Preventing intimate partner violence: evidence & opportunities

Charlotte Watts
Chief Scientific Advisor
Department of International Development
What is violence against women?

'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’

• Includes sexual abuse of children, rape, intimate partner violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking & harmful traditional practices
Violence against women and girls is widespread globally.
*Results show the simple average prevalence of lifetime IPV among ever partnered / married women by country. Only includes population based studies with samples that are representative of either the whole country, region, or a city or town, and have an age range from <20 to >48. Any definition of IPV included, and varies by study.*
National data: percentage women who have experienced intimate partner violence in the past year*

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VIOLENCE AFFECTS GIRLS AND WOMEN AT EVERY AGE AND STAGE OF LIFE

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
Approximately 20% of women and 5-10% of men report being sexually abused as children.³

FORCED/EARLY MARRIAGE
Latest international estimates indicate that more than 60 million women aged 20-24 years were married before the age of 18 years. About half of the girls in early marriage live in south Asia.⁴

KILLINGS IN THE NAME OF HONOUR
A total of 1,957 honour killing events occurred in Pakistan from 2004 to 2007.⁵

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE
Globally, 30% women who have ever been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner.⁶

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING
More than 125 million women and girls alive have been cut in 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where FGM/C is concentrated.⁷

TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS
11.4 million³

SEXUAL VIOLENCE
It is estimated that globally 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner since age 15, although data is lacking in some regions.⁸

A FEW COMMON TYPES OF VIOLENCE
Health impact: Women exposed to intimate partner violence are...

**Mental Health**
- **TWICE** as likely to experience depression
- **ALMOST TWICE** as likely to have alcohol use disorders

**Sexual and Reproductive Health**
- 16% more likely to have a low birth-weight baby
- 15 times more likely to acquire HIV and 1.5 times more likely to contract syphilis infection, chlamydia or gonorrhoea

**Death and Injury**
- 42% of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner have experienced injuries as a result
- 38% of all murders of women globally were reported as being committed by their intimate partners
Many risk factors for intimate partner violence

**Individual & relationship**
- Experiences of childhood abuse, growing up in violent household
- Problematic alcohol use by male
- Acceptance of violence as means to resolve conflict
- Less than secondary education of women

**Community level**
- Acceptability of wife beating
- Norms supporting male authority/control over women
- Norms of family privacy
- Lack of social sanction for violence

**Broader societal level**
- Lack of economic rights & entitlements for women, including access to formal wage employment
- Discriminatory family law & limited acceptability of divorce for women
- Inequality in access to higher education
- Emphasis on women’s purity & family honor

Adapted from Heise 2013
Many potential prevention entry points: what works?

**Empower women and Girls**
- Ensure girls complete secondary school
- Increase women’s access to and control over
- Create safe spaces and strengthen social support
- Build knowledge and critical thinking skills

**Eliminate Gender Disparities**
- Reform marriage & family law
- Equalize women’s access to property and inheritance
- Liberalize divorce
- Eliminate Child marriage
- Remove barriers to property, credit and business ownership

**Laws, Policy Institutions**

**Relationship Skills**
- Improve communication
- Build skills in conflict resolution
- Promote joint decision-making
- Reduce triggers

**Social norms**

**Exposure to violence in Childhood**
- Parenting education
- Training in non-violent discipline
- Child abuse prevention
- Support for children who witness violence
- Early intervention for conduct problems

**Developmental Life course**

**Relationship**

**Developmental Life course**

**Family & Work Life**

**Socioeconomic conditions**

**Transform Norms**
- Promote critical reflection
- Challenge specific norms through staged strategies
- Build new positive norms
- Use theory-informed media and community mobilisation

**Reduce alcohol availability & binge drinking**
- Reduce outlet density
- Regulate promotion, advertising, drinking age
- Alternative livelihoods for traditional producers
- Services for addiction

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Examples of effective prevention approaches in low-middle income countries

Avahan, Karnataka

Image: micro-finance & empowerment intervention

SASA! community mobilisation
The SASA! Study
exploring community and relationship change
SASA! Study Overview

- **Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial**
  - Baseline: 1583 respondents
    - 717 female, 866 male
  - Follow up: 2649 respondents
    - 1181 female, 1468 male

- **Qualitative Research**
  - Baseline: 64 in-depth interviews and 12 FGDs
  - Follow up: 92 in-depth interviews

- **Operations Research**
  - 6000+ process reports
  - 750+ impact monitoring
  - 6 rapid assessment surveys

- **Economic evaluation**
  - Economic costing study
The **SASA! Activist Kit**

- developed by Raising Voices
- community mobilization approach
- changing social norms that perpetuate violence against women and HIV
The SASA! Approach: How it works

**Start**
- Learning about the community
- Selecting Community Activists
- Fostering ‘power within’ staff and community activists

**Awareness**
- Helping activists gain confidence
- Informal activities
- Encouraging critical thinking about men’s ‘power over’ women

**Support**
- Strengthening skills and connections between community members
- Joining ‘power with’ others to support change

**Action**
- Trying new behaviors, celebrating change
- Fostering the ‘power to’ make positive change

Arrows indicate involvement of community members, leaders, and institutions to build critical mass.
Building Critical Mass
Sustained, multi-layered programming

Multiple strategies to reach out to all levels in the community to affect social norm change

- Local Activism
- Work with stakeholders
- Media and Advocacy

Content evolves over 4 phases
SASA! in Kampala

Over 400 activists
‘regular’ women and men in community, local government and cultural leaders, ssengas, police, health care providers, drama activists, youth, etc

leading over 11,000 activities
community conversations, door-to-door discussions, quick chats, trainings, public events, poster discussions, community meetings, film shows, soap opera groups, etc

reaching more than 260,000 community members in 6 parishes in Makindye and Rubaga

• Implementation lead by CEDOVIP
• Technical assistance and monitoring by Raising Voices
Trial conclusions

• **SASA! had significant community impacts on:**
  – Attitudes towards the acceptability of violence & women being able to refuse sex
  – Past year occurrence of physical violence among those with a history of violence (52% lower, significant)
  – Levels of sexual concurrency reported by men
  – Women’s reported ability to refuse sex

• **Promising community impacts on:**
  • Community responses to women experiencing violence
  • Overall levels physical violence (52% lower, not significant)
  • New occurrence of violence in relationships

• **Direct intervention exposure not necessary to achieve benefits**
  – Cost approximately $1 / day per activist supported
Broader elements of successful prevention programmes

• Multiple, mutually reinforcing components
• Informed by theory and evidence
• Derived from well conceptualised theory of change
• Engages both men and women (either together or sequentially)
• Incorporates strategies to diffuse impacts
• Include explicit skills building elements and opportunities to practice them
VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE
LANCET SERIES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

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THE LANCET

World Health Organization

LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE