

Evidence Digest

Issue 15 April 2018

Latest evidence

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

ENGAGING MEN AS FATHERS

The impact of engaging fathers on Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in Rwanda (April 2018) This RCT assessed the impact of the Bandebereho ('role model') gender-transformative couples' intervention. At the 21 month follow-up, more than half of women in the control group (57%) reported experiencing physical violence from the partner in the previous 12 months, compared to one-third (33%) of women in the intervention group. Similarly, rates of sexual violence from a partner were 60% among women in the control group compared to 35% in the intervention group.

Fathers engaged in the two year **MenCare** couples intervention also spent one hour or more per day doing unpaid care work and household chores.

The findings provide much needed rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of male engagement approaches to tackling intimate partner violence (IPV), and highlight fatherhood as an effective entry point for gender transformative interventions.

CASH TRANSFERS

Cash transfers and IPV in low and middle income countries (February, 2018) In response to increasing evidence of the impact of cash transfer (CT) programmes on IPV, this mixed method review of 23 studies in low and middle income countries explores pathways for how cash transfers may impact on IPV.

The report proposes three pathways through which CT could impact IPV: 1) Economic security and emotional wellbeing; 2) intra-household conflict; and 3) women's empowerment. The first pathway is the only one that exclusively reduces IPV; the other two pathways may increase or decrease IPV, depending on whether additional cash aggravates or reduces relationship conflict and/or how men respond to women's increased empowerment.

The report finds that complementary activities such as trainings and group meetings are likely to be key factors in the effectiveness of CT programmes to reduce IPV.

Cash transfers and young women's experience of IPV in South Africa (February, 2018)

This RCT found that a conditional cash transfer (CCT) targeted to poor girls (aged 13-20) in high school in rural Mpumalanga province reduced the risk of physical intimate partner violence (IPV) in the past 12 months by 34%.

The report finds that the CCT works in part through delaying sexual debut or reducing the number of sexual partners, subsequently offering a protective effect against HIV acquisition.

Photo credit: Perttu Saralampi



Latest evidence

IPV AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

IPV and pregnancy spacing

(January 2018) This meta-analysis used demographic health survey data to explore inter-pregnancy intervals for women who experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional IPV in 29 countries.

Including analysis of data on 52,959 pregnancies from 90,446 women, the report finds that across countries, women's experience of IPV is associated with a reduction in time between pregnancies and a 30% increase in the risk of unintended pregnancy.

Inadequately spaced pregnancies (defined as pregnancies fewer than 18 months apart) are linked to maternal, infant, and child morbidity and mortality, and adverse social, educational and economic outcomes in later life for women and children. Therefore, this report helps to inform estimates of the burden of disease related to IPV.

SOCIAL NORMS AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Gender norms and violence against adolescent girls in conflict affected countries

(February 2018) This article presents results from the qualitative component of a mixed-methods RCT of the COMPASS programme in conflict affected towns in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and refugee camps for predominantly South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia.

The study examined local attitudes and social norms around physical and sexual abuse of girls through semi-structured interviews with caregivers and adolescent girls aged 12–14 in the DRC and 13–19 in the Ethiopian camps.

The report finds that physical and sexual abuse against adolescent girls as young as ten in both settings is normalised, sustained and legitimised by harmful gender-based norms including around appropriate behaviour of 'good' girls, girls as property, victim blaming and a culture of silence.

In both settings, the safety of adolescent girls from GBV was viewed as the responsibility of girls themselves, through the enactment of perceived 'good' behaviours.

The findings suggest that GBV prevention programmes should work with community structures and leaders to address victim-blaming, silence surrounding experiences of violence, and justification of abuse, in order to make interpersonal and community-level norms relating to responses to abuse more protective of adolescent girls.

VIOLENCE RESEARCH

Evaluation of UNICEF's Communities Care Programme: Best practice for research on GBV in humanitarian settings

(January 2018) This article provides a useful resource for programmers and evaluators engaged in implementing and evaluating GBV prevention and response programmes in humanitarian settings.

The paper highlights the use of best practices in GBV research to rigorously evaluate UNICEF's Communities Care programme in two diverse humanitarian settings, Somalia and South Sudan.

Best practices highlighted include: 1) establishment of local partnerships; 2) training and capacity-building with global and local teams; 3) using formative research methods to define and diagnose social norms; 4) use of mixed methods to develop and test

measures of social norms; 5) contextualising the programme to diverse settings; and 6) use of qualitative and quantitative methods to longitudinally evaluate the impact of the program on norms that sustain sexual violence and other forms of GBV.

Notably, the evaluation tested a valid and reliable social norms measure which was used to evaluate the impact of the Communities Care programme on social norms over time.

Technological innovations in research with children exposed to violence **(January 2018)**

This paper explores how new technological advances in research including tablet and internet-based applications, may improve research experiences for children who have been exposed to intimate partner and family violence.

The methodology included a review of relevant literature and a case study of the experience of the Child Development Institute in Ontario, Canada to introduce a new tablet based evaluation tool for children who have experienced trauma.

The findings suggest that tablet-based applications designed specifically for children who have experienced violence can help tackle some of the unique challenges and ethical considerations of research with this group.

However, further research is needed around the quality of data collected, and beneficiary feedback should be gathered on an ongoing basis to determine how children are experiencing the applicability of such technology and how it might be continually improved.

Policy and news

In Morocco, Parliament has just approved a [new law](#) against violence against women (VAW). However, the law falls short of explicitly outlawing marital rape or spousal violence and does not provide a precise definition of domestic violence.

UN Women and UNDP have launched a new [programming guide](#) on Preventing VAW in Elections. This guide is intended for those best positioned to prevent and mitigate violence in elections, including national electoral stakeholders, international organisations as well as those providing programming support on ending VAW.

REDRESS and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI) have published a series of [country-focused supplements](#) to the *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict* for Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Iraq. The protocol and supplements are designed to help strengthen the evidence base for bringing perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict to justice.

DFID's What Works Programme has shared two new short [videos](#) presenting endline findings from evaluations of interventions in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

UNFPA Asia & the Pacific have launched a new [interactive web platform](#) documenting the experience of 100 women researchers surveying more than 7000 households in Mongolia for the first ever national survey on VAW.

The WHO have launched a new [online global knowledge platform](#) – Violence Info - which collates published scientific information on the main types of interpersonal violence. This includes information on prevalence, consequences, risk factors, and prevention and response strategies. It also describes what countries report about their actions to address violence.

The Women's Refugee Commission have developed a [toolkit](#) for mainstreaming gender-based violence (GBV) prevention considerations into cash-based interventions. It includes a protocol to assess and address GBV survivors' needs for cash assistance within GBV case management services, as well as a post-distribution monitoring tool and accompanying guidance to monitor risks.

New interagency gender-based violence case management [guidelines](#) have been developed by the Gender-based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) Steering Committee to set standards for quality, compassionate care for GBV survivors in humanitarian settings, with a particular focus on the provision of case management services.

The Action Linking Initiatives on Violence Against Women and HIV Everywhere (ALIV[H]E) [Framework](#) provides a tool for analysing VAW and HIV, tracking progress, and strengthening existing evidence for promising and effective practice.

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:

- Organisational culture to prevent SEA and harassment
- Child safeguarding
- Whistleblowing
- VAWG and organised crime
- Sexual harassment in public spaces
- ILO convention on violence in the workplace
- VAWG considerations for the North Africa Joint Unit

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

VAWG Contact

Telephone
+44 (0) 0203 735 6922

Email
enquiries@VAWGHelpdesk.org.uk

Contributors

Dr Erika McAslan Fraser and Jenny Holden (SDDirect)

Catherine Klirodotakou (ActionAid)

DFID-Funded Research

What Works to prevent VAWG?

Here is an update on some of the research funded under the different components of DFID's flagship [global research programme](#):

Component 1: What Works to Prevent Violence: A Global Programme.

[IPV and women's mental health \(April 2018\)](#) This article uses cross-sectional data from the Stepping Stones and Creating Futures intervention baseline in South Africa, to explore the links between economic and emotional IPV and women's mental health.

The study found high levels of depression (45%) and suicidal thoughts (30%) among the 680 women participants (aged 18-30).

All measures of emotional IPV and economic IPV showed a consistent positive correlation with women's depression and suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, for both economic IPV and emotional IPV, the frequency of exposure increased the severity of mental health impact. The highest levels of depressive symptoms and thoughts were seen amongst women who experienced emotional or economic IPV, combined with physical IPV or sexual IPV.

This analysis suggests that emotional IPV and economic IPV should not be regarded as 'lighter', less 'important' forms of IPV when compared to physical and/or sexual IPV, in terms of mental health outcomes.

[Social norms and IPV in Nepal \(February 2018\)](#) This article explores the relationship between women's experience of IPV and social norms,

using baseline data from the What Works funded ['change starts at home'](#) project – a behavioural change communication intervention in Nepal.

Using a new measure of social norms (PVNS: Partner Violence Norms Scale), the study found that at both the individual and community level – norms were positively correlated with women's risk of experiencing sexual and physical IPV.

Study findings highlight the potential utility of PVNS to measure social norms around IPV. However, further assessment as the trial progresses and additional psychometric testing are needed.

The findings also reinforce the well-established relationship between men's educational attainment and women's lower risk of IPV and the positive link between household financial stress or low socioeconomic status and women's risk of experiencing IPV.

Component 2: What Works to Prevent Violence: VAWG in conflict and humanitarian crises

[Violence, uncertainty and resilience among refugee women and community workers \(February 2018\)](#) This report presents findings from the mixed-methods evaluation of GBV case management services delivered by IRC and CARE in Dadaab refugee camps in north-eastern Kenya. The project applies a task-based approach to case management where service delivery is led by skilled NGO staff and specific responsibilities are assigned to trained refugee community workers.

The report provides an overview of the context of GBV in Dadaab refugee camps, explores the roles and experiences of national staff and refugee community workers who deliver GBV response services in the refugee community, and provides an assessment of the comprehensive case management approach using task sharing to deliver GBV response services.

Findings include 1 in 3 refugee community workers (39% female and 23% male) had experienced violence against them. Refugee community workers tended to be engaged more in providing translation and interpretation rather than psychosocial support to survivors of violence. Whilst women reported high satisfaction with the services received, GBV survivors highlighted a number of challenges and concerns including questions about confidentiality of the service; community resistance to accessing GBV services; and fear of violent retaliation for visiting services.

Additional research is needed to understand how this model of care would work in other humanitarian settings and the adaptations necessary for it to function effectively.

Component 3: What Works to Prevent Violence: Economic and social costs of violence programme

[Business costs of VAW: The case of Ghana \(March, 2018\)](#) Key findings presented from Ghana in this policy brief include over a quarter (26%) of female employees have experienced IPV in the past 12 months, and 22% of male employees reported perpetrating IPV. Women who had experienced IPV took on average 13 days off work, and over 50% of survivors

DFID-Funded Research

experienced an impact on their work as a result of experiencing violence including difficulties concentrating and working slower than usual.

Results suggest a strong association between IPV and productivity and that the scale of the impact on the business sector could be substantial. Therefore, investments in preventing IPV could be beneficial to business in reducing lost labour and increasing productivity.

DFID Aid Match

She Can: Improving safety, mobility, access to justice and inclusive public services (April 2018) This independent evaluation of ActionAid's She Can project across four countries (Kenya, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Myanmar) found a high degree of impact on changing discriminatory and violent practices and in making services more gender-responsive, in addition to some

degree of improvement in access to justice.

The evaluation validates and provides evidence for the overall She Can theory of change and wider model of working with women as change agents through a human-rights based approach. In particular, the empowerment of volunteer Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and HRD groups was found to be a particularly effective approach to enable them to know their rights, confidently advocate with duty bearers, mobilise their communities and support survivors of VAWG. However, the evaluation highlights a critical need to ensure adequate support for HRDs in terms of economic empowerment, psychosocial support, mechanisms to ensure safety and continued education.

Other findings include that engagement between HRDs and duty bearers was most successful when

formalised and regular, and that both community mobilisation and duty bearer advocacy were particularly effective when supported by communication and mass media strategies. These resulted in changes in men and boys' attitudes, and a documented reduction of VAWG in the relevant communities.

The evaluation also found impacts beyond the ToC, including reductions in child marriage, improved sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) awareness and services and a breaching of silence on domestic violence at the community level.

Sierra Leone Opportunities for Business Action (SOBA)

Preventing IPV as part of a DFID private sector development programme (March 2018) This research provides an interesting case study of how a DFID programme put in place a range of low-cost initiatives to mitigate the risk of its female employees experiencing violence from their husbands and partners, primarily for women staffing newly established rice kiosks.

For example, employees' partners (with the consent of employees) were included in staff inductions to counter husbands' misperceptions about the nature of the job and prevent family tensions. Survivors of violence were also referred for professional counselling support through a specialized local organisation that also facilitated a conversation on domestic violence during staff induction.

Photo Credit: Alice Whitby/ActionAid, 2018

