



Potential Pathways for Prevention: Understanding the Intersections of Violence against Women and Children in the Family

SVRI September 2017: Sophie Namy¹

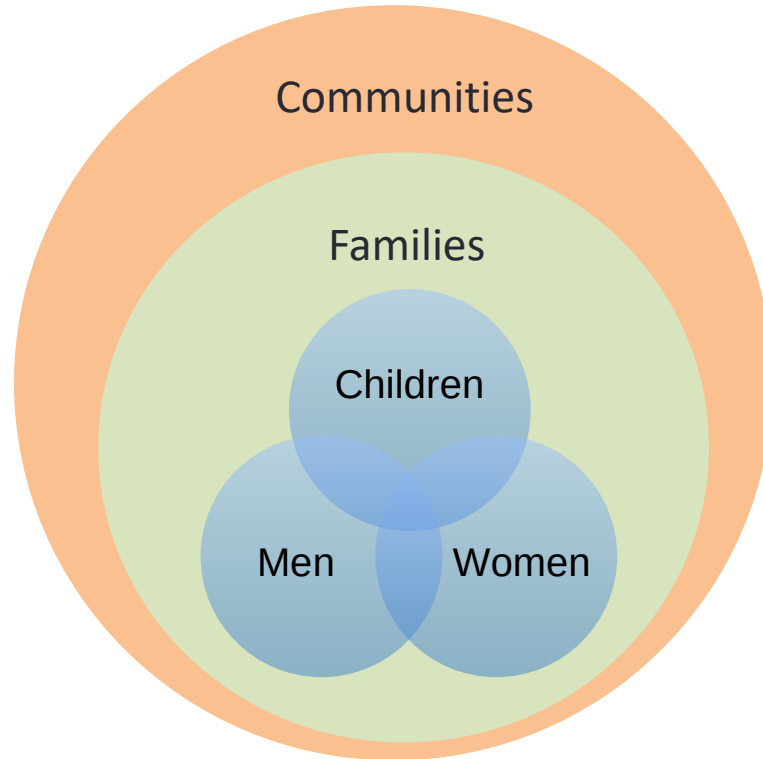
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IN REALITY...





AND YET...

(POLICY, PROGRAMMING & RESEARCH)





LEGITIMATE HESITATIONS

Intersections came into focus at SVRI 2013 (Alessandra Guedes). Since then discussion has grown, revealing possibilities and hesitations:



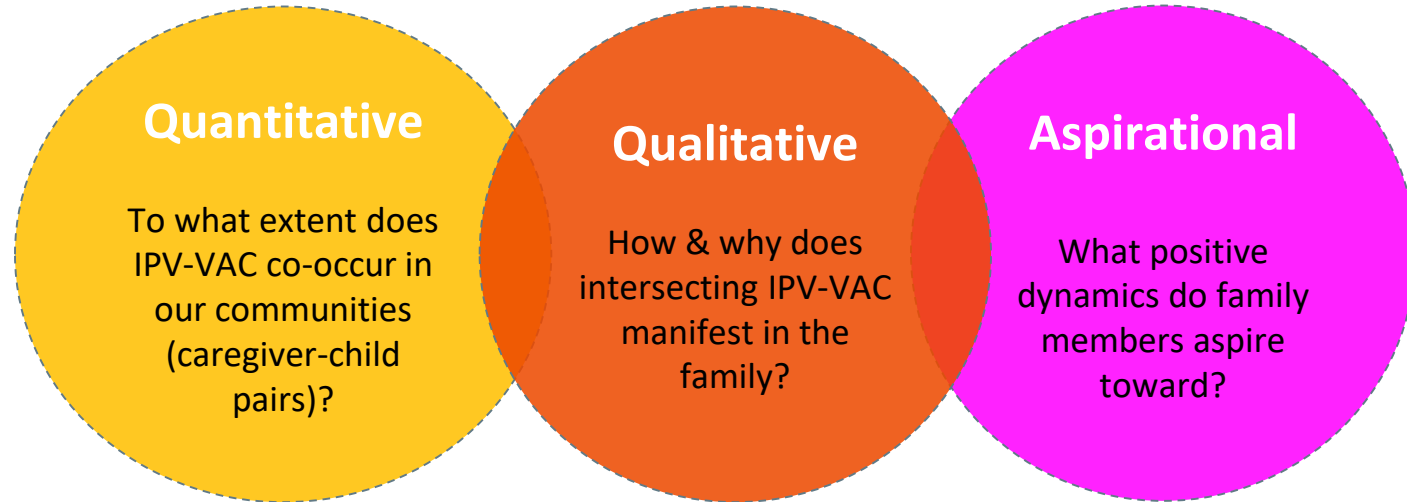
- Different actors & frames, women's rights/feminism & child protection
- Distinct life-phases with unique expectations for behavior and autonomy
- Power dynamics not the same (woman-man; adult-child)
- Sensitive terrain, risk stigmatizing (or infantilizing) women?

Can integrated approaches balance and account for these nuanced concerns?



NEED FOR DEEPER EXPLORATION

(THE INTERSECTIONS STUDY)



** Partnership between Raising Voices, Columbia Univ & Makerere Univ; funding from SVRI*



Qualitative: How do women, men, girls and boys experience intersecting IPV-VAC in their daily lives?





METHODS

- 16 FGDs & 20 IDIs with girls, boys, mothers & fathers (Kampala)
- Participatory techniques (illustrated vignettes) & ‘task-focused’ exercises
- Ethical protocols for researching VAC & VAW closely followed; child protection partner; redirect to positive at the end

n=55 adults & 51 children aged 10 to 15
(data collection Dec 2015)





KEY LEARNING 1:

IPV & VAC don't only overlap – they can also be profoundly intertwined, triggering cycles of abuse.

Disclosures suggest 4 patterns:



BYSTANDER TRAUMA



Mothers and children
experience psychological
effects from witnessing
husband/father's violence
perpetration

When the father turned to the children, the mother cried so much . . . because here [earlier] she had endured the pain from his beating, because she knew that the children were safe. But when he turned to the children, she even put her hands on the head and wailed aloud . . . She was not crying because he had beaten her, but because he was beating her children. (mother-FGD)

NEGATIVE ROLE MODELING



Children learn & adopt abusive behavior – including how they treat their own mother (e.g., someone not valued or respected)

[O]nce the children hear your husband shouting at you, they will also start despising you. Like a child can even start telling you that 'I will report you to Daddy.' Do you get that? That means that the child despises you, and thinks that you are a nobody who is always shouted at or beaten. (mother-IDI)

PROTECTION & FURTHER VICTIMIZATION



Attempted (or actual)
intervention resulting in further
violence against women &
children

Sometimes their mother annoys you. You grab and hold her [in a way that causes pain], and when your child . . . notices she runs to hold you or the mother while at the same time crying, and because of anger you end up kicking that child as well. But it comes out of high anger. The children will always take their mother's side, because they spend more time together. Generally, it is because of anger that children also are affected by our fights. (father-FGD)

DISPLACED AGGRESSION



Fathers or mothers manipulate children as retaliation (against each other); Women redirecting violence from husband (given circumscribed agency in patriarchal context).

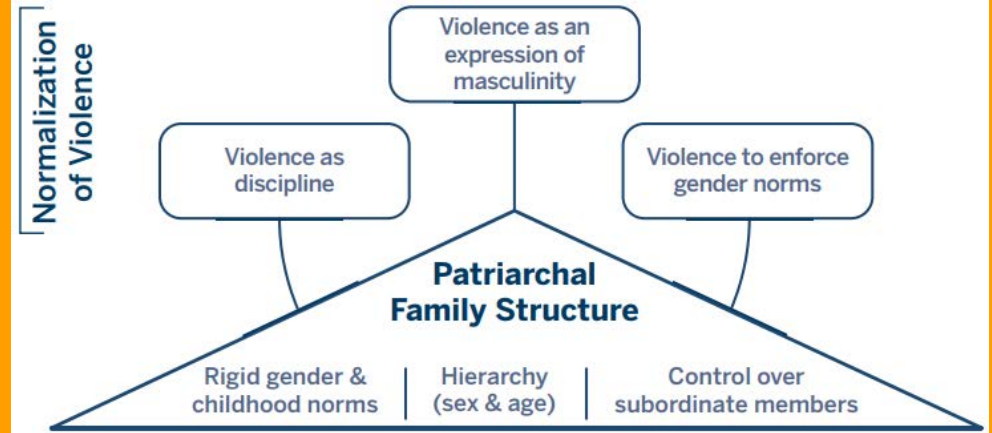
If I am the mother, at times I might have had misunderstandings with the father. By the time [the child] comes back home, I am already angry over what the father has done to me . . . instead of comforting the child, you just start to beat the child, because of the other anger that you still have. (mother-FGD)



KEY LEARNING 2:

The patriarchal family structure is a cross-cutting risk that normalizes many forms of violence:

- Violence to “discipline” & enforce gender norms
- Violence as expression of masculinity (“naturally like that;” “transforming shame into anger”)





Sometimes it is right [to shout at your wife], because there are times a wife behaves like a young child at home. If you are not tough with her, she might fail to understand. There are things that she does, and you feel that you have to shout at her to put a stop to it . . . You scare her a little bit . . . It is appropriate. (mother-IDI)

[My parents] only beat us if we have done something wrong, but if no mistake has been made, they do not do anything to us . . . I do not have anything [else] to say. If they beat me, it is because I have done something wrong. I accept that. (son-IDI)



KEY LEARNING 3:

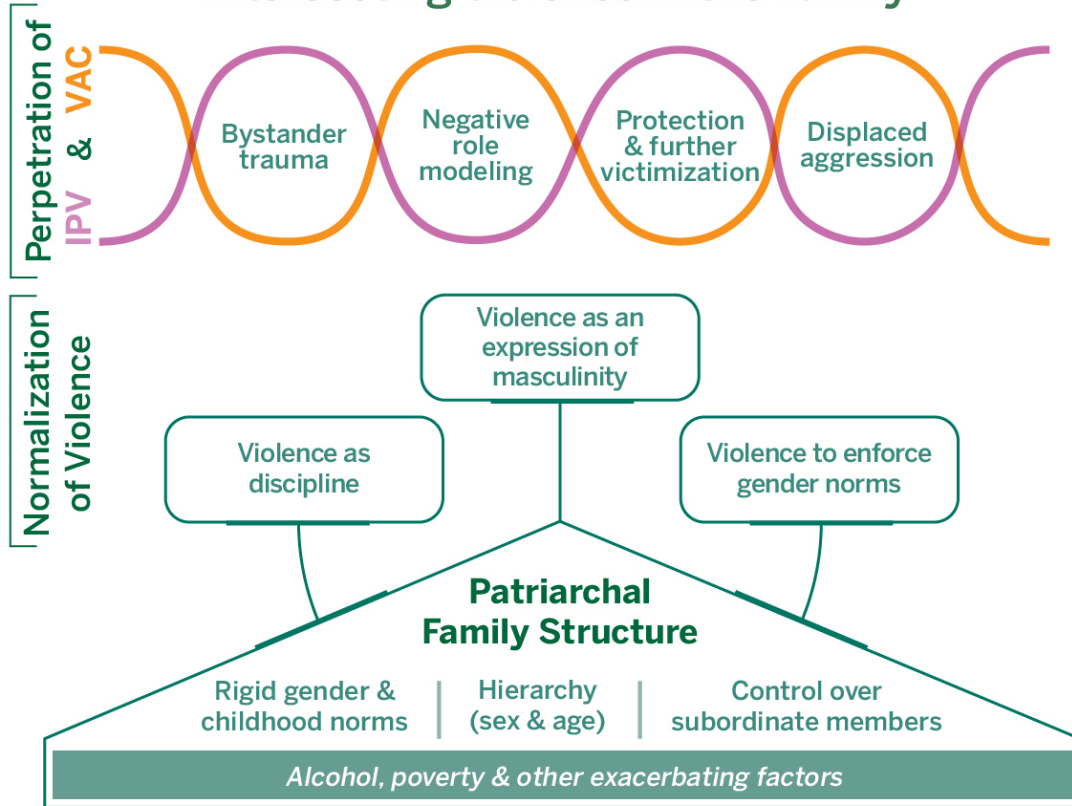
Some important moments emerged, when violence was contested:

- IPV in front of children consistently rejected
- A few children renounced IPV, arguing that women are “mature adults”
- Justifications for VAC appeared more deeply entrenched (when aligned with normative boundaries of acceptability)





Intersecting Violence in the Family



MOVING FORWARD

Independent VAW and VAC programs:

- Consider intersections-specific patterns when developing training content and coms materials
- Encourage reflection about harmful effects of direct & indirect experiences of violence

Integrated VAW-VAC prevention:

- Start with a feminist frame to address patriarchal norms & abuses of power
- Go beyond what we know: experiment with innovative programming





INTERESTED IN READING MORE?

www.raisingvoices.org



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Learning from
Practice Series
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Perspectives

Potential pathways to prevention: Understanding the intersections of violence against women and children in the family

Overview

Around the world, intimate partner violence (IPV) against women and violence against children (VAC) are happening in the same communities, homes and families. Existing data, while span point to a consistent overlap between these two forms of violence (see Box 2). Despite this research and programs have considered to address IPV and VAC in isolation. However, in recent years more calls are being made for considering — and addressing — the existing intersections between IPV and VAC (Guedes et al., 2016).

Box 1: IPV and VAC in the Family

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a type of violence against women (VAW) whereby violence is carried out by a current or former intimate partner. The UN General Assembly defines VAW as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (UN 1993).

Violence against children (VAC) is defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (Detrick et al., 1992).

Raising Voices is a feminist organization that has been working to prevent both VAW and VAC for over a decade. While we understand all violence as an abuse of power (at individual and structural levels) and strive for a cohesive approach, for the most part our VAW and VAC prevention programs have evolved independently. However, now more than ever, we are recognizing the many overlaps between VAW and VAC and are experiencing the need to explore integrated prevention programming more explicitly. For example, our SASA program (www.raisingvoices.org/sasa) focuses on decreasing IPV in the community. However, it can only go so far in shifting community norms

Towards a feminist understanding of intersecting violence against women and children in the family

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Intersections between violence against women and violence against children

Violence against women and violence against children often happen in the same families, initiating cycles of abuse within the home and across generations. Despite this link, efforts to address these types of violence are often conducted in isolation. Existing knowledge of how and why they occur together is limited, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Deeper understanding is critical to identifying opportunities for integrated prevention programmes. To increase the knowledge base, Raising Voices partnered with Columbia University on a study that explored the intersections between violence against women and children in Kampala, Uganda, between 2015 and 2016.^{1,2,3}

PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AND
ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS

GRANT DETAILS

PROJECT: Understanding the connections between intimate partner violence and violence against children in families in Kampala, Uganda, to inform primary prevention

ORGANISATION: Raising Voices and Columbia University

PROJECT LOCATION: Kampala, Uganda



DRIVERS AND PATTERNS OF INTERSECTING VIOLENCE

Co-occurring violence against women and children is common in study participants' families. The study found that the patriarchal family structure – including rigid gender and childhood norms, sex and age hierarchies, and an emphasis on controlling "subordinate"





Thank you!

