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13

Land Tenure and Women's Empowerment and Health

A Programmatic Evaluation of Structural Change in Nicaragua

SHELLY GRABE, ANJALI DUTT, AND CARLOS ARENAS

In recent decades the international development field has begun a concerted effort to advocate for women's human rights and empowerment in an effort to address UN Millennium Development Goal 3: "to promote gender equality and empower women." However, it remains unclear what is meant by *empowerment* and what impact a lack of empowerment might have on women's physical and psychological health and well-being.[1] Across the social sciences it is widely agreed that empowerment processes encompass structural inequities and access to material resources, a sense of personal control, and the enhancement of well-being (Cattaneo and Chapman 2010; Zimmerman 1995). Within psychology, *empowerment* has been defined as a sense of personal control and freedom whereby individuals gain agency and mastery over issues of concern to them, enhanced by having access to and control over resources (Rappaport 1987; Zimmerman 1990, 1995). Moreover, although an abundant literature suggests that empowerment is a process whereby multiple components influence each other and may lead to positive outcomes, empirical research does not often identify the components or the links among them (Cattaneo and Chapman 2010; Kabeer 1999; Zimmerman 1995).

In order to examine the role of empowerment in women's health outcomes (i.e., psychological well-being, receipt of violence), this chapter uses an inclusive definition of empowerment that is rooted in psychology but draws on cross-disciplinary perspectives. Early conceptualizations

and investigations of empowerment within psychology focused primarily on individual psychological processes such as perceptions of personal control, thereby giving limited attention to context and social structures (Perkins 1995; Riger 1993). However, empowerment theory explicitly links subjective well-being with larger social and political contexts and integrates a critical understanding of the sociopolitical environment with individual outcomes (Perkins and Zimmerman 1995; Zimmerman 1995). Similarly, in the international development literature, although empowerment has largely come to refer to the freedom of choice and action to shape one's life, it is recognized for many marginalized groups that freedom can be severely curtailed by structural inequities (see Mosedale 2005; Narayan 2005, for reviews). Thus, a synthesis of individual and contextual factors is required for the true expansion of opportunities. This chapter presents a case study of a women's organization in Nicaragua that facilitates women's empowerment in part through the ownership of land. The evaluation of this case demonstrates a comprehensive approach to the processes of women's empowerment by measuring and analyzing the multiple components involved—structural, relational, and individual—and the impact they have on women's psychological and physical health.

THE CONTEXT: STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS AND WOMEN'S LANDOWNERSHIP IN NICARAGUA

The global economic policies of the 1980s and 1990s introduced or exacerbated several structural factors that contributed to rising levels of gender inequity throughout the "developing" world[2] (Grabe 2010a; Naples and Desai 2002). Globalization and the structural adjustments that characterized these decades (e.g., withdrawal of subsidized services in the social sector, such as health care) continue to have unique and negative outcomes for women (e.g., feminization of labor and/or poverty; Naples and Desai 2002; Moghadam 2005). A growing body of evidence suggests that institutionalized inequities in the distribution of resources contribute to power imbalances and gender-based norms that can create environments that legitimize and perpetuate women's subordination and negatively impact their health (e.g., Connell 1987; Glick and Fiske, 1999). Although Nicaragua had long been an impoverished country, the shift in presidential power in 1990 brought with it a significant restructuring of social services, resulting in severe cutbacks to public sector commitments to human development goals, including health services.

The Xochilt-Acalt Women's Center in Nicaragua emerged out of this context. The founding members of the center recognized the dire need for health care services for women—particularly women in rural areas. The center started in 1991 as a mobile reproductive and sexual health care clinic serving women in rural communities. Although this type of outreach was important, once the basic health infrastructure was developed, the center evolved over time to comprehensively address the multitude of consequences uniquely confronting women with a lack of institutional power (e.g., food insecurity, high levels of domestic violence; Montenegro, 2004). Thus, in order to address the full range of women's health concerns, new programs were developed in the areas of agricultural production, education, and civic participation that were aimed at connecting women's empowerment with psychological, physical, and sexual health outcomes. Although each program had focused objectives, they had in common gender reflection training that explicitly raised awareness of the role of cultural ideology—that is, social rules, norms, and values that govern gender roles—in human rights violations against women.

The study presented in this chapter reflects an evaluation of one of the center's programs, Programa Productivo. Programa Productivo is an agrarian production program that Xochilt-Acalt developed in 1994 out of a strategic interest in challenging gender norms, thereby providing women with independent economic resources and security. Because landownership throughout Latin America (and most of the world) reflects dominant roles and is a sign of power and control (Deere and Leon 2001; Pena et al. 2008), the program's main initiative was to legally facilitate women's ownership of and titling to land as a means to improve women's status, access to resources, and health and empowerment measures. Women participating in the program received education surrounding their rights as landowners, legal assistance in land titling, and technical training in the area of agricultural production.

Until the last three decades, women's ownership of land in Latin America was restricted because of legal and customary rules that prohibited women from being landowners. Of the Latin American countries that implemented gender-progressive agrarian reform policies in the 1980s, Nicaragua stands out above the rest (Deere 1985). For example, the Agrarian Reform Laws of the 1980s and 1990s that recognized equal rights for both sexes were acknowledged as some of the most forward-looking reforms in Latin America. Moreover, in 1995 a major legislative leap was taken that led to compulsory joint titling for married couples and for those living in stable relationships (FAO 2005).

Nevertheless, data from the rural titling office indicate that between 1979 and 1989, women accounted for only 8–10 percent of beneficiaries under the agrarian reform. These low numbers reflect that land was still being allocated primarily to male "heads of households," whereas titled women were likely widowed or unmarried women living alone (FAO 2005). Thus, despite legislation that positioned Nicaragua as cutting edge in mainstreaming gender in agricultural policy, the relatively low percentage of women landowners reflects the reality that social constructions of gender, combined with cultural practices of restricting women's ownership of land,[3] have historically prohibited women from realizing their legal rights.

In recent years, a small body of literature has emerged examining health and empowerment outcomes of women's landownership. In the first published study in this area, authors found that in Kerala, India, women's receipt of long-term physical violence was inversely related to owning land, a house, or both (Panda and Agarwal 2005). Since that initial publication, investigators have expanded on this research and demonstrated links between landownership and women's negotiating power within the marital relationship, financial decision making, and decreased receipt of physical and sexual violence in West Bengal, Nepal, and Nicaragua, respectively (Grabe 2010b; ICRW 2006; Pandey 2010). Collectively, these studies put forth a framework for investigating landownership as a resource related ultimately to improvements in women's health.

In sum, although property rights may be emerging as one route to addressing women's health and empowerment, deeply entrenched social barriers still prohibit women from taking advantage of opportunities to effectively exercise their rights to own land (Narayan 2005). Because of this, women's organizations have an important role to play in creating the conditions for change in this area (Kabeer 1999). Similarly, there is great need for social scientists in the area of globalization and women's empowerment to evaluate processes involving landownership by defining, measuring, and analyzing the various components of empowerment involved. The following investigation of Programa Productivo was a collaborative project that brought together science and grassroots community advocacy. The expertise of the researcher (Shelly Grabe) ensured theoretically grounded, sound methodology from the lens of social psychology. The expertise of the community collaborator (Carlos Arenas) ensured cultural sensitivity and community relevance to the designed program. The aims of this project support the goals of feminist liberation psychology by focusing on the science of psychology as an instrument

for informing social action (Lykes and Moane, 2009). An analysis with the level of complexity presented in the following sections is necessary to lend scientific merit to the understanding of empowerment and increase the acceptability for empowerment approaches among policy makers, especially in regard to impacts on women's health.

METHODS

In order to evaluate the links between landownership and women's empowerment and health, household surveys were administered to two different groups of women in the state of León, Nicaragua. The first group were members of Xochilt-Acalt and were selected by simple random sampling from a list of 380 women involved in Programa Productivo ($N = 124$). The second group of women were randomly selected from neighboring communities in the same municipality that were not actively involved in Xochilt-Acalt ($N = 114$). The total sample size was 238 women. The control group structure allowed for direct comparison of women who were involved in a gender-based social organization aimed at empowerment and women who were not. The study followed field procedures recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) for conducting violence research in "developing" countries, including hiring and training a local research team to administer the surveys (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). Data were collected in private interviews conducted in Spanish.

Questionnaires included in the survey assessed sociodemographic information, such as age, number of children, and educational history, as well as information about partners, including partner alcohol use. The survey also assessed how regularly women participated in activities with Xochilt-Acalt and whether they owned land. Gender ideology was assessed with a modified version of the Attitudes Towards Women Scale (Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1973). Empowerment was assessed with standardized scales indexing power and control within relationships (Sexual Relationship Power Scale: Pulerwitz, Gortmaker, and DeJong 2000; Control: Ellsberg and Heise 2005), financial and household decision making (ICRW 2006), and individual autonomy and mastery (Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being: Ryff 1989). Psychological and physical health outcomes were indexed with standardized scales of self-esteem (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: Baños and Guillén 2000), depression (Center for Epidemiologic Studies—Depression Scale: Grzywacz et al. 2006), and physical, psychological, and sexual violence in

the past twelve months (Conflict Tactics Scale: Straus et al. 1996). All questions were translated into Spanish and verified and back-translated to ensure meanings would be conveyed properly in the local context before the survey was piloted. Ethics approval was granted by the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

RESULTS

The average ages of the respondents were in the early to mid forties, and the majority of women had three or more children. Approximately three-quarters of the sample were in relationships that were between six to ten years in duration. Most of the respondents reported being literate, although approximately a quarter of the sample never received formal schooling.

Table 13.1 shows group differences in the proposed process and outcome variables. As can be seen from the table, there are statistically significant differences seen with all the measured variables, with women who were members of Xochilt-Acalt reporting more progressive gender-role ideology conceptions, a greater say in household and financial decision making, more relationship power, less partner control, higher levels of autonomy and mastery, higher levels of self-esteem, lower levels of depression, and less physical and sexual violence in the past twelve months than the control group. Over 40% of women in each group reported experiencing psychological violence in their lifetime, and over 23% reported experiencing physical violence, with estimates of sexual violence being nearly as high. Importantly, women from both groups reported comparable levels of lifetime violence, suggesting that women who participated in Xochilt-Acalt were not a different subset of women who self-selected based on having a priori progressive relationships.

Path models were used to test the proposed processes surrounding women's empowerment and health, namely that participating with Xochilt-Acalt and landownership would lead to greater empowerment and psychological and physical health (Figure 13.1; see Grabe 2010, 2011 for specific details surrounding model building and path analyses). In the first path model, both organization participation and landownership were related to more progressive conceptions in gender-role ideology, which was, in turn, related to higher levels of household but not financial decision-making power, greater relationship power, and less partner control. Neither of the decision-making measures was associated with either indicator of a woman's individual empowerment. In

TABLE 13.1 MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG XOCHILT-ACALT STUDY VARIABLES

	Xochilt-Acalt members (N = 124) (M, SD)	Control (N = 114) (M, SD)	p	d
Gender ideology	1.84 (.166)	1.62 (.216)	.00	1.16
Household decision making	2.67 (.673)	2.48 (.662)	.02	0.29
Financial decision making	1.94 (.514)	1.81 (.569)	.03	0.24
Relationship power	1.81 (.235)	1.67 (.293)	.00	0.54
Partner control	1.50 (2.45)	2.22 (2.84)	.04	−0.27
Autonomy	1.84 (.150)	1.78 (.165)	.00	0.38
Mastery	1.71 (.137)	1.67 (.140)	.02	0.29
Self-esteem	1.93 (.104)	1.86 (.168)	.00	0.52
Depression	1.69 (.502)	1.83 (.620)	.05	−0.25
12M Physical violence	.067 (.500)	.167 (.651)	.01	−0.17
12M Psychological violence	.372 (.896)	.342 (.910)	.77	0.03
12M Sexual violence	.067 (.309)	.149 (.536)	.00	−0.20
LT Physical violence	.595 (1.122)	.707 (1.444)	.76	−0.09
LT Psychological violence	.959 (1.240)	.911(1.275)	.49	0.04
LT Sexual violence	.438 (.763)	.349(.784)	.35	0.12

NOTES: Mean differences are indicated along with the d = effect size. Effect sizes are calculated as the difference between two means divided by the standardized deviation ($d = [M_1 M_2/s]$). Effect sizes are computed to assess the magnitude of the difference between groups. According to Cohen (1988) an effect size of 0.2 might be considered "small" (although still a notable difference), whereas values around 0.5 are "medium" effects, and values of 0.8 or higher considered "large" effects. A positive d for gender-role ideology and relationship power indicates that Xochilt-Acalt members scored higher on the study variable. A negative d for partner control indicates that women from Xochilt-Acalt's partners controlled their mobility less.

12M = past twelve months. LT = lifetime.

contrast, relationship power was related to higher levels of autonomy and mastery, and partner control was related to lower levels of women's mastery. Autonomy and mastery were each associated with higher self-esteem and lower depression. Mastery was associated with less psychological violence. The hypothesized model provided a reasonably good fit to the data (i.e., $\chi^2 = 175.82$, $df = 61$, $\chi^2/df = 2.88$, NFI = .81, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .09, AIC = 53.82), but because neither of the decision-making variables served as either significant predictors or outcomes in the hypothesized process, they were dropped from the model and a trimmed model was rerun. Fit statistics from this model indicate a slight improvement ($\chi^2 = 110.34$, $df = 39$, $\chi^2/df = 2.83$, NFI = .87, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .09, AIC = 32.34) over the former.

Next, in order to help explain the mechanisms by which organizational participation and landownership are related to individual empowerment
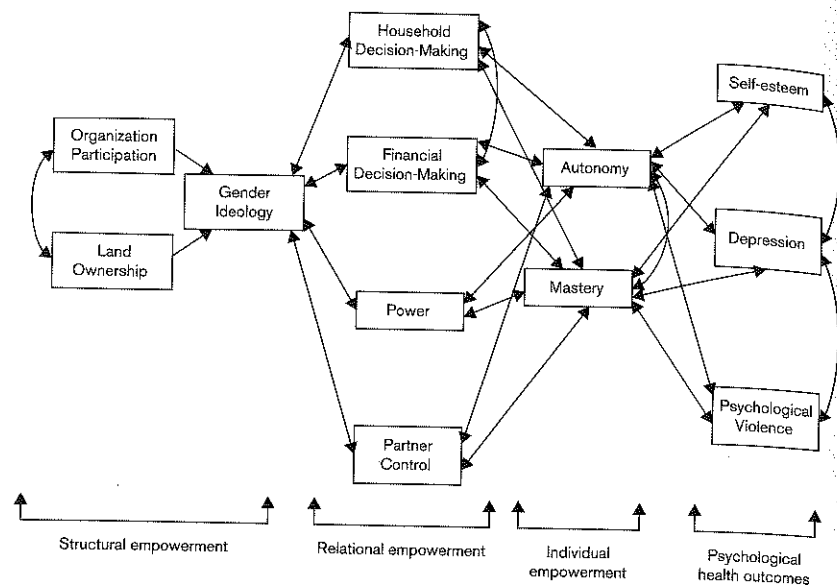
FIGURE 13.1. The hypothesized model. Organizational participation and landownership were hypothesized to predict gender role ideology, which in turn was hypothesized to influence decision making, relationship power, and control, which were expected to predict women's individual empowerment, and, finally, psychological health.

and psychological health, product of coefficients tests were used to test for indirect effects (Sobel 1990). A test of the indirect relation of structural empowerment on relational empowerment suggests that participation in the organization was indirectly related to relationship power (t = 2.06, p = .039) but not partner control. Landownership was also indirectly related to relationship power (t = 3.00, p = .002) and partner control (t = –1.96, p = .050), because it was related to more progressive conceptions of gender-role ideology. Thus, it seems that although participating in the organization and owning land both predict positive outcomes for the participants, actual ownership of land is a more robust predictor of altered gender relations. Nevertheless, since the organization is imperative to facilitating women's ownership over land, participation in the organization was a critical factor in improving women's empowerment outcomes.

Given that the model included multiple components of empowerment, the relations between the empowerment indicators were examined (see Grabe 2011, for more detail). The aim was to evaluate the most commonly used measure of individual empowerment in the development
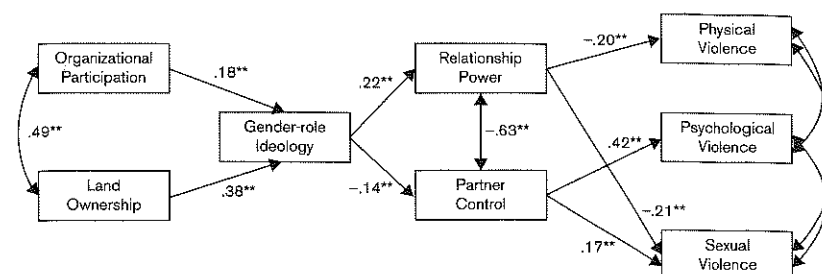
FIGURE 13.2. The relationship between structural power, interpersonal power, and violence. Note: Values are standardized beta weights **p < .01.

literature (i.e., decision making) relative to the additional indicators included in this study. The results suggest that neither measure of decision making was strongly correlated with women's autonomy or mastery nor with women's relationship power or partner control, despite the fact that decision making is often used as a proxy of either agency or relative power within the relationship. In addition, the decision-making scales were not related to any of the psychological health measures. In contrast, relationship power and control, autonomy, and mastery were consistently related to each other and to the health measures.

A second path model was constructed to focus more specifically on the role of power and control in the cycle of domestic violence. As shown in Figure 13.2, women's relationship power predicted fewer episodes of physical and sexual violence, and partner control predicted greater receipt of psychological and sexual violence.

DISCUSSION

Findings from the Xochilt Acalt's Programa Productivo contribute to a growing body of literature that defines and conceptualizes women's empowerment. The evaluation of Xochilt- Acalt's work also supports a theoretical model that suggests that social structures may be associated with health factors that are often linked to subordination and oppression. The results of the study, which show that contexts where power may be unevenly distributed (i.e., women owning land in a situation whereby female landownership defied social roles) may define patterns of personal empowerment, provide support for the suggestion that multiple components of empowerment relate to each other and are critical to understanding the processes surrounding women's empowerment and health.

The study also demonstrates that taking a social psychological approach to the investigation of women's health and empowerment can bridge the theoretical arguments surrounding gender equity with the practical implementation of development interventions. The findings also expose mechanisms surrounding women's subordination and psychological and physical health and provide empirical support that has yet to be demonstrated elsewhere. Moreover, this case study suggests that comprehensive attempts to improve women's health worldwide should involve policies ensuring that appropriate infrastructures exist to support women's abilities to exercise their rights. Although the discourse of human rights is not widely used among psychologists (Kitzinger and Wilkinson 2004), the findings from this evaluation suggest that women's landownership in and of itself, as well as how it relates to other fundamental rights (i.e., violence), may be a requirement of social justice.

In addition, the results support a number of guiding principles and strategies for interventions that can advance the international empowerment agenda and contribute to the aims of social justice articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). First, the findings suggest that development practitioners should not confuse practical interventions (i.e., those based solely on allocating short-term resources) with strategic interventions (i.e., those with the potential to transform the conditions in which women live). Given the pivotal role of Xochilt-Acalt in administering landownership via Programa Productivo, the findings suggest that it may be most useful to think about resources (i.e., land) as "enabling factors" that catalyze the empowerment process, rather than as ends in themselves (Malhotra and Schuler 2005). Programs may be most effective when policy makers, and those developing interventions, work in collaboration with women's organizations to combine equity in the distribution of resources with a sense of personal power and control to optimally impact health and well-being. In other words, the design of empowerment programs should be based on the potential for women to act on the structures of power that constrain their lives and not on buzzwords that are in favor of a globalized economy.

LESSONS LEARNED

The importance of understanding the process of empowerment is not simply academic. This case study demonstrates that organizational intervention may provide an important and effective means to achieving change. In this case, participating with Xochilt-Acalt was related not

only to landownership but also to more progressive gender ideology. Again, although the direction of this relationship cannot be discerned from the model, this link lends support to Freire's (1970) theory of consciousness-raising through group forums as a means to bring about empowerment. Moreover, the results suggest that women's organizational participation was part of the pathway to improving psychological health and reducing violence, although it was not as strong a predictor as owning land. Nevertheless, understanding the benefits associated with participating in the organization suggests that changing laws alone is not enough to bring about significant social change. Organizational intervention can greatly assist in facilitating women's access to land and their related psychological and physical health.

The findings also suggest that while it may be possible that resources serve as catalysts for empowerment, empowering women requires a contextualized understanding of power in different dimensions. For example, the results highlight a relation between structural factors and gender ideology. Although the direction of these effects cannot be discerned from this data, the findings support the notion that resources may provide the material conditions through which inequalities are produced, but cultural ideology plays a critical way in how they are sustained (Glick and Fiske 1999). In particular, women with more progressive gender ideology reported having greater relationship power and were able to withstand partner attempts at control. It is possible that women who are more aware of their sociopolitical environments and who hold beliefs about their rights to exercise their rights are able to exert greater influence in their marital relationships. Perhaps not surprisingly then, higher levels of relationship empowerment were related to women's greater individual empowerment as reflected in measures of autonomy and internal feelings of competence, which, in turn, were related to higher levels of psychological health. Although the empowerment process demonstrated is likely iterative, not linear, the findings suggest that manifestations of power between men and women may not be static but may be malleable under certain conditions. The results also suggest that the most widely relied-upon measure of empowerment in the development literature to date, financial and household decision making, is not a robust or reliable component in the empowerment process.

Finally, the study demonstrates a synergistic relationship between activist-based social organizations and a researcher. Women within the organization were responsible for developing their own strategies for action and the researcher, in the words of Ignacio Martin-Baró (1994),

used the discipline of science in the service of social justice by focusing on the oppressive reality of social structures. This study demonstrates that successful collaborations between community-based organizations and social science researchers may be critical in the struggle for social justice.

CONCLUSION

The changes that occurred as a result of the efforts at Xochilt-Acalt are particularly important in the context of the persistently high rates of violence experienced by women globally. However, international calls to improve the well-being of women have led to numerous laws to empower women and improve their health and status. Nevertheless, the barriers to accessing these laws suggest that laws alone are often only one aspect of social change required to effectuate substantial changes (Amnesty International 2005). As such, the success of Xochilt-Acalt, and the potential for generalizing the findings to the issue of property rights as a means to women's empowerment and health, is particularly timely. Not only does the evaluation of Programa Productivo illustrate the mechanisms by which altered structural changes (i.e., fostering women's ownership of land) can bring about significant improvements in women's psychological and physical health, but it provides support for social advocacy and programs aimed at improving women's well-being. Such avenues may be integral to transcending the normative barriers that subordinate women, to enabling greater access to legal, social, and structural support, and ultimately to encouraging women's empowerment.

Although issues of agrarian change and rural development were a major part of the global economic restructuring imposed on "developing" countries in the 1990s, it has been only in very recent years that women's interest in land has emerged as a contested issue (Razavi 2008). Women's property rights have taken on greater importance in light of women's centrality to agricultural livelihoods, an intensification of women's unpaid agricultural labor, increasing levels of poverty, and food scarcity (Razavi, 2008). The findings from Xochilt-Acalt's work suggest, at a minimum, that programs and policies should aim to alter the structural barriers that prohibit women from being landowners. For example, leading organizations that hold empowering women and girls as one of their primary action areas, such as the Clinton Global Initiative (2010), should include facilitating women's access to land as part of their strategic effort to reduce violence against women and girls. Similarly, because women face the risk of land alienation and entitlement

failure in the presence of imposed privatization from multilateral lending programs (despite having legal rights), organizational interventions are necessary to ensure that everyone is capable of realizing their rights.

Changing institutional structures shift the responsibility of combating violence from women to policy makers and program implementers, making it possible that women become beneficiaries of legal reform. For example, major foundations, such as the Rural Development Institute (2010), with its Global Center for Women's Land Rights that works to facilitate landownership for women, can use findings from the current study to further their delivery of policy recommendations and programmatic solutions to securing women's land rights. Projects and programs aimed at development in areas involving ownership and control over vital resources can better improve women's rights by altering the complex power structure in which women's subordination is embedded. Finally, perhaps more than most, this area is ripe for interdisciplinary efforts and cooperative collaboration between interventionists, social activists, and researchers working for women's human rights and social justice in an increasingly globalized context. Through collaborative efforts, changes to social policy that effectively grant women human rights and gender-based interventions aimed at transformative relations could lead to the very notions of social justice that are idealized by the international community addressing these issues.

Box 13.1. Summary

Geographic area: Nicaragua.

Global importance of the health condition: Violence against women is the most pervasive human rights violation in the world (UN 2007). Domestic violence, in particular, has become widely recognized internationally as a serious problem with grave implications for women's psychological and physical health (WHO 2005).

Intervention or program: In 1991 the Xochilt-Acalt Women's Center started as a mobile women's reproductive healthcare clinic in León, Nicaragua. Since that time, the center has burgeoned into a widespread rural network with programs aimed at agricultural production, education, economic empowerment, and civic participation. The current case study evaluates a particular aspect of the agricultural production program—landownership—on women's empowerment and health in the region.

Impact: Women landowners involved with Xochilt-Acalt reported more progressive gender ideology, greater say in decision making, more relationship power and control, higher levels of empowerment, greater psychological well-being, and less physical and sexual violence than a control group of women who did not own land.

Lessons learned: Although participation with Xochilt-Acalt played a major role in improving psychological well-being and reducing violence against women, the study also found that owning land played an independent role in promoting women's health.

Link between empowerment and health: Social interventions that alter women's status and shift cultural norms surrounding the capabilities and worth of women increase empowerment, contribute to higher levels of psychological well-being, and reduce women's receipt of violence.

For a video about Xochilt-Acalt Women's Center, see https://youtu.be/Gzxz7jdNhzI.

Box 13.2. Lessons Learned from Rural Nicaragua

In recent decades there has been a focus on women's health and human rights by organizations ranging from the United Nations to grass-roots organizations—all attempting to address UN Millennium Development Goal 3: "to promote gender equality and empower women." In the context of this increased interest, the success of Xochilt-Acalt's efforts to transform women's realities is particularly noteworthy. A major aim of Xochilt-Acalt is to reduce violence against women, an issue frequently addressed with individual-level interventions. However, Xochilt-Acalt recognizes that an individual focus cannot effectively curb violations that are largely social in practice. Instead, its efforts center on altering the social structures that put women at risk for violence, in this case ownership of land when owning land is associated with power and status. By simultaneously addressing issues of violence and women's land rights, the interventions at Xochilt-Acalt reconfigure power relations in a manner that allows women to reach increased levels of health in ways that are socially and experientially just. Furthermore, Xochilt-Acalt centers its change on the desires of women in the local community rather than on interests of foreign partners or donors. A combined focus on social structures and local voices has led to a successful reduction in women's experiences with domestic violence.

NOTES

1. Although an important aim of public health is to address disparate health issues gravely impacting women, many health topics gaining increasing attention in the international arena are violations of women's human rights. While addressing women's health is of critical import, it should be recognized that there are limitations to using "health" versus "human rights" language. Discussions surrounding health may inadvertently obscure the issues of power and inequality that are at the foundation of women's human rights violations.

2. There is no universally recognized definition of a developed country. Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan defined a developed country as "one that allows all of its citizens to enjoy a free and healthy life in a safe environment." Given that many industrialized countries do not meet these criteria, and that the terms *developed, under-developed*, and *developing* are often used by so-called First World nations to describe the relatively low economic well-being of another country in a manner that implies inferiority, when used in this chapter these terms will appear in quotation marks to reflect their problematic nature.

3. Despite receiving gender training surrounding joint titling, many titling officers treated the joint titles as "family" titles and recorded fathers and sons on the land titles, rather than husbands and wives.

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