

Evidence Digest

Issue 18 January 2019

Latest evidence

Here is a selection of the latest evidence on violence against women and girls (VAWG):

CHILDHOOD VIOLENCE

Risk factors for childhood violence and poly-victimization (February 2019). This cross country analysis explores risk factors for childhood emotional (EV), physical (PV), sexual violence (SV) and poly-victimisation for children aged 13–17 from nationally-representative Violence Against Children Surveys across six countries (Cambodia, Kenya, Haiti, Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania).

The results underscore that children often simultaneously suffer multiple forms of violence, with substantial

heterogeneity of risk factors across countries, and a few notable trends.

Due to longer exposure, increasing age was associated with increased risk of lifetime SV among females and, to some extent, among males. Associations with school enrolment were mixed among girls (protective in some settings and risky in others), consistent with existing literature. Among boys, school enrolment tended to increase the risk of PV in half of the countries studied.

The lack of clear patterns across countries underscores the importance of context in understanding children's experience of violence, as well as prioritising context-specific research on risk factors to inform prevention strategies.

HUMANITARIAN CRISES

Evidence from the 2014 Israeli Military Operation in Gaza (January, 2019). Using qualitative data from 21 group discussions and unique survey data from a representative cross-section of 439 women in the Gaza Strip, this study investigated how the Israeli military operation “Protective Edge” in 2014 influenced domestic violence, accounting for risk factors at different levels of the ecological model.

The results show that the military operation increased domestic violence. The analysis suggests that the mechanisms through which conflict increased levels of violence are displacement, a lowered ability of married women to contribute to household decision-making and reduced social support networks.

Risk factors for gender-based violence against Syrian refugees in Turkey (January 2019). This qualitative study explores risks of gender-based violence against Syrian adolescent girls and young women in Turkey, including how risks are shaped by displacement.

Syrian adolescent girls and young women expressed an increased sense of vulnerability to violence since their displacement. Women reported pressure to marry or work by their families, both of which they perceived to increase the risks of violence.



Refugee camp in Syria (Source: Pixabay)

Latest evidence

In contrast, some adults suggested that marriage could protect adolescent girls and young women from risks of violence associated with working.

Within the context of refugee camps, this study shows how family-based coping strategies to protect young women sometimes reinforce harmful gender norms and increase exposure to violence.

Results suggest that interventions to address violence in such settings should focus on safe spaces, access to education and safe transport for young women, and financial support for families as well as community-based interventions to address the daily risks of sexual harassment in public spaces.

SOCIAL NORMS

Shifting norms that drive IPV (December, 2018). Using data from the SASA! study, a cluster randomised trial of a community mobilisation intervention in Kampala, Uganda, this research explores which community members are most likely to intervene when they witness IPV.

Overall, SASA! community members were almost twice as likely to intervene than their control counterparts (57% vs 31%).

In control communities, factors positively associated with trying to help are older age (women), increasing relationship duration (men), talking to neighbours (men) and believing it is okay for a woman to tell if she is experiencing IPV (men).

By comparison, in SASA! communities, factors positively associated with trying to intervene were increasing relationship

duration (women/men), employment (women), talking to neighbours (women), childhood abuse experiences (women), lifetime IPV (women/men), IPV-related attitudes (women/men) and greater SASA! exposure (women/men).

The results suggest that contextual factors may modify the effects of personal characteristics on people's willingness to intervene. The results highlight the role that community mobilisation approaches such as SASA! can help to create environments supportive of action against VAWG.

GBV/HIV INTEGRATION

Delivering GBV prevention and response through HIV/AIDS services (December, 2018).

This randomised control trial (RCT) assessed the impact of a comprehensive GBV program, delivered through HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment platforms in the Mbeya region of Tanzania.

Whilst the study found no statistically significant reduction in IPV prevalence, the programme was found to contribute to positive, community-wide changes including less tolerance for certain forms of violence, more gender equitable norms, better knowledge about GBV, and increased community actions to address violence. The programme also led to a nearly three-fold increase in utilisation of GBV services at health facilities over a 16 month period, and visits were more likely to include a HIV test.

The results demonstrate the feasibility and impact of integrating

GBV and HIV/AIDS service provision at the local level.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Measuring the impact of Empowerment Self Defence (ESD) on sexual assault

(December 2018). This RCT examined the impact of an ESD intervention on sexual assault risk reduction for school age women and girls in Malawi.

Participants received a 12 hour intervention over six weeks, with refreshers, using the IMPower methodology which teaches boundary recognition and boundary setting, negotiation and diffusion tactics, verbal assertiveness, and physical defence skills, with the self-efficacy to implement these skills.

The intervention was found to reduce prevalence of past-year sexual violence by 26%, and lead to increases in self-defence related knowledge among the intervention group. Significant changes for sexual assault prevalence were found for both primary and secondary age children.

The vast majority of sexual violence perpetrators were known to victims, with boyfriends the most commonly reported perpetrators at baseline and follow-up, across primary and secondary schools and intervention and control groups.

Results support the potential effectiveness of school-based ESD as a promising strategy to address sexual violence among school age populations in high prevalence settings.

Policy and news

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have launched a [new tool](#) to assist teachers to deliver GBV prevention activities in early secondary school. The tool includes a series of guidance notes for teachers and school leadership on concepts and issues related to preventing school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) as well as a structured teaching programme for use with students aged 11-14 years.

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children has launched [#SafetoLearn](#) - a new campaign dedicated to ending violence in schools. The campaign includes a Call to Action to more than a hundred Education Ministers to end violence in schools.

The International Rescue Committee have launched a [new toolkit](#) to measure the impact of GBV case management on women and older adolescent girls' psychosocial well-being and felt stigma.

Womankind launched a new policy briefing on [ending online violence and abuse against women's rights activists](#) to coincide with the International Women's Human Rights Defenders Day (29th November 2018). The briefing highlights women's experiences of online violence and abuse and the impact that it is having on women, with policy recommendations and a call for a multi-stakeholder approach to counter silencing of women online.

A new [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\) report](#) provides an overview and in-depth analysis of the scope of gender-related killing of women and girls perpetrated both within and outside of the family sphere. The findings are based on homicide statistics produced by national statistical systems in which the relationship between the victim and perpetrator or the motive is reported.

The Economist Intelligence Unit has developed a country-level benchmarking index that evaluates how stakeholders are responding to sexual violence against children. [The Out of the Shadows](#) index examines four key dimensions related to response including the environment, legal framework, Government commitment and capacity, and engagement of industry, civil society and media – and has been applied to date in 40 select countries.

In November 2018, over 1000 leading researchers, practitioners, policy makers and activists took part in the [13th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion](#). The theme of the conference was 'advancing injury and violence prevention towards SDGs' including a focus on various forms of VAWG.

The EU-funded [Non-Violent Childhoods Programme](#) has developed a set of guidance reports and a campaign raising awareness of the harmful impact of corporal punishment. The programme – based on learning from the Baltic Sea Region - provides guidance standards and practical tools aimed at transforming societies and making non-violent childhoods a reality.

VAWG Helpdesk Round-up

The query service has produced short reports and expert advice to DFID and HMG staff on the following topics over the last quarter:

- Cyber Violence against Women and Girls
- Digital harassment of women politicians
- Organisational approaches to prevent sexual harassment
- Links between climate change, environmental degradation and VAWG
- Lessons from VAWG programming for P/CVE practitioners

Want to know more about how we can help you with research or advice?

Send us an email or give us a call and we can discuss your request further.

VAWG Contact

Telephone
+44 (0) 0203 735 6922

Email
enquiries@VAWGHelpdesk.org.uk

Contributors

Jenny Holden and Dr Erika Fraser (SDDirect)

DFID-Funded Research

What Works to Prevent VAWG?

In December, the What Works Programme held a learning event after five years of this DFID-funded global research collaboration.

The event – held at the Milken Institute of Public Health in Washington DC included an interactive panel discussion followed by Q&A on the implications of the new evidence for VAWG prevention research, policy and programming.

Here is an update of recent research funded under the programme:

Sexual coercion, consent and negotiation: processes of change amongst couples participating in the Indashyikirwa programme (December 2018) This paper explores sexual coercion among couples from rural Rwanda who participated in Indashyikirwa - a 4-year intimate partner violence prevention programme - that included a 5-month couples curriculum to promote equalitarian, non-violent relationships.

Drawing on three rounds of longitudinal qualitative interviews with 14 couples (28 individuals), this paper explores processes of change in experiences of coerced sex over the course of the intervention and 1 year after.

Both partners of couples reported significant changes in their sexual relationship, including reduced experiences of coerced sex, greater communication about sex and increased acceptability for women to initiate sex. Men and women also became more willing to disclose sexual coercion over the course of the study.

The findings highlight several promising aspects of the intervention including grounding discussion of sexual coercion in an analysis of gendered power and norms, reflecting on the consequences of broader forms of sexual coercion and employing a benefits-driven, skills-based approach.

A family centred approach with migrant communities in Nepal (January 2019) This evidence brief provides a summary of results of Sammanit Jeevan (Living with Dignity) - a family-centred intervention to prevent violence against women and girls among migrant communities in Nepal.

Implemented by VSO Nepal and its local partner BYC, the programme recruits young married women, their husbands, and cohabiting mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law to participate in a workshop series that combines three elements: gender transformative norms, economic empowerment, and income generating activities.

The evaluation found that the intervention was successful in increasing couples' earnings and savings, with qualitative evidence that women felt they had more control over their income.

The family-centred intervention also reduced food insecurity among both women and men: among women this more than halved.

Although there was no statistically significant reduction in women's experience of intimate partner violence, there was a reduction in controlling behaviours of husbands, and an improvement in gender equitable attitudes supported by both quantitative and qualitative data.

Couple participants in the Sammanit Jeevan family centred intervention, Nepal. [Photo credit: Chloe Pratt]



Violence against Adolescent Girls: Trends and Lessons for East Africa

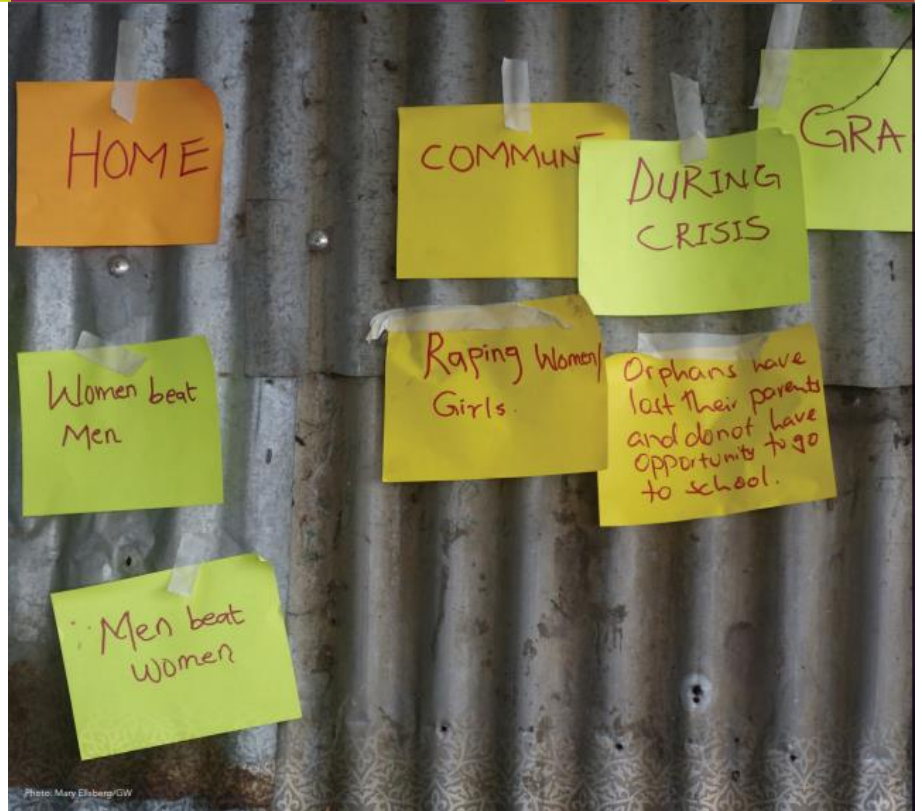
(December 2018) Adolescent girls experience high levels of violence, according to new research in South Sudan which finds over 20% of girls aged 15-18 had experienced an incident of non-partner sexual violence.

As part of the What Works research programme, the Global Women's Institute in partnership with the International Rescue Committee and CARE conducted a mixed-methods study in five locations in South Sudan. Secondary analysis was supported by DFID's Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) consortium.

The research found that conflict within and between communities is a primary driver of violence against adolescent girls. Girls living in villages which have been attacked have a 3-7 times higher likelihood of experiencing non-partner sexual violence.

The findings highlight the need for greater emphasis on improving access to formal services for adolescent girls. More than 70% of adolescent girls in the Juba sites reported that they did not access health, legal, or police services after an incident of violence.

The report recommends greater synergies between child protection and VAW programming to address adolescent girls' unique needs and experiences.



Violence against Adolescent Girls: Research in South Sudan
(Photo credit: Marv Ellsberg. Global Women's Institute)

MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery prevention and responses in South Asia: An Evidence Gap (December 2018)

This evidence gap map provides a visual overview of where there is stronger evidence to tackle trafficking, child and forced labour in South Asia.

Most studies have been conducted in India (n=65), followed by Nepal (30) and Bangladesh (28). Half of included studies examined child labour interventions, followed by a third of studies on sexual exploitation.

There is a clear concentration of studies examining interventions, policies and programs aimed at risk-based prevention among individuals at risk for modern slavery in communities, particularly targeted education and training interventions.

Evidence gaps include: industry initiatives and public private partnerships; interventions that target perpetrators; credit systems; service provision and response interventions; rehabilitation; legal and policy approaches; and ICT solutions. Few studies looked at cost-effectiveness.