Breaking Barriers for Women and Children in Developing Countries

Why don’t women and children attain the highest level of health globally?

But lack of access to quality health services isn’t the only reason:

- Unequal power relationships between men and women
- Social norms that decrease women’s education and paid employment opportunities
- An exclusive focus on women’s reproductive roles
- Women’s potential or actual experience of physical, sexual, and emotional violence

Poverty negatively impacts both men and women but tends to inflict a higher burden on women and girls. For example, food insecure families may allocate food to men over women and children, leading to malnutrition, or women and children may be more exposed to indoor air pollution from certain cooking fuels, leading to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD, WHO 2019).

Engaging Fathers for Effective Child Nutrition & Development in Tanzania (EFFECTS)

- Will engaging fathers improve child nutrition and development?
- Peer group interventions for mothers and fathers, delivered by community health workers in rural Tanzania

Challenges

- 2 out of 3 mothers report physical, sexual, or emotional violence
- 2 out of 3 mothers and 1 in 2 fathers use physical punishment or psychological aggression on their infants and toddlers
- Mothers’ beliefs:

  A man should always be served food before his wife/partner

  A man must make the final decision on how money is spent

Tanzania Facts

- Total fertility rate: 5.2 children
- 6.7% of children die before their 5th birthday
- One-third of children under 5 are stunted
- 45% of women of childbearing age are anemic

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