

VAWG Mainstreaming in Development: a Framework for Action

Abstract

If we are finally to end violence against women and girls (VAWG), then this commitment needs to be embedded into all development programmes regardless of sectorial focus. Women and girls are vulnerable across the board and recognition of this reality is the first step. The VAWG Mainstreaming Framework we propose here addresses how to centralise a VAWG lens into development programming irrespective of programmatic priorities. This article will evidence the need for such a lens and then present the approach through a number of stages. Finally the model will be applied to two programme areas, micro finance and HIV/Aids, demonstrating its applicability across development issues.

Introduction

Sustainable Development Goal 5 states: 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'. Within that goal are 9 targets whose common objective is to end gender inequality in all its forms, including violence against women and girls (VAWG). Two targets are focused on VAWG: 5.2 is *Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls* and 5.3 is *Eliminate all harmful practices*. There is ongoing debate on the targets, for example the need to remove any age caps, thereby to acknowledge that violence can and does occur at all stages of a woman's life, from earliest childhood into oldest age, as well as the necessity also to disaggregate data and analysis. ¹ While there are many examples of programmes, policies and conventions to end VAWG, we argue that without a systematic model for mainstreaming an end to VAWG we will not see SDG 5 and its targets achieved.

Definitions of violence

Popular definitions of violence vary substantially; violence is a concept used to categorise certain forms of interpersonal behaviour, and as such it is subject to sociocultural interpretation. Thus, some acts and structures viewed as violent by western societies may not be viewed as such by other communities, and opinions about whether/how to challenge them will, therefore, vary. This diverse understanding of violence also applies to academic research, which frequently operates with different definitions according to discipline (gender studies, law, peace studies etc.). This lack of clarity across contexts and academic fields can lead to difficulty in cross-cultural approaches to programme and policy design. In research on VAWG a broad definition of violence is required, which recognises that violence is both a physical and a psychological phenomenon, and that it operates on multiple levels, from the personal to the macro-structural.

One major development partner input to tackle VAWG is the global programme funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) - the *What Works to Prevent Violence Research and Innovation Programme* (henceforward What Works). What Works is supporting projects and evaluations in upwards of twenty countries in Africa and Asia. In this paper we have chosen to follow the example of the What Works Programme in adopting the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) definition of VAWG:

"Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and/or girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" (UN 1993; see also Scriver *et al* 2015: 8).

The What Works programme (Scriver *et al* 2015) supplements this definition with a vantage point gained from the social ecology approach (outlined in detail below). This theoretical perspective facilitates the understanding of violence as multidimensional, with inter-linkages between personal, situational and sociocultural (structural) factors.

We argue that a mainstreaming model needs to refine this perspective somewhat through the addition of intersectional analysis and a VAWG spectrum. In combination these frameworks allow for a more complex and nuanced understanding to emerge of why violence happens, within this analysis strategies and effective action can be identified.

The reasons for mainstreaming VAWG

Apart from specific programmes focused solely on ending VAWG, there are no models for mainstreaming a VAWG perspective within different sectorial development programmes. In this paper we have brought together the contextual research on VAWG with the literature on analysing and understanding why it happens. In doing so we have developed a model that could lead the way in shaping how development actors include VAWG as a central stand in their programming regardless of the sector focus (e.g. health, education, access to justice, environment, livelihoods).

In order to illustrate this mainstreaming approach we will primarily apply our model to two programme and country examples. In Nepal the national wide and government led Integrated Women's Development Programme has so far focused on promoting and supporting women in micro finance initiative but intends to expand its remit into building resilience to end VAW and open access to justice. Secondly, we will consider how a VAW mainstreaming lens could be applied to HIV/Aids prevention programmes. We further critically consider the overall attention given by DFID to VAWG prevention and mitigation and development of an evidence base, beyond What Works. We set out here our theoretical framework, with the intention that we and other practitioners may have future opportunity to test the model's appropriateness and validity and also improve it through application and evaluation.

Because there is no agreed, commonly applied approach to mainstreaming VAWG prevention into sectoral and multi-sectoral programmes such action can be aided by building partly on best practice, lessons learned and indeed the failures of gender mainstreaming. Other guidance can be provided by the programmes and research supported by DFID, one of whose four pillars in its strategic vision for women and girls is addressing VAWG in all its manifestations. National, public sector, civil society and development partner actions dedicating to preventing and mitigating VAWG provide additional information, as does the development of an evidence base to inform future interventions.

The urgent need for a mainstreaming approach was clearly stated in a recent Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) review of DFID's VAWG programming (May 2016). While DFID was praised for its significant investment in world leading innovations and research into VAWG, it was noted that if VAWG is to be eradicated it must become a key focus across sectors, regardless of whether the key focus of any programme is to end VAWG. This will be just as valid for other development partnerships.

The structure of this paper

This body of paper is divided into three sections. Section one will explore in greater detail how the category of VAWG is conceptualised and detail the reasons why a mainstreaming approach is necessary. Section two presents our mainstreaming lens as a staged approach. The third section applies the VAWG mainstreaming framework to two specific programmes in order to demonstrate its applicability across sectors.

1. What is meant by VAWG and why is a mainstreaming framework necessary?

We argue that in order for the goal of ending VAWG to be embedded into a development project (regardless of sectoral focus) attempts need to be made to do the following:

- Create an **enabling environment** to support action against VAWG, including policy and legal change, support services (health, psychosocial support, advice over exit options) All such work requires increased and deliberate spending and capacity building.
- Work on **changes to social norms** that limit women and girls' opportunities to participate in society free

from fear of VAWG. Such activities also necessitate work to foster and sustain positive changes to male attitudes and behaviours, as well as those of wider society. Specifically here there need to be targeted challenges to the normalisation of violence in everyday life.

- Increase **social perceptions of the benefits and value** of girls and women being equal partners in societies thereby reducing the levels of social/violent control women and girls are subjected to (which relates to their inferior positioning).

The proposed VAWG Mainstreaming Framework is further based on the premise that it must include male perspectives, not solely through an identification as perpetrators of violence, but e.g. as champions of more equal gender relations, as community members with authority and leadership potential to support social norm change, as active participants in debates about gender issues and indeed as survivors themselves of sexual violence. (See e.g. Alexander-Scott *et al* 2016, Fulu *et al* 2013, Fulu, Jewkes *et al* 2013, Gruber & Bradley with Conroy 2016, IPPF 2010, Jewkes *et al* 2014, Morrell *et al* 2012; Raising Voices *et al* 2015)

VAWG mainstreaming provides opportunities for policy-making and legislative work to respond more effectively to the needs of everybody – women and men, girls and boys. VAWG mainstreaming can support public interventions to be more effective in tackling the continuation and perpetuation of inequality and social norms that enable VAWG. VAWG mainstreaming cannot and does not only intend to avoid the reinforcement of inequalities that adversely affect women and men. To be effective and sustainable VAWG mainstreaming must work from current situations, identify and tackle inequalities and support the development of evidence-based policy and practice that address the reasons for VAWG and seek to dismantle the social norms that perpetuate and justify violence, provide impunity to perpetrators and fail survivors.

VAWG mainstreaming has to be grounded in gender mainstreaming - one without the other cannot work. Gender inequality contributes to normalisation of VAWG. At the core of addressing VAWG is the need to tackle gender inequality, by bringing together all stakeholders with investment either in changing or maintaining existing systems and policies that prevent action, and working with all such actors to effect change. Efforts to bring about policy change in any one sector must be reflected in similar efforts to achieve a multisectoral approach to VAWG mainstreaming in policy and through such interventions to work towards implementation of policy into practice.

Why does VAWG Mainstreaming matter?

Violence against women and girls is the most widespread form of abuse worldwide, affecting 35% of all women during their lives. DFID's 2011 Strategic Vision for Girls and Women emphasises the crucial importance of supporting opportunities for women and girls to have greater and sustained:

- **Voice in** decision-making
- **Choice for** education, when and whom to marry
- **Control over** one's own body, including freedom from sexual violence, freedom from discriminatory social norms such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and equal access to services and justice

A recent report mapping DFID VAWG programmes discusses vanguard action by DFID, with its portfolio of work indicating enhanced focus, e.g. the development of the VAWG Theory of Change (ToC) and action to tackle social norms that enable VAWG and gender inequality (OPML 2014).

Despite such increased attention, the majority of development programmes do not and are unlikely ever to prioritise spending on activities aimed at improving the lives of women and girls, not least through elimination of VAWG. This is why VAWG Mainstreaming in ATJ programmes and beyond is essential. Before we go into greater detail about our proposed VAWG mainstreaming framework we will first review the evidence.

What works to prevent VAWG? A review of the evidence so far

Despite the need for context specificity, there are certain broad, base-level observations that can be made about VAWG cross-culturally. These observations must not shape policy or programme design, but can be taken as a useful baseline from which to formulate questions and begin analytical processes in more focused, contextual research. Recently, the What Works programme has conducted a review of the VAWG literature. The programme has also produced a Briefing Paper summarising the effectiveness of VAWG prevention and response mechanisms (Jewkes 2014). It finds, for instance, that the existence of shelters and protection orders with proactive arrest policies is ‘promising’, followed by counselling and paralegal programmes. Less convincing evidence has been found to support advocacy interventions or ‘batterers’ programmes’ for example. Single-component programmes are also criticised as being less effective than multi-component programmes. It must again be noted, however, that this overview paints a broad picture, not reflective of the context specificity that is highlighted as necessary and that we argue here is a critical first step for effective VAWG mainstreaming.

Further to this call for more contextual evidence, the What Works programme has also specified critical gaps in current knowledge about VAWG perpetration and prevention:

- The current evidence is biased towards individual predictors of violence (victimhood and perpetration); more information is needed about factors operating at the relationship and community levels, including greater understanding of the range of potential male responses to VAWG in those situations (see e.g. the 2014 *Lancet* series on VAWG for an overview of the complexities of the issues).
- There is a paucity of studies that consider macro-level factors in the geographic distribution of violence types, and how global, economic and political structures affect the dynamics of VAWG (see e.g. Remme *et al* 2014, Taylor *et al* 2015, UNAIDS 2012a, Walker & Duvvury 2016).
- More information is needed about how different levels of the social ecology (e.g. household, community, broader society/nation) interact to protect or endanger women and girls.
- Researchers and practitioners must stop working in ‘silos’, and instead must embrace comparative approaches in terms of methods, analytical angles and research foci (e.g. multi-community, organisational, structural).

This is broadly reflective of DFID’s Theory of Change for VAWG, which outlines four critical areas for concurrent intervention. These transect all social spheres ranging from the individual level (e.g. rights awareness, education) to the community level (social norm change), to the broader structural level (political will, legal capacity, service availability etc.). Although economic empowerment is embedded within this ToC, little evidence currently exists on how this one element of empowerment (more broadly defined) actually interacts with others.

Looking at DFID’s approaches to VAWG

DFID has developed a Theory of Change for addressing VAWG, which outlines four critical areas for intervention:

- Empowerment of women and girls (e.g. land rights, education, rights awareness)
- Change in social norms
- Development of political will and legal/institutional capacity
- Provision of more comprehensive services

Broadly speaking, DFID funded programmes in this area focus equally on all four points (OPML 2014). Notably, this reflects a substantial increase in programmes concentrating on social norm change (up 40% since 2012). 19 of the 29 countries with DFID funded VAWG programmes engage with all four of the intervention categories above.

These areas of focus are incorporated under the larger umbrella of DFID’s Strategic Vision for Girls and Women, first articulated in 2011 and subsequently revised in 2013, which sets out the strategy for women’s empowerment as four pillars:

- Pillar 1: Girls’ completion of primary and secondary education
- Pillar 2: Girls’ and women’s economic empowerment
- Pillar 3: Girls’ and women’s ability to live free from violence
- Pillar 4: Universal sexual and reproductive health and rights

These pillars, although envisaged distinctly, are in reality embedded with each other in reciprocal and highly contextual relationships. This is conceptualised in terms of the need to create an ‘enabling environment’ that facilitates progress in each area (DFID 2014).

However, a recent policy briefing emphasises the need to reflect the pillars’ connections more skilfully in both theory and practice by linking related aims and approaches, as well as adopting a more comprehensive multi-sectoral approach in their pursuit (ITAD 2015). Central to creating this enabling environment is the introduction of legal rights and access to justice. Mainstreaming VAWG within development needs, therefore, to be framed in terms of the creation of a sustainable and enabling environment that takes a survivor centric approach. In other words, one that places women and girls front and centre, while working with other key partners such as public institutions, community groups, men and boys.

Empowerment of Women and Girls

Ultimately we argue that all development programmes should seek to empower women and girls by ensuring an enabling environment within which their rights are respected and justice is accessible. Empowerment in a broad sense depends on improvements in women’s position: alterations in patterns of control.

This has often been expressed in terms of the power quartet:

Type of power relation	Implications for an understanding of empowerment
Power Over: ability to influence and coerce	Changes in underlying resources and power to challenge constraints
Power To: organise and change existing hierarchies	Increased individual capacity and opportunities for access
Power With: increased power from collective action	Increased solidarity to challenge underlying assumptions
Power from Within: increased individual consciousness	Increased awareness and desire for change

Table from Luttrell *et al* (2009).

It is also understood that women do not form a singular homogenous group. Gender intersects with other forms of socio-economic discrimination to produce a diverse array of oppressive environments for women (intersecting issues include, for example, race, nationality, sexuality, class, religious identity). However, the distinction between women’s practical gender needs and their strategic gender interests (Molyneux 1985) allows for the development of generalised gender policy by distinguishing between context-specific practical requirements on one hand and a ‘deductive analysis of the structures of women’s subordination’ on the other (Kabeer 2012: 6).

Naila Kabeer’s contribution to this overarching feminist politics has been substantial; she offers a specific definition of empowerment, which covers women’s sense of self-worth and social identity; their desire and ability to challenge their subordination; their capacity to exercise strategic control over their lives and to renegotiate relationships, and their ability to participate alongside men in the reformation of their societies

in ways that lead to more fair and democratic distributions of power and opportunity (Kabeer 2008, 2012) ⁱⁱ. Her well-known statement covers these points thus:

Empowerment = agency, resources and achievement.

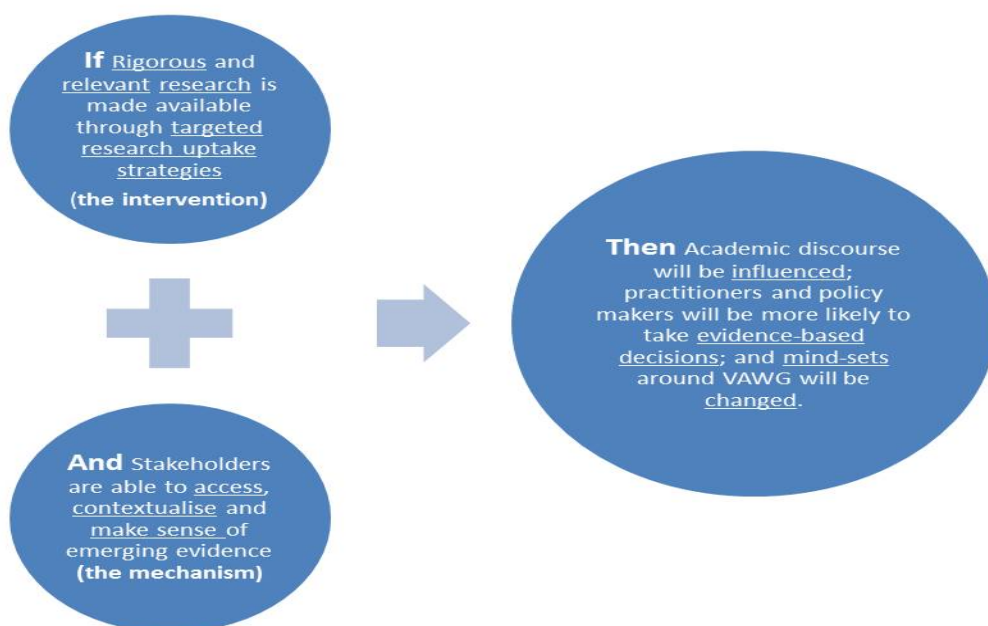
Empowerment: agency, resources, achievement (Kabeer 2003: 171-173)
'Agency encompasses both observable action in the exercise of choice - decision-making, protest, bargaining and negotiation - as well as the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their actions, their sense of agency.'

Kabeer's definition offers an overarching agenda while simultaneously leaving room the required analyses of intersecting aspects of social discrimination that affect women differently according to context. Additionally, this definition of **empowerment encompasses the need for attention to position and condition**: the transformation of social and cultural power structures (improving position) must be accompanied by efforts to enable people to benefit from such changes (people must have good condition - health, economic opportunities etc. - in order to benefit from the possibilities available). Thus, meeting basic needs is not bypassed by the drive for empowerment. Addressing condition and position must go hand in hand; care should be taken to combine and sequence both kinds of approach but they should not be confused with each other (see also Luttrell *et al* 2009).

2. Presenting the VAWG Mainstreaming Lens

In this next section we set out our mainstreaming approach presented as a series of stages designed to guide programmers in embedded a VAWG lens in their activities.

Stage One - Framing Knowledge Collection around VAWG to Guide Programme Design



A **VAWG lens** requires actors to automatically reflect on **how and if** a programme will positively or negatively impact on VAWG. **A series of critical and reflective questions should be asked** through the design stage that considers if and how interventions may positively or negative impact on levels of VAWG.

These include:

Design Questions	Programme Reflection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do we understand the types of violence most commonly experienced by women and girls programme recipients? ▪ To what extent are these types of violence commonly talked about and acknowledged to be unjust and abusive? What level of normalisation exists? ▪ To what extent is this normalisation of violence similarly applied by men and women, boys and girls? 	<p>Understanding these types of violence should involve an understanding of the contexts in which it occurs (at home, school, work on the way to school or work etc.) If this is not known should a piece of research be commissioned in order to gather this knowledge?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are some groups more likely to project normalised views of VAWG? ▪ Who are the most vulnerable groups? ▪ And what material resources and/or social/cultural capital do they have to draw on? 	<p>Similarly an exercise to map out what resources and forms of social and cultural capital already exist (e.g. through established community groups) is needed in advance of programme design. Projects should build where ever possible on tried and tested approaches so as to minimise the risk of triggering a backlash (and therefore potentially increasing the vulnerability of certain groups).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What internal differences scan be seen in patterns and types of violence and in the triggers for it? In other words are certain forms of VAWG more common in particular areas and under certain conditions? 	<p>Can a one size fits all approach to programming respond to the complex contexts of VAWG even in one country? To what extent will a more locally tailored response be necessary and if so is this feasible?</p>

With this knowledge in place



In other words the starting point is **understanding the experiences of vulnerable groups** (e.g. women and girls) and working outwards into the environment and contexts in which they live and asking; **what can the programme do to end the violence they suffer?**

Building this knowledge can be supported through a theoretical approach **The Ecological Model** (see Figure 1 below).

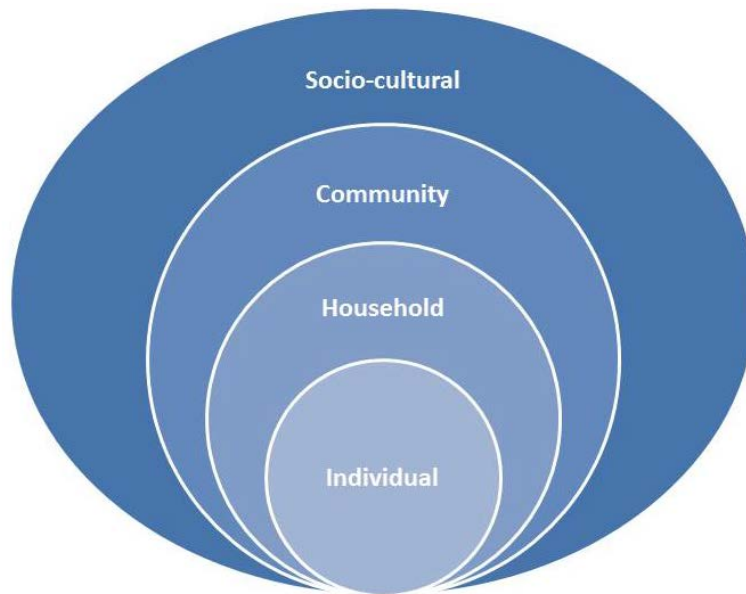


Figure 1 - Ecological Model

This model supports an outward approach that begins with the experiences of individuals. However it is understood that these personal experiences are in fact triggered by dynamics (largely gendered) occurring at the household level, which in turn is shaped by community structures and then wider socio-cultural beliefs and values.

In particular it surfaces the ways in which decisions are made, who has the power to decide what they can and can't do with their life? Who has the most access to the recourses, such as food, but also medicines and luxury goods? It also leads to a reflection on what happens when individuals challenge these power structures? Is violence used to discipline and maintain this status quo? Is it used to remind household members of the hierarchy of power? How are these structures and behaviours shaped by worldviews that hold to a status quo that marginalises some and in doing so creates groups who are vulnerable because they have less power?

Stage Two - Operationalising Knowledge on VAWG: Designing the Programme

The ecological model could be used to steer questions specific to the goals of programmes, for example in relation to Access to Justice programming it might look like this:

Social Ecology Level	Meta-Question	Factors to think about for Operationalisation
Socio-cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What cultural practices and common views exist in regard to women and girls and specifically the use of violence against them? 	Are there views emerging that need to be captured, challenged and changed by the programme?
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What community mechanisms exist to mitigate VAWG or offer security and protect to victims? 	How effective are the community mechanisms perceived to be and could they be built upon by the programme?

Household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What dynamics exist at household level that may support or perpetuate VAWG? 	<p>Are there certain intra-/inter- household behaviours that need to be challenged by the programme? Is there opportunity to use the programme to tap into certain change dynamics (e.g. is there evidence that young educated women challenge their parents about the use of violence?). Can they be supported by the programme?</p>
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What room is there for individuals to challenge and change social norms surrounding VAWG? 	<p>Can individuals who may be in the minority but wish to see VAWG end tap into wider networks and support structures to mobilise the change they want to see? If the answer is yes can the programme build on them? If it is no can the programme in fact build them?</p>

Stage Three - Implementing & Monitoring Change: Embedding a VAWG Lens at all stages

Building on the knowledge gained through the first two stages a **three dimensional VAWG lens** could be used to implement, shape, monitor and adapt a programme. The proposed dimensional framework develops or **operationalises the ecological model** used in Stage 2 to help develop detailed contextual knowledge around *why and how* VAWG materialises and flourishes. It consists of: *an enabling environment, social norm change and positive social perceptions of the benefits of girls and women.*

These dimensions represents the spaces and where change most needs to happen if is to end and then be prevented moving forward. In both the design, implementation, monitoring and programme adjustment questions should be asked in relation dimension.

Monitoring needs to focus in particular on potential backlash to the changes being pushed by interventions that challenge the normalisation of VAWG and advocate justice.

areas VAWG

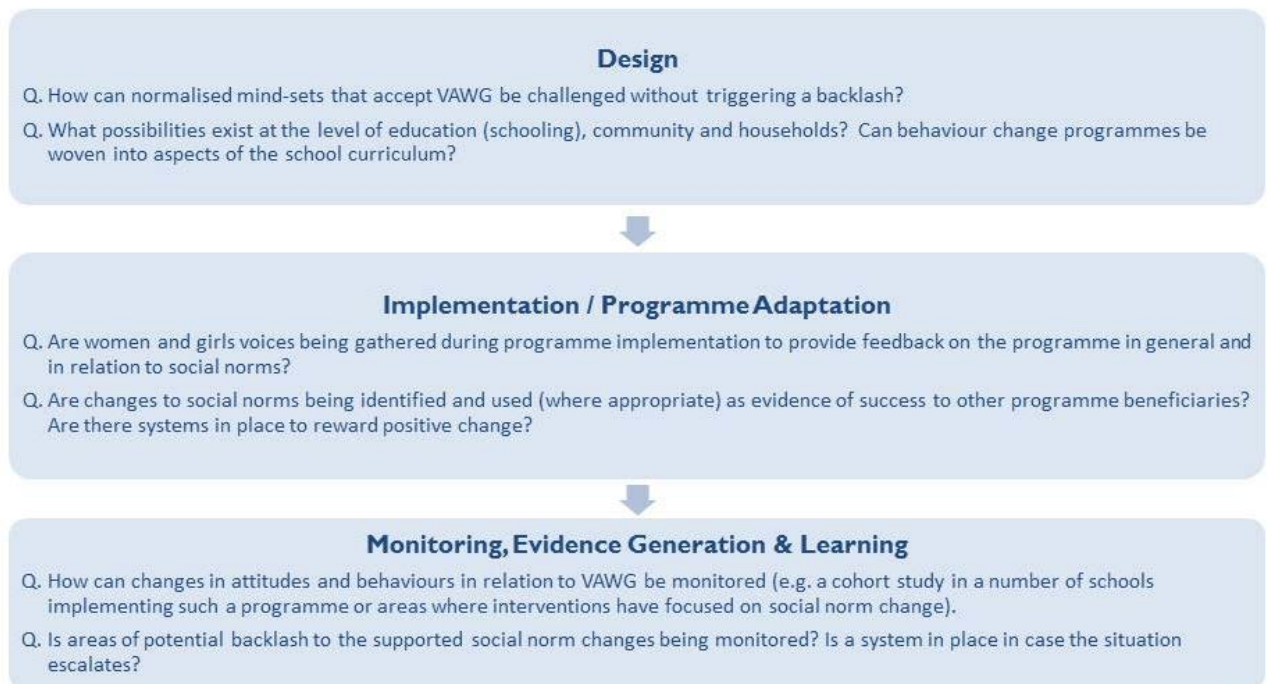
Creating an enabling environment to support action against VAWG, including policy and legal change and increased spending.

Programmes will need to address any lack of process, system, and resources (human and material) in relation to the spheres that make up this environment (Government, Legal, Police, Social/Psychological support (including safe houses), medical (forensics and treatment).



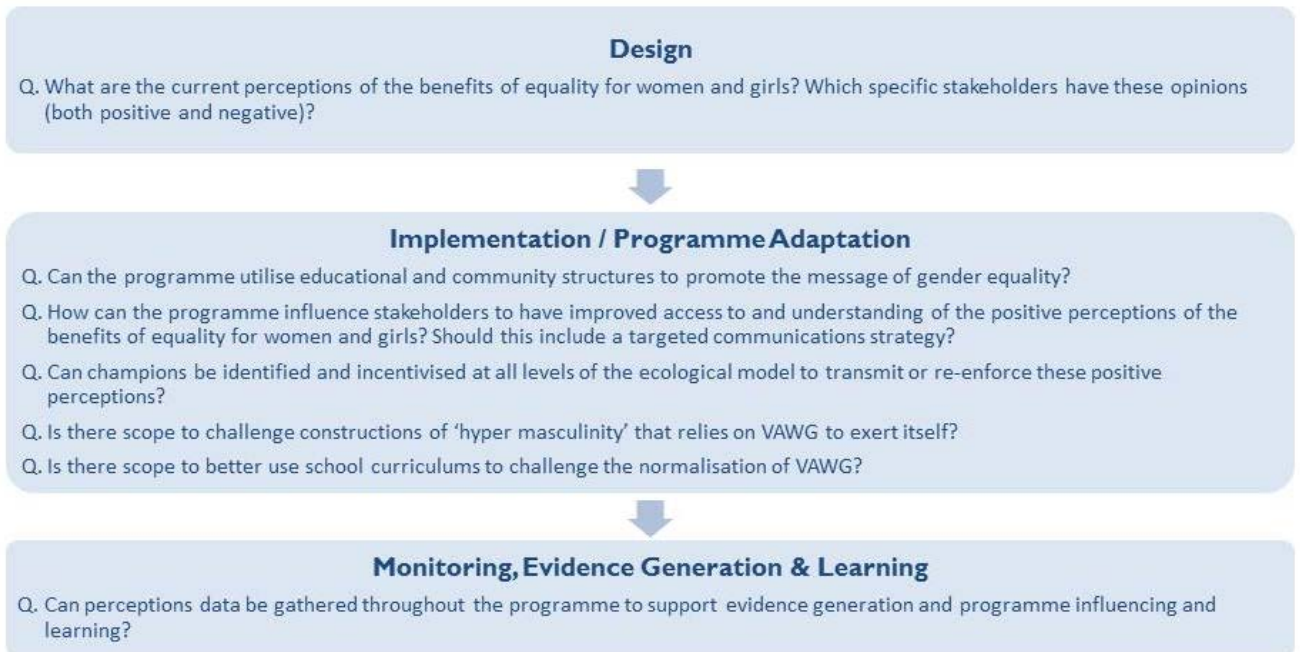
Changes to social norms that limit women and girls' opportunities to participate in society free from fear of VAWG.

The ecological model can be used to draw out in-country differences and to guide understanding of what kind of social norm change interventions might be appropriate – particularly in relation to social norms. Testing of innovative new interventions, and trialling of programmes that have worked elsewhere all need to be implemented with caution and close monitoring: there are no quick solutions and what works in one context will not in another.



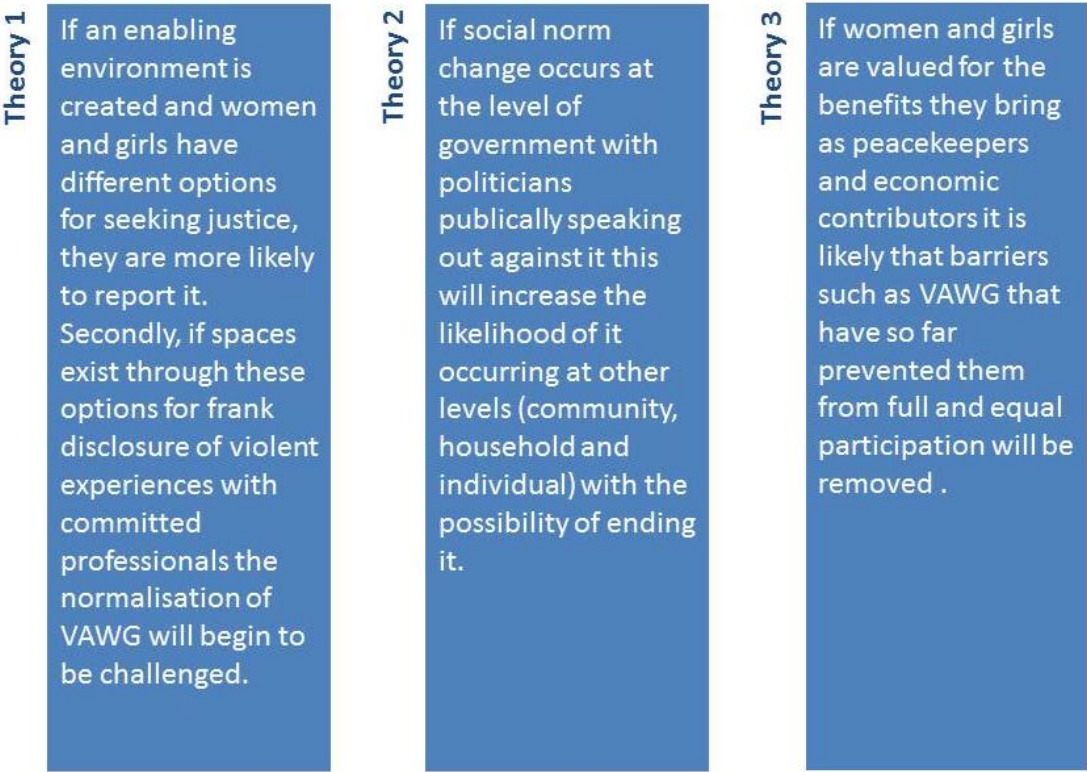
Increasing social perceptions of the benefits and value of girls and women being equal partners in societies free from VAWG.

If greater opportunities exist enhanced wellbeing (including a reduction of end to VAWG) can be seen than we can confidently say the value of women and girls has improved. Programmes need to make efforts to support the development of new opportunities for women in education and the workplace and build on networks already in existence. Ultimately this dimension will be achieved if the second has also been successful. This dimension at programme level might involve tapping into or capacity building at the level of women's social movements and civil society organisations. If there are visible organisations advocating for women in public spaces this will likely help to promote the value and benefit of women's full and equal participation in life. The barriers that may prevent this (e.g. VAWG) will need to be removed as part of this process.



VAWG mainstreaming is: A Survivor-centric approach looking at the extent to which the needs of survivors are understood and responded to within a joined up system.

The VAWG Mainstreaming Framework feeds into the following sequence of theories:



3. Applying the VAWG Mainstreaming Framework

3.1 The Integrated Women's Development Programme Nepal

The IWDP has been implemented for the past 30 years by the Government of Nepal. The programme covers 1 million women, who are formed into Self Help Groups. Some of these have also been federated into cooperatives, with 1600 cooperatives spread over different districts of Nepal. Many SHGs had become defunct, and the government is currently engaged in reviving them. The group structures of the IWDP are widely thought to be useful not only in enhancing economic empowerment, but also in offering a forum where women can talk about and address other issues of concern. There have also been several challenges. For instance, when paralegal workers started becoming effective at the group level, some began to take money to settle cases, and the formal judicial system then took an objection to the informal system of settlement of matters, which ought to be brought to the judiciary. The IWDP has taken women's economic engagement as its entry point to the wider goal of women's empowerment and increased equality. However if violence is to be reduced we argue that a deliberate VAW lens must be embedded into the programme. Income on its own is not enough to build the resilience and wider infrastructural support needed to end VAW. In fact, as we argue later, it can in fact increase women's vulnerability to forms of violence.

In Nepal the new constitution enshrines gender equality as a core goal which has now been backed up by donor and government commitment to the GESI (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion) framework. In 2009, Nepal passed its first domestic violence law, the Domestic Violence and Punishment Act, which defines domestic violence as physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse (OECD 2014). This government level commitment is positive and a signal of wider momentum to transform women's lives. However within a connected approach the laws and frameworks will remain disconnected from ground level experiences of continued violence.

Recent analysis of the DHS data on *Nepal* (2017 Research Report 'Women, Work and Violence in Nepal') suggests that almost one fifth of the women had experienced some form of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey by partners. Physical violence was the most cited form of violence followed by emotional and sexual violence by an intimate partner. Among factors associated with experience of violence, although place of residence was not associated with the experience of violence, residence in specific ecological zones was significant with women from the Terai zone reporting higher odds of experiencing violence compared to other zones. The women from the richest households in urban areas were less likely to be victims of any form of violence from their husband/partner as compared to women from the poorest households. Women's education significantly reduced the odds of experiencing any form of violence in both rural and urban areas, while women who had witnessed their father beating their mother were more likely to experience violence. In addition, in the multivariate analysis, marital control and experience of witnessing 'father beat mother' were significantly associated with experiencing violence. In rural areas, women were less likely to work the more they agreed with norms justifying wife beating, but in urban areas this trend is reversed. A higher proportion of women who agreed with 3+ statements justifying wife beating were employed, compared to women who said there was no justification for wife beating.

Applying the VAW Mainstreaming lens to the IWDP

Creating an Enabling Environment

In the context of the IWDP where strong support networks between women involved in self groups is in existent the designation of community advocates or mobilisers with a specific remit to support survivors of violence has the potential to see positive results. This mobiliser/advocate would offer emotional support and link survivors to key services including legal, medical and psychological. The IWDP will need to invest in

building this human resource and also in building the wider infrastructure needed so that the mobilisers/advocates can refer women to specific services and support through the process of justice and resolution. Whilst the IWDP has invested in paralegals to some extent it is the linking between these various levels of legal and medical support that is lacking. The effectiveness of these services is also patchy and a concerted attempt within the IWDP to build is clearly necessary.

Social Norm Change

Whilst the IWDP has made significant inroads in terms of increasing women's income now is the time to build in attempts to reverse harmful attitudes that render women vulnerable to domestic forms of violence. A recent survey conducted across the IWDP programme found that women who earn an income are 1.4 times more likely to suffer IPV (see 'Women, Work and Violence in Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan'). As women earn more income so they start to challenge the traditional gender norms of men as the primary wage earner. Understanding what triggers a shift in gendered attitudes is complex. However there is some research that highlights the importance of local women's organisation specifically focused on ending VAW as a key factor in shifting female attitudes towards violence. The study found that women who were engaged in a women's organisation were more likely to recognise violence as abuse (so to challenge its normalisation) and would take action to challenge it (Htun and Weldon 2012). Building the capacity of local women's organisation may well help the IWDP mobilise a shift in attitudes towards gender that in turn should reduce instances of violence.

Changing the perceptual value of women and girls

As stated at the start of this article, VAW is normalised because of the devaluing of women. It is hoped that gender programmes by taking a holistic multi-dimensional approach will build women's voice through education and employment that in turn will force a reconceptualization of the value women bring to society and to the home.

In short mainstreaming VAW within the IWDP requires two adjustments, the introduction of designated mobilisers to work to end VAW and to support and advocate on behalf of survivors. These should be integrated within the pre-existing self-help groups but work more widely across communities. Secondly the resourcing or capacity building of local women's organisations working solely to end VAW will be key in bringing about the long-term structural shifts needed if VAW in Nepal is to end.

3.2 Linking HIV focus into VAWG Mainstreaming ⁱⁱⁱ

Here we briefly consider vulnerability to HIV infection linked to violence and the need for such intersections to be addressed within the VAWG Mainstreaming Framework. All mainstreaming work also requires the essential component of quality, disaggregated data that can support evidence-based planning, interventions and reporting. The development of a robust and regularly updated data base to support calls for investment into VAWG and HIV mainstreaming policy and programming will help to build the evidence for why such support matters, what needs to be instituted and achieved if an enabling environment is to be created and sustained.

Intimate Partner Violence, HIV and Mainstreaming VAWG: why is such attention important?

Addressing violence against women and girls, especially by intimate partners, is considered essential to achieving the UNAIDS 90-90-90 treatment targets by 2020 (Heise & McGrory 2016). Globally, IPV is by far the most common type of abuse, with 30% of women experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime (WHO 2013). In the context of access to justice, there is a powerful argument that the creation of a genuine enabling environment must have equitable justice as a goal. This would require both the removal of harmful laws and practices, as well as ensuring that women are empowered to claim their rights (see e.g. Nussbaum, 2001).

The intersections between IPV and possible HIV infection have been the subject of much policy and programmatic engagement. Indeed, debate continues as to the extent and relative strength of the connections between IPV and vulnerability to HIV infection, with due attention given to location, risk factors pertaining to different groups of women and girls, relative security of the environment, etc. Yet evidence indicates that exposure to IPV can increase women's risk for HIV infection through forced sex with an infected partner, limited or compromised negotiation of safer sex practices, or increased sexual risk-taking behaviours (Mamam *et al* 2000). A detailed recent study determines that: 'Analysis of pooled DHS data from 12 surveys and ten sub-Saharan African countries confirms that reported intimate partner violence is associated with a significantly raised risk of HIV infection in women' (Durevall & Lindskog 2015, p. e40). Two prospective longitudinal cohort studies from Uganda and South Africa similarly indicate the associations between IPV and HIV infection; the Uganda study suggests that were IPV not to happen, 1 in 5 new HIV infections could be avoided. (Kouyoumidjian, Calzavara *et al* 2013, Jewkes *et al* 2010; see further Kouyoumidjian, Findlay *et al* 2013 regarding both the relative validity of the central premise and also challenges inherent in weakness of data and differences in definitions).

The opportunities for women to report IPV to formal and informal (customary) justice systems may be difficult, dangerous and fraught; such avenues may be even further compromised in situations where vulnerability to HIV infection is a possibility, for reasons such as fear of stigmatisation, ostracism and abandonment by spouse and/or family. In addition, there is evidence that women disclosing their positive HIV status may be even more vulnerable to IPV (UNAIDS 2014).

Creating an enabling environment

As this paper sets out, the proposed starting point for mainstreaming is to view it as a comprehensive, in-depth examination of a sector as a whole, as well as its potential, effective links to other sectors. Therefore, to mainstream HIV, and to do so within the wider context of mainstreaming VAWG, is to undertake a continuous process of integration of the two areas of focus throughout the functioning of an organisation or sector; it is not a time bound and once only goal. If a sector is to be responsive and reflexive to mainstreaming (i.e. works to achieve both internal and external mainstreaming) and engages with other relevant sectors, those institutions, groups and individuals participating might be able to shape how prevention and mitigation of VAWG and HIV can jointly be addressed in a more holistic and potentially effective fashion. Such action will be challenging and will require effective engagement and co-operation across sectors that might always be natural partners, as well as lengthy, sometimes small-scale community action, that is likely to need reinforcement in the longer term so as to counter resurgence of entrenched social norms.

Social norm change

The ecological model can be used to draw out in-country differences and to guide understanding of what kind of social norm change interventions might be appropriate – particularly in relation to social norms. Testing of innovative new interventions, and trialling of programmes that have worked elsewhere all need to be implemented with caution and close monitoring: there are no quick solutions and what works in one context may well not do so in another.

Programmes such as SASA! in Uganda, which work at community level to address and reduce instances of IPV and minimise risk of HIV infection, indicate that measures to address often deeply entrenched social norms accepted by both men and women can be effective. SASA! is a community mobilisation approach developed by *Raising Voices* that aims to prevent violence against women and HIV by addressing a core driver of both: gender inequality. The efficacy of such initiatives can perhaps especially be achieved if a commitment is made to engage for the longer term. The success of the original SASA! programme and the lessons learned from the multi-disciplinary study conducted between 2008 and 2012 have led to the approach being adapted and rolled out in other countries across sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in Southeast Asia, Pacific island nations, the Caribbean and Latin America (Abramsky *et al* 2014, Kygombe *et al* 2014, LSHTM *et al* 2016).

Changing the perceptual value of women and girls

One activity central to addressing the connections between VAWG, HIV and justice is to develop gender-responsive policy frameworks at central and local government levels that are sufficiently robust to move from the page into action; inextricably linked to this is to work with communities first to understand current perceptions of women and girls' value and then where necessary to seek to develop more equitable attitudes and behaviours. Bridging the often wide divide between structural change and addressing perceptions of women's and girls' value is one major challenge. Often deeply entrenched perceptions of value will require challenging structures of power, where certain groups may well resist any reduction of the value of their own place and space within society. Justice and security practitioners and officials may well be unwilling to alter statutory and customary systems to provide a foundation to support and provide guidance to achieve changes in perceptual value. This reluctance might be due to lack of knowledge as to the reality of the level of VAWG, the risks of IPV and HIV infection; it might also be a result of individuals' own perceptions of gender relations.

While formal, statutory justice mechanisms usually set out equal access under the law, potential for women's legal rights education might be severely limited, while support from household or community to seek justice might be lacking. In addition, proposed alternative mechanisms (e.g. restorative justice) might be shaped through perspectives that are insufficiently gender aware and fail to understand existing socio-cultural dynamics and the extent to which social norms might have to change in order to achieve lasting, equitable access to justice^{iv}. Any such approach must include HIV positive women, whose rights under formal and customary law are often even more circumscribed and whose opportunity and/or willingness to seek public redress for VAWG, including IPV, might well be minimal. Nonetheless, people living with HIV & AIDS, their families and other community members can be supported both to know about their legal and sexual and reproductive health rights and the sanctions that exist (at least on the statute books) to prevent and punish illegal acts (see e.g. Gruskin *et al* 2013 and UNAIDS 2012a & b).

Conclusion: Beyond VAWG mainstreaming to further action

Whilst there are no magic solutions or blue print formulas to end VAWG we believe that adopting a systematic and evidence based approach such as that outlined above, as a starting point, will produce robust and sensitive programmes that represent a positive way forward in achieving SDG 5 but more importantly support the end to VAWG.

References

- Abramsky T, Devries K, Kiss L, Nakuti J, Kyegombe N, Starman E, Cundill V, Francisco L, Kaye D, Musuya T, Michau L & C Watts. 2014. 'Findings from the SASA! Study: a cluster randomized controlled trial to assess the impact of a community mobilization intervention to prevent violence against women and reduce HIV risk in Kampala, Uganda'. *BMC Medicine* 12: 122. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/12/122>
- Alexander-Scott M, Bell E & J Holden. 2016. *DFID Guidance Note: Shifting Social Norms to Tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)*. London: VAWG Helpdesk.
- Crockett C, McCleary-Sills J, Cooper B & B Brown. 2016. *Brief on violence against older women*. Washington DC: World Bank, Global Women's Institute, IDB and ICRW.
- Department for International Development (DFID) 2012.
- DFID. 2014. *The Strategic Vision for girls and women: three years on*. London: Department for International Development.
- Douglas S. 2007. *Gender equality and justice programming. Equitable access to justice for women*. UNDP: Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance (2).
- Durevall D & A Lindskog. 2015. 'Intimate partner violence and HIV in ten sub-Saharan African countries: what do the Demographic and Health Surveys tell us?' *Lancet Global Health*; 3 (1): e34-43. doi: 10.1016/S2214-109X(14)70343-2.
- Eley H, Tollhurst R & S Theobald. 2005. 'Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in development sectors: have we learnt the lessons from gender mainstreaming?' *AIDS Care*: 17 (8); pp. 988-998. DOI: 10.1080/09540120500102250.
- Fulu E, Jewkes R, Roselli T & C Garcia-Moreno. 2013. 'Prevalence and risk factors for male perpetration of intimate partner violence: findings from the UN Multi-country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific'. *Lancet Glob Health* 2013: 1; e187–207.
- Fulu E, Warner X, Miedema S, Jewkes R, Roselli T & J Lang. 2013. *Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women and How Can We Prevent it. Quantitative Findings from the United Nations Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific*. Bangkok: UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and United Nations Volunteers.
- Garcia-Moreno C, Zimmerman C, Morris-Gehring A, Heise L, Amin A, Abrahams N, Montoya O, Bhate-Deosthali P, Kilonzo N & C Watts. 2014. 'Addressing violence against women: a call to action'. *The Lancet* Vol 385 (9978). Series on violence against women and girls; paper 5. [[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61830-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61830-4)].
- Gruber J. 2005. Silent survivors of sexual violence in conflict and the implications for HIV mitigation: experiences from Eritrea'. *African Journal of AIDS Research* 4 (2): pp. 69–73.
- Gruber J. 2006. 'Does conflict increase vulnerability to HIV infection? Issues for a research agenda'. *African Journal of AIDS Research* 5 (1).
- Gruskin S, Safreed-Harmon K, Ezer T, Gathumbi A, Cohen J & P Kamari-Mbote. 2013. 'Access to justice: evaluating law, health and human rights programmes in Kenya'. *Journal of the International AIDS Society* 16 (Suppl 2): 18726. doi.org/10.7448/IAS.16.3.18726.
- Heise, L. 1998. 'Violence against Women: An Integrated Ecological Framework', *Violence against Women* 4(3): 262-290.
- Heise L & E McGrory. 2016. *Violence against women and girls and HIV: Report on a high level consultation on the evidence and its implications, 12–14 May, 2015*. (Greentree II). STRIVE Research Consortium, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
- ITAD 2015. *DFID's Efforts to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls: A Learning Review*.
- Jewkes R, Flood M & J Lang. 2014. 'From work with men and boys to changes of social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: a conceptual shift in prevention of violence against women and girls.' *The Lancet* Vol 385 (9978). Series on violence against women and girls; paper 3. [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/>]
- Kabeer, N. 2003. *Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals*. London: The Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Klot J & V-K Nguyen (Eds). 2009. *The fourth wave : violence, gender, culture, and HIV in the 21st century*. UNESCO.
- Klot J, Auerbach J, Veronese F, Brown G, Pei A, Wira C, Hope T, M'boup S *et al*. 2012. 'Greentree White Paper:

Sexual Violence, Genitoanal Injury, and HIV: Priorities for Research, Policy, and Practice'. *AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses* 28 (11): pp. 1379-1388. doi:10.1089/aid.2012.0273. (On behalf of the participants in the 2012 Greentree (I) Meeting on Sexual Violence and HIV.)

Kouyoumdjian F, Calzavara L, Bondy S, O'Campo P, Serwadda D, Nalugoda F, Kagaayi J, Kigozi G, Wawer M, & R Gray. 2013. 'Intimate partner violence is associated with incident HIV infection in women in Uganda'. *AIDS* 27 (8): pp. 1331-8. doi: 10.1097/QAD.0b013e32835fd851.

Kouyoumdjian F, Findlay N, Schwandt M, Calzavara L. 2013. 'A Systematic Review of the Relationships between Intimate Partner Violence and HIV/AIDS'. *PLoS ONE* 8 (11): e81044. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0081044.

Kygombe N, Starmann E, DeVries K, Michau L, Nakuti, J, Musuya T, Watts C & L Heise. 2014. 'SASA! is the medicine that treats violence. Qualitative findings on how a community mobilisation intervention to prevent violence against women created change in Kampala, Uganda'. *Global Health Action*: 7.

LSHTM, Raising Voices, CEDOVIP & Makerere University. 2016. *Stronger together: Engaging both women and men in SASA! to prevent violence against women*. London and Kampala: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Raising Voices, Center for Domestic Violence Prevention and Makerere University. Learning from Practice Series: Paper 4.

Maman S, Campbell J, Sweat M & A Gielen 2000. 'The intersections of HIV and violence: Directions for future research and interventions'. *Social Science & Medicine* 50 (4):459-478.

Gender Politics'. *Men Masculinities*: 15: pp. 11–30.

OPML. 2014. *Violence against women and girls: map of DFID programmes, 2014*. Oxford: Oxford Policy Management Limited.

Remme M, Michaels-Igbokwe C & C Watts. 2014. *What works to prevent violence against women and girls? Evidence Review of approaches to scale up VAWG programming and assess intervention cost-effectiveness and value for money*. Pretoria: Medical Research Council.

Staszewska K. 2015. *Promises to keep: using the SDGs to stand with Fearless Women to end violence*. London: Action Aid.

UNAIDS. 2012a. *The user guide for the HIV-related Human Rights Costing Tool: costing programmes to reduce stigma and discrimination, and increase access to justice in the context of HIV*. Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNAIDS. 2012b. *Key programmes to reduce stigma and discrimination and increase access to justice in national HIV responses*. Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNFPA. 2013. *The Role of Data in Addressing Violence against Women and Girls*. New York: United Nations Population Fund.

ⁱ In a wide field, see Crockett *et al* 2016 regarding older women's experience of VAWG, the overview by Staszewska 2015 on the SDGs and VAWG and UNFPA 2013 on the paucity of reliable and disaggregated data on VAWG, especially in situations of conflict and displacement.

ⁱⁱ Kabeer's parallel attention to resources and agency (structure and culture) has been incorporated into and/or has informed innumerable research and policy frameworks on women's empowerment including that of ICRW (Golla 2011), and she has worked extensively for DFID.

ⁱⁱⁱ This section on how action on HIV might be interwoven into VAWG mainstreaming has been informed *inter alia* by Abramsky *et al* 2014, Durevall & Lindskog 2015, Elsey *et al* 2005, Fulu *et al* 2013, Gruber 2005 & 2006, Heise & McGrory 2016, Klot & V-K Nguyen, 2009, Klot *et al* 2012, Kygombe *et al* 2014, LSHTM *et al* 2016, Maman *et al* 2000, Samuels *et al* 2017, Stone 2017, UNAIDS 2012, WHO 2013.

^{iv} See e.g. Deng 2013 for a partial overview of the challenges involved in seeking to begin to address access to justice in insecure settings - for all those who require redress, including survivors of VAWG.