

Social Costs of Violence against Women and Girls: Evidence from Ghana

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What Works to Prevent Violence, Component 3:
Economic and Social Costs of VAWG



What Works Component 3: Overview of research

- The What Works to Prevent Violence: Economic and Social Costs of VAWG is the third component of the larger DFID funded What Works to Prevent VAWG programme.
- Research undertaken within component 3 includes:
 - Surveys with women aged 18-60
 - 3000 in Pakistan
 - 2000 each in Ghana and South Sudan,
 - Qualitative research components in Ghana and Pakistan:
 - in-depth interviews,
 - participatory focus group discussions
 - key informant interviews.
 - Business surveys with managers and male and female employees also undertaken
 - 100+ per country
- Analysis currently underway with findings emerging.



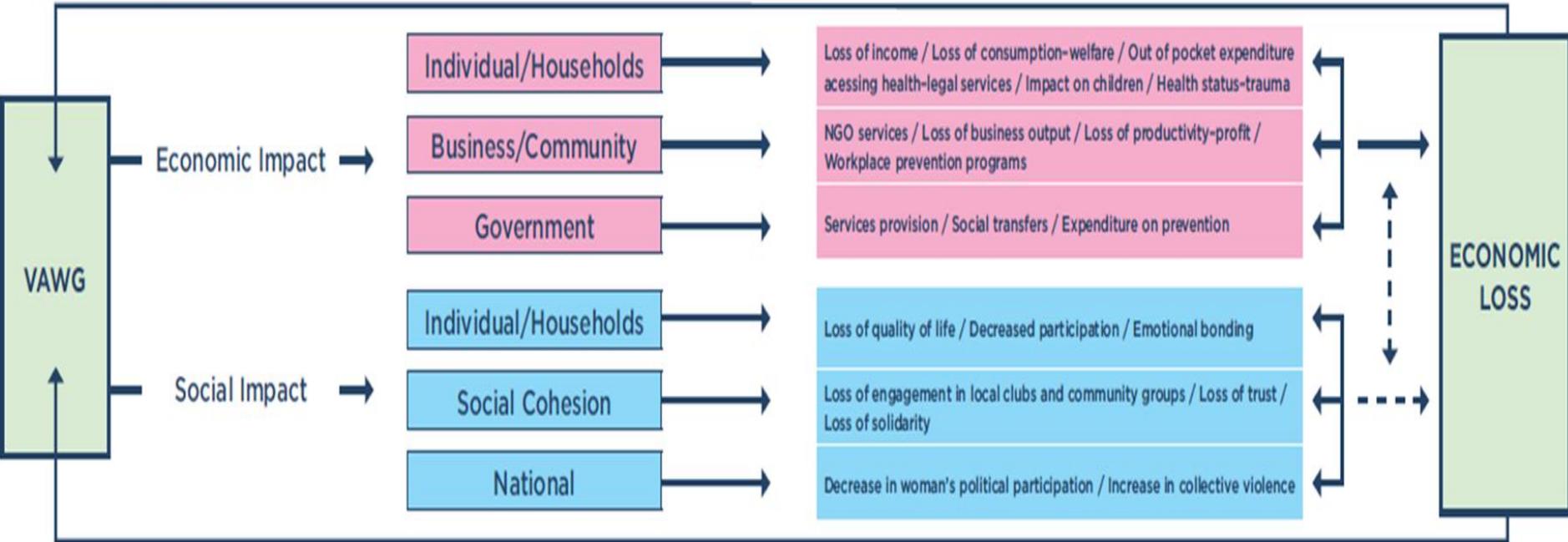
Intangible costs of VAWG: addressing a knowledge gap

- Component Three investigating economic and social costs of VAWG in Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan.
- Costing studies have done a good job of understanding the direct costs of VAWG, i.e. those that are tangible or monetary.
- Less understanding of intangible, non-monetary costs.
 - Where these have been examined tend to focus on individual level, e.g. health impacts, or household level, e.g. impact on children's wellbeing or education.
- Understanding of the social costs of VAWG at community level remains a gap in knowledge.
- In this presentation, will present initial insights relating to the social costs of VAWG at the community level from qualitative fieldwork in Ghana.



Conceptual Framework

Figure 2: Impact Pathways of VAWG on the Economy: a Conceptual Model



Sample Size and Methods: Ghana

- Potential participants were identified first through quantitative survey conducted by local partners.
- Fieldwork took place between January and February 2017 in Ghana.
- Data collection methods included:



30 in-depth individual interviews with women



8 Focus Group Discussions:
4 with men, 4 with women



10 Key Informant Interviews

- International Centre for Research on Women with support from ISSER at University of Ghana undertook training of local field researchers, including modules on research ethics and gender sensitive research.



Finding 1: Diminished sense of safety within the community

- Where violence, especially sexual violence, is perpetrated it can create ripple effects whereby those who were not directly victimised feel less safe.
- Although IPV is often perceived as a private issue, perpetrators may be seen as 'unsafe' men. Impunity and their ongoing presence in the community adds to a diminished sense of safety.
 - In such contexts, it was reported that women will reduce their mobility and engagement in the community.

The area will get a bad reputation... there will always be fear and panic.
(IDI, Female)



Finding 2: Reduction in social cohesion

- Shame and stigma lead to women who experience violence reducing involvement in social and community groups.
- In cases of IPV, the family may be stigmatized and excluded from involvement in community groups and activities.
 - isolation and exclusion may compound other negative impacts of violence and reduces women's access to supports.
 - Reduces social cohesion as some groups/families seen as having less belonging to the community than others.

I become shy and will not go to public, I could not speak in public; it had a serious effect on me, (survivor, FGD, Urban, women)

She will find it difficult going to such places ... she will cut herself from her social connections (Urban, FGD)



Finding 3: Losses for women's leadership

- Some FGDs/interviews suggest that a woman who has experienced VAW would resign from key roles in the community for fear of gossip, embarrassment or lack of respect from community members.
- May be asked to resign by community members who see her as 'lacking wisdom', as not having "the qualities of a leader" or as not being "qualified" to give her opinion on issues in the community.

People will have less respect for you as the leader, they will not value what you say. If such a woman is a church elder, people will not listen to what she preaches. (Woman, IDI)

If for instance she was a fellowship leader in the church or community, it will not give her the moral right to advice people and she will feel that she has failed at home and so she is not in the position of giving any form of advice..." Rural In-Depth Interview, Female



Broad Impacts: Evidence from Ghana

- Evidence suggests that in communities where VAWG is common, it has a chilling effect on women's and girls' mobility and leadership, in fact on their capabilities
- Undermines both women's and their communities' potential .
- Thus, addressing VAWG has far-reaching implications. Not just about women and their households but also about the functioning of vibrant, productive, equitable communities.





With thanks,

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