



Ugandan Parenting for Respectability Implementation Science Evaluation: Hybrid type II Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial of a Parenting Programme to Reduce Violence against Children and Gender Based Violence in Uganda

Dissemination Event Highlights

More than half of Uganda’s children experience physical violence, and a third experience sexual violence in their lifetime. The Parenting for Respectability programme (PfR) was developed in Uganda by Makerere University Child Health and Development Centre, in collaboration with Universities of Glasgow and Oxford, and implemented with SOS children’s villages in Uganda between 2021 and 2022 to address these issues at family and community level. Drawing on one of the most important values among parents – family respectability – the programme addresses the link between violence against children and intimate partner violence and emphasises recruitment of fathers and parental couples.

Study design and implementation

A cluster randomised controlled trial Hybrid Type II Trial was conducted in Northern and Central Uganda to test the effectiveness of the PfR programme in comparison to a brief 2-hour lecture (Parenting in a Nutshell – PiN) on parenting and partner relationships. A total of 54 villages (N=2318 parents: 1,251 female and 1,066 male) were randomised to either PfR or PiN, and half of their 10-14-year-old children were interviewed at baseline, immediately after the programme was delivered, and six months later.



Dissemination

On the 12th Jan 2023, the Uganda Team, with support from Prof Jamie Lachman from University of Oxford, organized a national dissemination event at Wakiso, near Kampala City, aimed at sharing study results and implementation experiences, and discuss scaling -up considerations with the stakeholders. The event received media coverage from 2 local radios, 4 TV stations (https://youtu.be/D_f8rUaklo0, https://youtu.be/Oqi_vRv9PFk, <https://youtu.be/YeQJYtvBa7o>, <https://youtu.be/i0viXIWd2dY>), and 2 national newspapers, featuring comments from the project team, Gender Ministry, and the Chief Guest.

Attendance

The event, which was presided over by the Chairperson of the Gender and Social Services Committee of the Uganda Parliament as the Chief Guest, was attended by 125 participants including key policy officials from the Ministries of Gender Labour and Social Development Education and Health, and members of the Ugandan Parliament. At the district and sub-county levels, all key social development departments, health, police and judiciary were in attendance and were led by their technical head – the Chief Administrative Officer and the district Chairperson, who is the political head. Others in attendance were faith-based leaders, selected community members and the facilitators who delivered the programme to parents. The event was marked with role plays by facilitators to show case their skills and testimonies of positive behavior change by some parents. Remarks by the various leaders underscored the importance of investing in parenting support training, and they made commitments to support scaling-up of the programme since poor parenting and violence was widespread in the country.





Results

Preliminary results, subject to peer review, show that the programme registered positive results for PfR across almost all outcomes. The effects of PfR were stronger at 6-months follow-up, while the impact of the 2-hr lecture faded after 6 months. Most effects were equal for male and female parents. Child assessments supported parents at 6-months (not at post-test). Results also showed an overall



reduction in child maltreatment, in particular, physical and emotional violence, and reduced acceptability of corporal punishment. Results also showed increased support of education and child educational aspirations, increased investment in basic child necessities, reduced household food insecurity and reduced parenting stress and parent depression.

Recommendations

- Now is an opportune time to scale-up Parenting for Respectability Programme given the increasing policy interest to optimise the role of parenting and strengthen the family institution, and given government emphasis on evidence-based programmes
- Alternative delivery mechanisms, including multimedia, digital, and remote modalities combined with in-person support and a rigorous referral system may be necessary to increase scalability and reach while maintaining programme effectiveness within existing resource limitations

Makerere University Child Health and Development Centre, in collaboration with University of Oxford under the Global Parenting Initiative Projects, PLH and other local implementing partners, are committed to ensuring meaningful capacity strengthening and systems development during adaptation and scaling efforts. The results of this study will feed into the ongoing standardisation of parenting work in Uganda through the National Parenting Agenda Consortium Initiative led by Makerere in collaboration with the Gender Ministry.

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