

Implementing child-focused gender norms programming in Myanmar: challenges from a humanitarian context with high levels of violence.

Dr. Deborah Fry, University of
Edinburgh

Stacer McChesney, Plan International

Study and Context

- Long standing humanitarian contexts with different conflicts across three States within a context of rapid socio-political change over the last decade.
- This study included 1) secondary analysis of existing national datasets and 2) consultations with 240 young people ages 18 to 22 years old (with equal numbers of boys and girls) in Central Rakhine, Northern Rakhine and Kachin IDP Camps and host communities
- A range of participatory activities were used to investigate social norms and drivers of violence against children with the specific goal of (re)designing prevention interventions.

What we aimed to measure/change

- Key areas of exploration for the qualitative consultation were identified through an initial secondary analysis of national surveys such as the Global School Based Health Survey (GSHS), the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) and the Myanmar Census as being key issues for young people in order to improve programming:
 - school violence and bullying,
 - migration,
 - substance abuse,
 - adolescent intimate partner violence and help-seeking behaviours

Adaptation Challenges

- Different implementing partners in each IDP camp and also at State level
- An 'outcome mapping' process identified that most of the current programming was focused on activities without a clear indication (and no measurement) of outcomes
 - Led to a lot of 'awareness raising activities' as the core of the work without a theory of change about why awareness raising would contribute to changed behaviours
- Implementers were not aware of the national data that existed that could help programming

Main Findings—focusing on SVB and IPV

School violence and bullying (SVB):

- Out of 96 countries that use the GSHS measure, Myanmar is the only country globally where self-reported school violence and bullying has an increasing trend for both boys and girls.
- Young people thought the main causes of bullying related to lack of empathy and intolerance of difference linking back to structural drivers
- Young people highlighted the link between how teachers treat students and how students treat each other.
- School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) was commonly mentioned by both boys and girls.
- Norms differ among boys and girls about what they should do if they witness school violence or bullying.

Main Findings

Intimate Partner Violence among Young People:

- Adolescents who are married as children experience the highest levels of controlling behaviours from their spouses and partners.
- Adolescents also hold more negative gender norm beliefs around intimate partner violence than adults and equate love with violence
- Controlling behaviours including monitoring physical and online movements are an accepted norm
- Adolescents **do** tell someone such as a family member about the violence they experience in their relationships but they are less likely to seek professional help than adults because of shame, stigma and other normative barriers

Recommendations for Future

- Revised Plan International's Champions of Change programme to be context specific
 - Highlighting more on challenging the norm of 'loving too much' leading to IPV.
 - Emphasising more that controlling behaviours is part of IPV
- Building a comprehensive prevention theory of change (across implementing partners) that is built on INSPIRE and is context specific
- More focus on adapting programming for gender components (current programmes are often not disaggregated unless they focus specifically on gender norms)