

What works to prevent violence against women and girls?



Lessons from DFID's flagship programme

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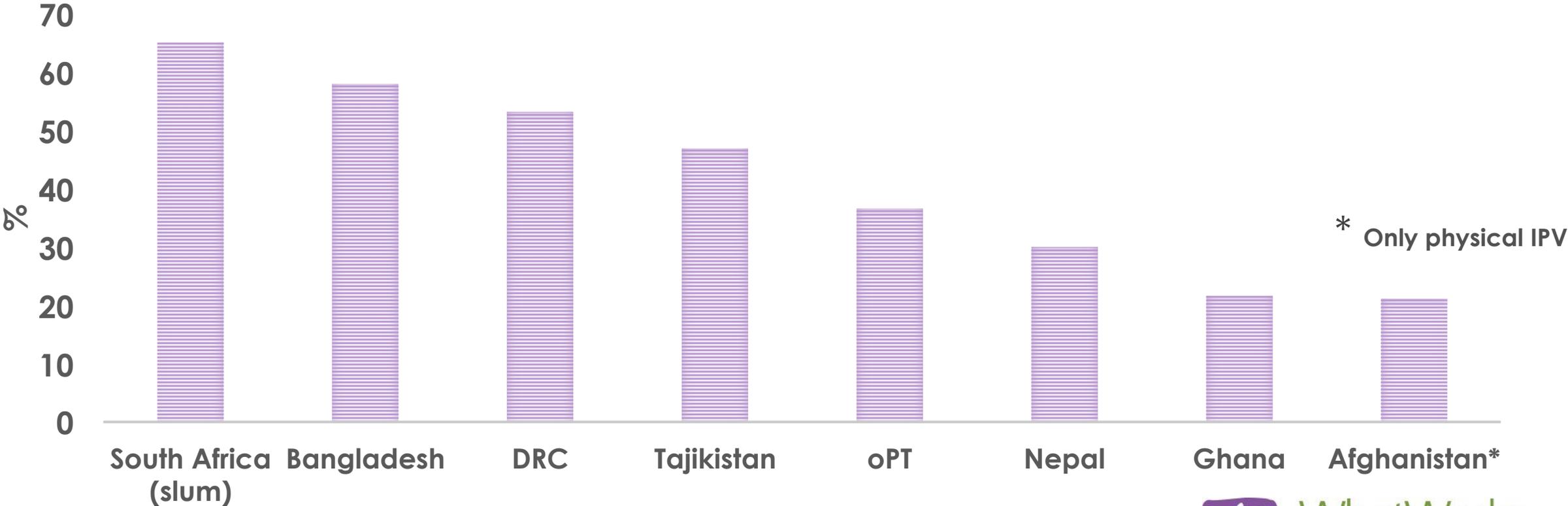


DFID flagship programme: What works to prevent violence against women?

- ▶ **What Works** is generating new knowledge on :
 - ▶ **drivers** of violence
 - ▶ What works in **prevention**
 - ▶ **costs** of violence prevention
- ▶ Work has been conducted in **13 countries** of Africa and Asia
- ▶ We have evaluated **15 VAWG prevention interventions** and will have **6 costing studies**

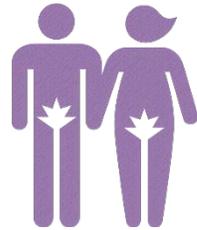


SCALE OF THE PROBLEM : Women's experience of physical or sexual violence in the past 12 months



Key tasks in VAWG prevention : addressing drivers of violence

- ✓ Empower women, change gender relations and eliminate patriarchal privilege
- ✓ Prevent the use of all forms of violence and change violence-related social norms
- ✓ Reduce structural inequalities – poverty, low education



- ✓ Strengthen relationships-communication
- ✓ Strengthen mental health & reduce substance abuse
- ✓ Change parenting to strengthen child protection
- ✓ Protect women & girls



WhatWorks

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What Works interventions are evaluating programming on..

- ▶ **Economic empowerment of women and men and gender programming**
- ▶ **Social norms change programmes: work with men and women in communities**
- ▶ **Interventions and research with children (mainly in schools)**
- ▶ **Interventions with couples and special populations**



Key elements of all effective evidence-based interventions

- ✓ Context- and **population-appropriate**
- ✓ Address **important** and **amenable** drivers of violence for the context
- ✓ Are **multi-component** and have a **strong theory of change**
- ✓ Based on theories of **gender & power**
- ✓ Work with men and women or girls and boys
- ✓ Use **effective behaviour change methods** for training components: including **critical reflection**, **skills building**, **experiential learning** and **building empathy**
- ✓ Provide **time for change**
- ✓ Delivered by purposefully selected, **well trained**, experienced and well supported **facilitators** or **volunteers**



VAWG PREVENTION THROUGH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

- ▶ Poverty and women's financial dependence on men are very well established drivers of VAWG
- ▶ Adding a **gender transformative component** to economic empowerment interventions can **reduce IPV**, **prevent** possible **backlash** IPV and **improve** economic **outcomes**
- ▶ IPV prevention through economic empowerment requires **an intentional focus on IPV**
- ▶ And to **meaningfully change** participants' **economic position**
- ▶ In settings where women are most **constrained, family-centred interventions are important**
- ▶ **Not all women benefit** - some require **more intensive interventions** focused on other key drivers e.g. mental health and substance misuse
- ▶ **Economic interventions with** poor and marginal **men may enable engagement around gender and power** that would otherwise not be possible



SOCIAL NORMS CHANGE INTERVENTIONS

- ▶ Interventions can change harmful social norms **through community change agents** can reduce IPV, but they are not always effective
- ▶ **Awareness raising** alone **does not change behavior**. It **must be followed by meaningful interpersonal engagement** and programmes addressing drivers of violence
- ▶ Effective interventions **constructively engage community leadership structures** – religious and traditional – as well as **engage and support the police, health and social services**
- ▶ **Enabling access to services and counselling couples are key elements of more effective interventions**
- ▶ Community action teams can be **successful when**:
 - ▶ They are **well trained** and **supported**
 - ▶ There is a **long time frame** (2+ years)



KEY LEARNINGS IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR AND WITH CHILDREN

- ▶ **Even in challenging settings, interventions in schools can significantly reduce peer violence and corporal punishment**
- ▶ Effective school-based interventions:
 - ▶ Are **developmentally appropriate**
 - ▶ **Recognise that children take time to learn:** no effective very short interventions
 - ▶ Include **critical reflection, empowerment to communicate** and **address gendered power**
 - ▶ Reach out to **families and communities**
 - ▶ **Are delivered by highly trained teachers, NGO staff or coaches**



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Couples and special populations

- ▶ Couples programming **can be delivered safely** and have **considerable impact on IPV**
- ▶ We have demonstrated particular benefit in:
 - ▶ Couples (family) economic & gender empowerment interventions
 - ▶ Substance abuse driven violence
 - ▶ Highly patriarchal & traumatised populations
 - ▶ Counselling as an adjunct to social norms change interventions
- ▶ These interventions are effective where the overall interventions **addresses the key drivers for VAWG** and where there is a direct and **overt focus on building** the relationship of **'the couple'**
- ▶ 'Couples programming' is **not effective** and may not be safe **when there is concealment or ambiguity around 'couple' status** – for example in highly stigmatised populations



Conclusion

- ▶ **VAWG can be prevented in programmatic timeframes**, but we have also shown that **not every intervention**, used in every setting **works**
- ▶ **Context is important** – interventions must be carefully selected and adapted for a setting
- ▶ **Violence prevention** interventions **must be adequately funded**
- ▶ The field can now **move to scale up with caution**, and should **embed** this work **in** a programme of further **research**



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