUPS  
TO GAIN A CONSENSUS ON  
SOCIAL NORMS**



# Intergenerational Forum





**Discussion group - men**



**Discussion group - adolescents**



**Discussion group - adolescents**



**Discussion group - women**





**Women fora: Grandmothers,  
mothers, young girls and teachers**



# Mother sessions « Under the Tree »





# Adolescent Sessions





# Adolescent and Grandmother Sessions





# Intervillage day of homage to grandmothers



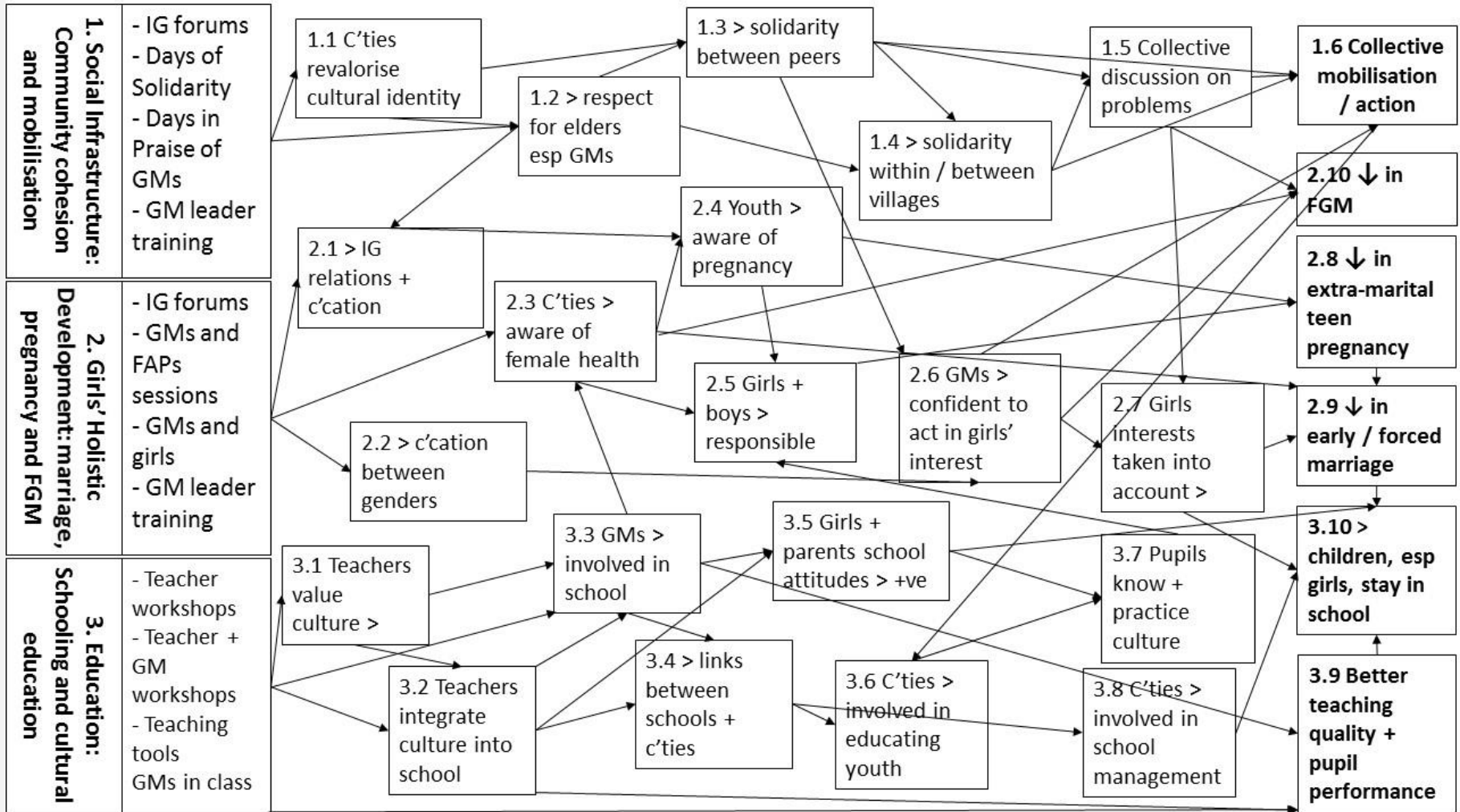


# Grandmother Teacher Trainings

# Preliminary results of Girls' Holistic Development in Némataba

- ✓ Improved communication between genders and generations
- ✓ Increased leadership among grandmothers, and adolescents
- ✓ Grandmothers build solidarity and take collective action to prevent child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, FGC and keep girls in school
- ✓ Shifts in social norms linked to girls' education and child marriage
- ✓ Collaboration between the school and community

# Theory of Change



# Lessons Learned

- ✓ It is essential to work within existing cultural systems to **change social norms**
- ✓ **Systemic and structural change needed** to involve a diverse group of community actors including adolescents for norm change
- ✓ Active involvement of grandmothers is beneficial given their role in education, the protection of girls and influence on the family
- ✓ **A community dialogue approach** should be taken to catalyze reflective dialogue and decision making within communities

# WHY REALIST EVALUATION?



# Key Principles of Realist Evaluation

## The nature of programs:

- ✓ Programmes are 'embedded'
- ✓ Programmes are 'active'
- ✓ Programmes are 'theories'

## Principal research tasks:

- ✓ Hypothesise the key change mechanisms (M)
- ✓ Hypothesise the key contexts (C)
- ✓ Explain the outcome pattern (O)

# Programs are “embedded”

They are always inserted into pre-existing social systems

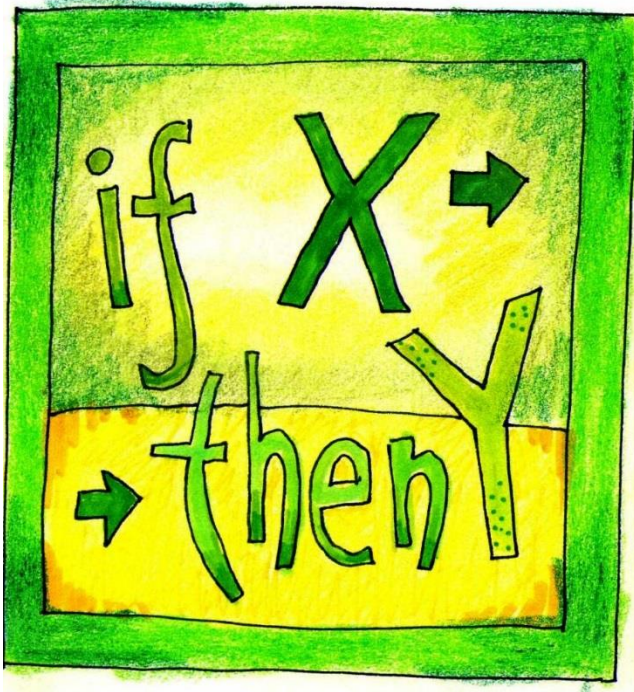


**To work, preventive health initiatives need to operate at different levels:**

- ✓ Ideas
- ✓ Individuals
- ✓ Institutions
- ✓ Infrastructure

*Adapted from R Pawson*

# Programs are Theories



If we do ..... to them,  
they will change their  
behavior in ..... way.

*Adapted from R Pawson*

# Programs are “active”

They are ‘active’ in the sense that their intended effects work through the reasoning and volition of their subjects

Even ‘mechanical’ interventions like the free distribution of bed nets depend on the subject’s ideas.

Bed nets work but also end up:

- ✓ Not installed (can’t be bothered)
- ✓ Removed (sleeping becomes too hot)
- ✓ Used differently (for Dads, not Moms & kids)
- ✓ ‘Walking’ (sold/exchanged for higher-value item)

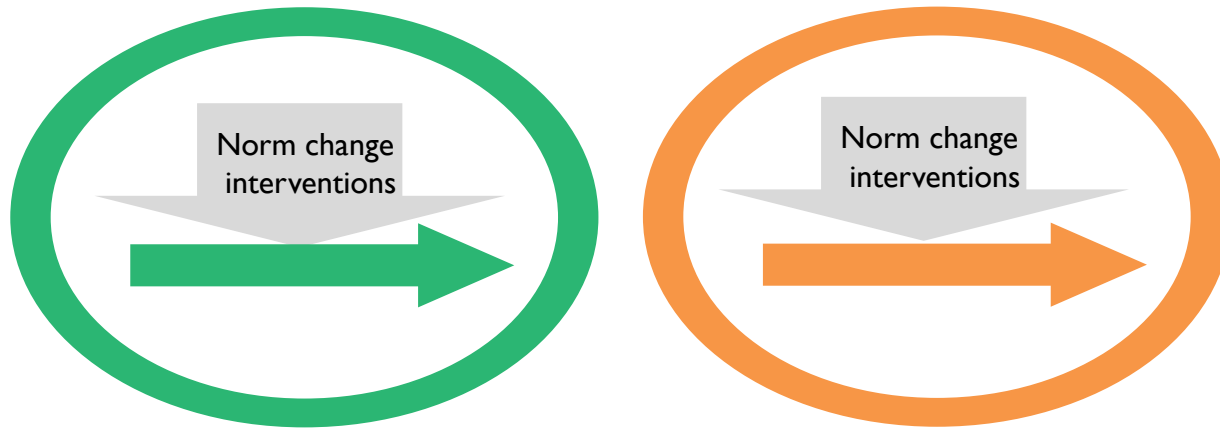


*Adapted from R Pawson*

# Realist Evaluation: Change Mechanisms, Contexts & Outcomes

**Don't ask:** 'What works?'

**Rather, investigate:** 'What works, for whom, in what circumstances?'



**The same program mechanism will have different outcomes in different contexts**

*Adapted from R Pawson*

**WHAT HAS A REALIST  
EVALUATION APPROACH  
SHOWN US TO DATE?**

# Cyclical evidence-driven approach to Theory testing

1-What are the change mechanisms and are they leading to normative and behavior change?

2-How will they be scaled (and documented)?

**Technical assistance - 3-4 rounds over 24 months**

- ✓ Create *program* change theory - where and how social changes are expected
- ✓ Examine existing evidence and undertake new studies to address key gaps
- ✓ Build capacity to prepare for scale-up, ensuring social change mechanisms remain intact

