Strengthening women’s empowerment and gender equality in fragile contexts towards peaceful and inclusive societies
A systematic review

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Women’s empowerment in FCAS matters!

23% World population living in FCAS

75% Women in FCAS living in extreme poverty

6% Proportion of bilateral aid to women’s empowerment and gender equality in FCAS as principal objective

Top 5 aid recipients for women’s empowerment and gender equality:
- Bangladesh
- Afghanistan
- Myanmar
- Uganda
- Ethiopia
Our focus: gender specific/transformative interventions in FCAS

**Population**
- All genders of all ages at individual and community levels living in FCAS

**Interventions/Comparison**
- Gender specific or gender transformative interventions compared to status quo

**Outcomes**
- Outcomes based on the 3 dimensions of women's empowerment: resources, agency and achievements

**Study types**
- Rigorous impact evaluation methods
Overview of the Gender SR

- Linked papers: 36
- Programmes: 55
- Interventions: 14
- Linked Qualitative papers: 90
- Fragile countries /contexts: 29

Studies: 104
Most studies are in Africa and South East Asia
We analysed 14 types of interventions
Interventions have positive effects overall, but effects can be enhanced

**Positive Effect**
Most interventions have significant positive effects on outcomes closely related to the purpose of intervention

**Limitations**
Most interventions do not achieve positive and significant effects for downstream behavioural outcomes (e.g. IPV)

**Multidimensional Effect**
Some interventions have positive effects across the three dimensions of empowerment: Cash transfers, self-help groups, and TVET

**Social Norms**
Norms and restrictive social contexts are barriers to empowerment

**Targeting and design**
Targeting the right level of vulnerability is a key driver of success
Implications for project design and implementation

1. Adjust for restrictive contexts.
2. Target the “right” beneficiaries.
3. Work with local powers and institutions.
4. Promote social capital and exchange.
5. Design for empowerment.
Implications for research

- Standardise indicators
  - We need standardised, gender-related indices

- Encourage and fund more rigorous impact evaluations
  - Regions (e.g. MENA) and interventions with evidence gaps need more research

- Use qualitative data
  - Encourage more mixed-methods IEs

- Look at the long-term
  - Longer follow-up periods are needed to assess long term benefits