Transforming households, reducing the incidence of violence in emergencies: A study of displaced Colombian communities

CPC Learning Network at Columbia University and UNICEF¹

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THRIVE Final Report

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**Introduction**

Interpersonal violence affecting women and children is increasingly recognized as a public health priority in humanitarian emergencies.¹ Research has broadly demonstrated the harmful effects of violence on women’s physical and mental health throughout their lives, in the form of injuries, sexually transmitted infections, chronic stress and lack of control over reproductive choices (box 1).² Similarly, children who are exposed to violence face long-term impacts on their physical, emotional and social development.³

Although the effects of interpersonal violence in humanitarian settings, particularly against women and children, has been confirmed in several recent reviews,⁴ the evidence base has lagged behind the momentum for prevention and response.

This gap can be attributed to several factors. First, many studies have focused on wartime violence, such as rape and sexual abuse by armed groups,⁵ while other forms of violence, such as domestic violence, have been largely invisible.⁶ Violence between family members has remained understudied since the home is generally viewed as a private sphere.⁷ Second, when household violence in humanitarian emergencies does receive attention, it has typically been fragmented across the gender-based violence and child protection sectors, each with its own theoretical basis, funding streams, lead agencies, strategies, terminologies, rights treaties and bodies of research.⁸

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**Box 1. Commonly used definitions of violence against women and children**

**Violence against women**

“Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts and coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/104, 1993).

**Violence against children**

“All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse” (United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

“The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity” (E.G. Krug, J.A. Mercy, L.L. Dahlberg and A.B. Zwi, World Report on Violence and Health, 2002).
In reality, violence against women and violence against children often co-exist within households, suggesting that these forms of violence are interrelated. A recent review of 33 peer-reviewed studies from humanitarian contexts identified multiple risk factors that are common to violence against both women and children, including conflict exposure, alcohol and drug use, income/economic status, mental health/coping strategies and lack of social support. These findings confirmed the intersection of predictors across violence against women and violence against children, as well as the potential for integrated interventions. Lessons from this review can be applied to improve violence prevention and response programming and to offer recommendations for further research. The review suggests that increased use of longitudinal studies and experimental designs can better establish temporality between exposures and household violence outcomes, control for confounding and inform practice.

Studies have not typically inquired about the co-occurrence and intersections among multiple forms of violence, except in research on adolescent females, where research questions on violence against women and against children align. To address this gap in evidence, Columbia University and UNICEF collaborated on a project titled ‘Transforming Households: Reducing incidence of violence in emergencies’ (THRIVE). It sought to investigate the drivers of violence against both women and children during humanitarian emergencies. The project is a collaboration between the CPC Learning Network at Columbia University, UNICEF and the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, with funding provided by the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and Global Affairs Canada.

Recognizing the need for interventions to be grounded in the cultural and political realities of a specific context, THRIVE began formative work with emergency-affected populations in two settings, Colombia and Haiti, in 2017. This report presents the methods and findings from formative qualitative data collected in Colombia, which were analysed in partnership with the UNICEF Colombia country office and Universidad de los Andes. The purpose of the formative study was to gain deeper insights into how families in Colombia have been affected by household violence and conflict and how these realities might inform an intervention to reduce violence against women and children. In addition to building upon the existing frameworks and evidence base, the findings will
be used to design and evaluate a violence prevention intervention that takes into account the specific needs and concerns of the target population(s), as expressed during this formative stage.

The Colombian context

Colombia is an upper-middle income country that houses the world’s largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).\textsuperscript{12} UNHCR Colombia reports that as of June 2017, the country had over 7.3 million IDPs.\textsuperscript{13} Furthermore, that number was expected to increase as armed groups sought to claim territory lost by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the 2016 Peace Agreement and as displaced Colombians in Venezuela returned to their country of origin.\textsuperscript{14}

Displacement affects every department within the country, and conflict-related violence perpetrated by armed groups has been documented to include physical and sexual violence against children, use of girls and women as sex slaves or as ‘payment’ for protection services, and recruitment of children as guerilla soldiers.\textsuperscript{15} This group-perpetrated violence coexists with violence against women and violence against children in the home. In a nationally representative survey, 38 per cent of women and girls ages 15-49 years reported being physically or sexually abused by a current or recent intimate partner.\textsuperscript{16} The most frequently reported perpetrators of physical and sexual violence against girls ages 15-24 were intimate partners, parents and other relatives.\textsuperscript{17} Additionally, children ages 5 – 14 years constituted 58 per cent of maltreatment cases.\textsuperscript{18} In spite of the high prevalence of violence within the home in Colombia, previous research efforts have found that communities were reluctant to discuss family violence.\textsuperscript{19}

Research questions

The THRIVE project in Colombia was guided by three research questions, all of which were developed to gain formative and contextual knowledge from an intersectional perspective (i.e., examining the correlation between violence against women and violence against children) to inform prevention and intervention strategies.

1. What are the gender norms and local drivers affecting household violence?
2. How does exposure to conflict and/or relocation affect families?
3. What strategies, including coping mechanisms, might help to reduce household violence and strengthen families?

Methodology

Study Design

This qualitative study was completed in 2017 in Soacha, Cundinamarca and Tierralta, Córdoba. All data were collected through a participatory photo elicitation approach, implemented over the course of four interview sessions. Photo elicitation is a participatory, qualitative method that uses photography as a tool for facilitating discussions on sensitive topics, such as household violence and violence against women and children.\textsuperscript{20} The purpose of using a participatory approach like photo
elicitation was to provide participants with the ability to share stories and to drive the conversation on their own terms. This technique was intended to mitigate barriers related to power differentials that can arise in traditional interview structures, especially with adolescents and when discussing sensitive topics. Previous research had indicated that group discussions on problems often highlighted challenges external to the home, which could mask violence occurring within the household context. As such, individual activities were chosen to encourage the discussion of conflict and violence within the household itself.21

During the first session, interviewers introduced the study to participants and sought their consent or assent to proceed with the research. Participants who agreed to proceed were given cameras to use for the duration of the study. The photo-taking portion of the activity was used to encourage participant-initiated conversation on the thematic content of sessions. Participants were instructed to take photos related to prompts about family relationships (interview 1), family safety and wellbeing (interview 2), changes to family dynamics during times of displacement or insecurity (interview 3), and gender norms (interview 4). During each session, interviewers and respondents reviewed photos taken in response to prompts from the previous session and discussed prompts through a loosely structured open-ended interview. Interviewers then provided prompts for the upcoming session.

There were two rounds of photo-taking and three rounds of discussion, followed by a fourth, final in-depth interview to explore topics covered in the previous weeks. There is no standard definition of household violence; for the purposes of this study, the team modified existing definitions of violence against women and violence against children to establish a minimum definition of household violence a priori: “power and/or control perpetrated by one person in the household, with the intention or effect of causing harm to another person in the household’s physical, sexual, or emotional health or well-being”.22 This definition was applied with the understanding that local conceptions of violence could expand it.

**Research Team**

The field team included four Colombian researchers from diverse academic backgrounds and levels of qualitative research experience; a field coordinator from Colombia; and two field oversight staff from the United States. Prior to data collection, the researchers participated in two weeks of classroom training. Training topics included qualitative research methods being employed, effective probing techniques, ethics and confidentiality, appropriate referral processes, conceptions of violence and reflexivity exercises. Investigators from Columbia University, Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, and UNICEF-Innocenti provided additional oversight and support to training and research. Local partners with established presence and relationships in Soacha, Cundinamarca and Tierralta, Córdoba included staff from UNICEF Colombia, international non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations.

**Participants**

Spanish-speaking adolescents (ages 13 to 17) and adults (ages 18 to 75) participated in the research. Soacha and Tierralta were selected in partnership with UNICEF as areas with large concentrations of internally displaced persons, high levels of insecurity related to community violence, and an established presence of community organizations that could respond to participants in need. Local
partners purposively selected and led the recruitment of conflict-affected and displaced individuals in Soacha and Tierralta.

Due to concerns that disclosing displacement status could contribute to stigma and insecurity, participant eligibility criteria were modified to include adolescents aged 13-17 and adults aged 18 and older who lived in communities known to house large numbers of displaced persons, and/or environments characterized by insecurity. One member per household was enrolled into photo elicitation interview activities. In all, 73 participants (16 adolescent boys, 15 adolescent girls, 13 men and 29 women) completed 226 interviews.

**Ethical procedures**

All data collection was completed in accordance with ethical guidelines set by the Columbia University Institutional Review Board, protocol #AAAR1039, Universidad de los Andes, and the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2001). The local referral protocol included referral to community organizations for psychosocial support and legal entities in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, in accordance with Colombian law.

**Research process**

Photo elicitation interviews took place from June through August 2017. They included between three and four individual sessions, with two photo-taking assignments in between. The number of sessions completed was determined with consideration for time constraints of the interview team and participants. Participants who did not possess photo-taking devices were provided a mobile phone with photo-taking capability to use for the duration of the study.

During the first session, interviewers obtained consent from adult participants and caregivers and assent from adolescent participants in confidential interview spaces provided by partners. Participants were not remunerated. Interviewers introduced the activity and asked participants to elaborate on definitions and composition of their family, activities undertaken together, and changes associated with relocation. Interviews were audio-recorded in Spanish. At the end of the interview, participants were encouraged to use photo-taking devices to examine themes related to the next session: family decision-making, family safety and happiness, and challenges and strengths of their communities.

During the second session, interviewers and participants reviewed the photos taken in response to the assigned prompt, and participants were encouraged to describe and share their motivations for taking photos. Participants were then assigned a prompt on gender roles within their families and communities for the third session. During the fourth, final in-depth interview, the interviewer and participant revisited topics from previous sessions, probing further on conflicts in the household, conflict resolution, community challenges and strengths, and desired changes, including interventions or resources that could strengthen the family or community.

A subset of the 73 participants who completed interviews was selected for analysis (n=62), which included boys (n=16), girls (n=15), men (n=13) and women (n=18) from both sites. This subset of participants was chosen to account for the oversampling of women. Of the 226 total interviews, 20
interviews per age-gender strata were chosen for analysis for a total of 80 interviews, with the understanding that additional interviews would be chosen if needed to reach saturation. Interviews were selected to maximize inclusion of perspectives from different participants and to include an equal number of interviews per photo elicitation session.

The team used an inductive thematic approach to analyze data. Eight staff in an academic setting in the U.S. participated in transcript review and codebook development. Because analysis was completed outside of the context in which interviews took place, the research team adapted processes meant to mitigate Western biases in coding and analysis. In accordance with recommendations on including the language of completed interviews in analysis, two staff members with Spanish fluency reviewed 13 transcripts in Spanish, and an additional six staff reviewed 80 transcripts translated from Spanish to English.

The analysis team developed open codes through the review of a transcript from one of the sub-populations and revised the codebook against transcripts from the other subgroups, using different sessions of the photo elicitation interviews. The selection was random and resulted in review of an adolescent boy’s transcript, followed by transcripts from an adolescent girl, adult man and adult woman. In addition, the team completed an exercise to make interpretive lenses explicit, which resulted in the creation of a researcher bias checklist that team members used to record observations of potential biases throughout the open coding process.

All transcripts were coded using Dedoose 8.0.33 (SocioCultural Research Consultants, Los Angeles, CA). Eight transcripts were double-coded to assess interrater reliability and used to further refine conceptualization of the codebook. Weekly transcript review included discussions on code definitions and researcher biases. During the open coding process, the team documented interpretive reflections weekly, noting emergent impressions about central themes as they related to each research question. These reflections, in conjunction with analytic memos created in Dedoose, were collated and provided the foundation for the formation of themes through analytic organizing of open codes and overarching central themes.

**Analytic Framework**

The socioecological model is a stratified framework that public health organizations have touted as the recommended conceptual model for understanding and preventing interpersonal violence. Heise (1998) popularized the framework’s application for violence against women and girls. Slightly adapted from its original conceptualization, current socioecological models of interpersonal violence consist of four nested layers – individual, relational, community and societal – with each layer retaining an array of risk factors for violence against women and violence against children.

At the societal level, for instance, feminist researchers have written about the relationship between patriarchal structural inequities and violence against women and children. Examples of community influences include exposure to armed conflict, infrastructural limitations (such as inability of law enforcement and judicial procedures to enforce and uphold laws), migrant status, residential instability, neighborhood structural factors, and community norms that accept violence against women and children as normal. Relational variables consist of decision-making power, relational quality, bullying and mistreatment by siblings, mother's attribution of child intentions, and exchanges wherein the victim denies or challenges the perpetrator. Alcohol use, HIV status, the
experience of violence as a child, and psychological mechanisms (e.g., hostility) represent various individual factors.\textsuperscript{33} The socioecological framework was applied from a feminist perspective to the data, observing hierarchical patterns relating to gender norms as occurring within the societal level of the model.

**Limitations**

While there are several strengths to this study, the findings should be contextualized within the study’s limitations. Procedural limitations included variation in number and duration of interview sessions and replacement of phones throughout the duration of the study. The number of interview sessions was adjusted in consideration of participant and interviewer time constraints. This flexibility allowed for greater participation; however, it may have impacted analysis for interventions.

The amount of data needed for the study was overestimated, with women in particular being overrepresented. To address this limitation, a subset of interviews was selected from each participant demographic and analyzed until saturation. Selecting a subset of data for analysis, however, risks overlooking certain data points or qualitative outliers. Additional publications will aim to utilize a greater amount of the collected data, thereby mitigating the risk of jeopardizing participants’ time and energy.

Analytical limitations emerged around translation and availability of demographic information. Limited demographic information was collected for this sample in order to protect participant confidentiality. As a result of this, in conjunction with coded discussion of displacement in general, researchers were unable to differentiate findings by site. Translation complications arose in relation to participants’ tendency to mask or euphemize discussions of relocation and displacement due to stigmatization and fear of armed groups and gangs. Additionally, differentiation between developmental stage (e.g., adolescent girl versus adult woman) proved difficult at times due to the interchangeability of their use. In order to address concerns that the translation process itself can result in a loss of contextual specificities and richness, and in line with previous recommendations, the team employed Spanish-speaking researchers to code randomly selected interviews in Spanish.\textsuperscript{34}

**Findings of the study**

A majority of the 62 participants included in this study resided in Tierralta, Córdoba at the time of data collection (n=39, 62.9%). Equal numbers of adolescents and adults were included in analysis (n=31 per age group). The average age of adolescent participants was 15 years (SD= 1.5), and the average age of adult participants was 44.3 years (SD=13.9). A slight majority of the sample was female (n=33, 53.2%). While numbers of girls and boys were relatively equal, 58% of adults in the sample were women.

The results below are described in three sections that align with the research questions: 1) *What are the gender norms and local drivers affecting household violence?* 2) *How does exposure to conflict and/or relocation affect families?* 3) *What strategies, including coping mechanisms, might help to reduce household violence and strengthen families?* Figure 1 represents a visual code cloud of the overall coding system and frequency (represented by relative size of the code labels) with which codes were applied.
Findings revealed that participants’ perceptions of gender norms were framed by benevolent sexist stereotypes. Moreover, participants frequently discussed conflict in the household and described several drivers of violence against women and children in the household. Drivers of violence were mostly convergent and represented intersecting levels of the socioecological model. Next, relocation reflected a pattern of shifting familial structures that experienced increased stress associated with urban community characteristics. Finally, participants generated several recommendations, also at all levels of the socioecological model, to strengthen families and reduce household violence. These overarching themes are discussed in more detail below.

There was some differentiation in the frequency of code counts by site (see Appendix A for a table of code count by site and gender). Generally, participants from Soacha spoke more frequently about substance use, while participants from Tierralta conversed more frequently about community and cultural identities. However, these differences lessened when examining sites by code case count. Moreover, the differences in frequency did not reflect a qualitative difference in meaning for drivers of violence against women and violence against children, the impact of relocation on families, or interventions.

Research question #1: What are the gender norms and local drivers affecting household violence?

THRIVE findings identified multiple drivers of violence against women and violence against children in the home (detailed below). Many findings support previous research addressing the role of substance use, socioeconomic status, and social support in the experience of household violence. THRIVE study results also established a close link between household violence and gender norms. The following findings are discussed through use of the socioecological framework from a feminist perspective.
Gender norms

Benevolent sexism – the perception of men and women in stereotypical and paternalistic, but seemingly positive, roles – was frequently evidenced in descriptions of ideal roles, as well as examples of interactions between boys and girls and men and women. (See box 3 for definitions of gender socialization and gender norms.) When defining and describing gender, for instance, men often used hierarchical comparisons to illustrate their points. These direct comparisons highlighted physical strength (favoring men/boys), freedom of movement in the larger community (favoring men/boys), and parenting quality and capacity (favoring women/girls).

There was greater discrepancy between examples and descriptions of what men are versus what they should ideally be than there were for women. Descriptors for men – irresponsible, replaceable, involved where they shouldn’t be, lazy, and unfaithful – contrasted with the idyllic aspirations of the same – providers, dedicated to the family, responsible, kind, supportive, and respectful. Many descriptors and examples of women highlighted women’s roles as nurturers – both in actual examples and hypothetical discussion of what women should be.

Within the context of benevolent sexist stereotypes, the intersection of patriarchy and gender norms emerged as a dominant theme. Together, patriarchy and gender norms reportedly drove both violence against children and violence against women in the home. Throughout the narratives, patriarchy was present through the manner in which men were described as controlling women’s and girls’ behaviors inside and outside of the home. In particular, women and girls reportedly experienced less freedom of movement than their male counterparts. Regulation of movement was explained in relation to benevolent sexist gender norms, stating that women and girls were more fragile and less able to protect themselves. Fears for girls’ safety in the community particularly revolved around unwanted pregnancy.

“There are some girls that, for example: Parents don’t let them do anything from the house to the school and vice versa. They don’t let them go out and, I mean, they want to live what other girls are living, like going out with friends and that stuff. And the girls want to live those things [being pregnant or doing drugs] and if their parents don’t let them, they flee from home to go and live those things.” (Female, age 17, Soacha)

The same participant noted a double standard wherein mothers in particular worry less about sons’ activity outside the home than that of their daughters due to the risks of unwanted pregnancy.

“For example, with my brother, well he had girlfriends and went out, but mothers like they don’t, with a man they don’t worry as much. Because men are like, I don´t know they are so

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Box 3. Commonly used definitions of gender socialization and gender norms

**Gender socialization:**
“Process whereby individuals develop, refine, and learn to ‘do’ gender through internalizing gender norms and roles as they interact with key agents of socialization, such as their family, social networks and other social institutions.” (John, Stoebenau, Ritter, Edmeades, Balvin, 2017)

**Gender norms:**
“Sets of rules for what is appropriately masculine and feminine behaviour in a given culture.” (Ryle, 2012)
strange, but with women they try to control them more. Because they can get pregnant, and all those things. For example: women can get pregnant, but men can just disappear and leave the girls, and they are left alone with the baby, and it is harder for them. So, I don’t know for a man it is like, it is like easier, because men have more liberty than women and you see that a lot.” (Female, age 17, Soacha)

Another participant shared that women and girls remain responsible for a child from an unwanted pregnancy while the father may choose to participate or not, reflecting many participants’ concerns for pregnancy risks and associated responsibilities.

Participant: “…That you might go out with another person and the moment you get pregnant and all that. If men do that nothing is done about it but if women do it they get hit or scolded and things like that. And men go everywhere and nobody says anything to them.”
Interviewer: “Why do you think men can do that?”
Participant: “Because they take care of themselves, they know how to take care of themselves, but we don’t. We don’t, but I do know how to take care of myself.”
Interviewer: “So you would be able to go anywhere?”
Participant: “One day I said, Mom, I'm going to the park with a friend of mine, ‘No you can't go over there!'”
Interviewer: “And men do not ask for permission.”
Participant: “Men don’t even ask for permission.” (Female, age 15, Tierralta)

Some adult women also reported less freedom of movement than their adult male counterparts. However, while safety concerns for women in both communities were also discussed, restricted movement for adult women was primarily placed within the larger context of subordination to male intimate partners. Violence against women was described most often in response to a perceived deviation from socially accepted gender norms for women.

“Like, I think that, I haven’t been very far but for example I’d say to a man, my husband’s brother, he says to women that they can’t go and work because they’re women, why? Like I think that is machismo, saying that she has to stay at home cooking, washing, and all that for the men… or a man who hit women, who hit a woman, and just because she’s a woman he thinks he has a right to hit her.” (Female, age 35, Soacha)

Women and men alike frequently referenced a woman’s place as being within the home, except in instances where the woman was employed.

“The difference is that the man has the role of being the one who provides [for] the family, the one who takes care, who sustains, the one that’s in the house, the one who talks and immediately everyone says ‘Amen.’ And the woman know, the woman is the one who helps in the house, the one who takes care, the one who keeps an eye on everything, her role in the house, and her husband always expects that. He doesn’t get home to sweep, to cook, he gets home to provide, and he’s the one that provides what you need because as a wife you go and say, ‘I need this for the dinner, we need, the children need this,’ and he’s the provider and he’s authority… I told her ‘that husband you have is wonderful, take care of him, be more loving, more thoughtful, if your husband tells you to stay in the house someday don’t get mad about that, stay with him in the house…’” (Female, age 50, Soacha)
“…[my mom] worked, they both worked. But my dad was jealous, but he let her work and plus my dad did use violence, because my dad with my mom pretty hard for a while, because he saw that his brothers were telling him ‘you have to get her in line, you can’t let her talk back to you, you have to…’ That is what my mom told me, right? (Male, age 33, Soacha)

While the theme of men controlling women emerged frequently in the data, some women contrastingly reported that they did not allow their spouses to make decisions for them.

“…with me I'm not going to do whatever he likes, I don't do whatever he wants, just because I have to. Or if he goes out, like his brother’s wife, he goes out, she can't go out until he gives her permission. I do whatever I like I go wherever I like.” (Female, age 35, Soacha)

Drivers of violence against women and children in the household

For the present study, drivers were defined as factors temporally associated with violence against women and children, as being precursors or as having happened prior to violence (i.e., not outcomes or consequences). Drivers reflecting all levels of the socioecological model (individual, relational, community and societal) were evident in the data. Table 2 details where the drivers of violence against women and violence against children are located within the socioecological model, as well as the overlapping and contrasting ways in which these drivers manifest between women, girls and boys. With the exception of accumulation of daily stressors and poor familial communication skills, all other drivers were influenced by or intersected with gender norms. While there is some variation in the manifestation of drivers, collectively they reflect inequitable gender- and age-related power dynamics: women and children were more likely to experience household conflict or violence than men.

The drivers of violence manifested differently between women and children; however, they largely reflected patriarchal practices aimed at maintaining inequitable power dynamics within the home.

Table 2. Socioecological drivers of violence against women and violence against children in the household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drivers of violence</th>
<th>Violence against women</th>
<th>Violence against children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance use (I/C/S)*</td>
<td>Male battering of female intimate partner when inebriated</td>
<td>Battering of children (usually by man) when inebriated; beating as a form of punishment for child substance use; parental inebriation associated with failure to protect girls from extended family members’ perpetration of sexual abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulation of daily stressors (I/R/C)*</td>
<td>Intimate partner and economic stressors (e.g., management of finances and unemployment); unwillingness to share resources; intimate partner disagreement over resources</td>
<td>Management of work and parenting responsibilities compounded by economic stressors; parents battering children while trying to manage routines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of social support (R/C) | Prolonged sexual and physical abuse (typically by men towards women) by family and community members, including intimate partner violence, when women's family members are unable to or otherwise do not intervene | Chronic physical abuse by immediate and extended family members when family and community members do not intervene

Poor communication skills (R) | Inherited intergenerational intimate partner problem resolution practices | Inherited intergenerational parenting problem resolution practices; escalation of verbal disagreement between caregiver and child

Household responsibilities (R/S) | Perceived deviation from female gender roles (e.g., meal preparation) | Perceived lack of contribution to household tasks; hierarchical familial practices of discipline

Behavior regulation (R/S) | Control of intimate partner’s sexual autonomy and access to activities outside the home; reproductive coercion | Punishment for substance use, disobedience, poor school attendance or performance, and missed curfews

Intervention in intimate partner violence (R/S) | Protection of mothers (mostly by adolescent boys)

Note. I = individual driver; R = relational driver; C = community driver; S = societal driver.
* = also related to relocation experience.

Substance use

As indicated in previous research, substance use was a frequently referenced driver of household violence. Most often, participants described substance use, generally alcohol, as a precursor to violence against women and children by an adult male in the home. Violence perpetrated by men following alcohol consumption was often connected to narratives of male dominance and female subordination. One participant detailed a connection between substance use and latent gender norms by relating the behavior of a neighbor who frequently assaulted his wife, saying:

“…many times men are always trying to mistreat women when they are drunk or when they are on drugs…Because when he gets drunk he begins to say that women are easy, that if he wants any woman he would rape them or whatever he wants, because he is a very bad person when he gets in that when he is with alcohol or on drugs.” (Male, age 19, Soacha)

The same participant noted that instances of alcohol use and household violence were not limited to violence against women perpetrated by intimate partners, but also by fathers against children and adolescents.

“Ehh, in a safe home alcohol can affect many things because it can break the bonds, the family, over all the problems they can have, in one day they can even be hurting the woman they have or the children because of the alcohol problem, they can eh, do a lot of bad things.” (Male, age 19, Soacha)
To a lesser degree, substance use by adolescent and adult children also appeared to drive conflicts in the home with their parents or caregivers, either through parental disapproval or as a result of substance-induced aggression.

“Because I know a family, it’s my daughter-in-law’s family, it’s this: her cousins live with a woman, well, [name erased] aunt, but anyway, it must be as well because they’re such mad people, so because some of them are drug addicts, they drink too much and live with their mother and they treat her badly, they treat her horribly, there’s no respect or anything and she’s afraid of them. She’s afraid of her children when she sees them like that, drunk and well, drug addicts and good-for-nothings.” (Female, age 56, Soacha)

Furthermore, in one particular case, substance use by caregivers led to violence enacted against them by their children. This respondent reported an instance where a young man assaulted his intoxicated father for speaking poorly of his mother.

**Accumulation of daily stressors**

Accumulation of daily stressors – including economic stress, limited space and fatigue – were found to additionally drive violence against women and children within the home. Caregivers referenced these community factors as continuous stressors that impacted intimate partner and parenting practices.

“I live with a lot of stress well because of the pace of my life, and because, because of my financial difficulties and because my, yes over many things, eh, you get stressed. I got stress a lot, a lot, a lot. One day, the girl started studying and I had to, I mean the routine. The boy too. So the day came when I would get up, well I would get up early to make, because I sell lunches to, to my friend [name erased]. I sell her food, so I get up early to make them, so that I can have some time left over. I mean at eight in the morning I have the house ready, my lunch, everything, and that’s it.I go to the machine. So that day I don’t know for some reason I got up late, got up in a bad mood, I don’t know, and oh and went and clashed so horribly with my kids, horrible, horrible, yelled at them, punched [name erased] over here, [name erased]. She didn’t have breakfast.” (Female, age 40, Soacha)

Once again, gender norms interacted with the manifestation of these stressors in violence against women and children. In particular, violence against children was discussed as the result of male gender roles, with men acting as the disciplinarian in conjunction with compounding daily stressors.

“Because it’s not easy being in a job and maintaining order at the same time. Because when one [comes] he’s tired, suffocated…and the dad since he arrives tired and that [nuisance] he gives it hard to his kids. He starts to like get angry…” (Male, age 13, Tierralta)

Limited financial resources emerged as a persistent daily stressor and driver of household violence. For many reasons – including loss of work, theft, unwillingness to share resources or inability to find a job – financial resources were often described as scarce. Participants noted that financial stress heightened tensions within the home.
Interviewer: “...How were those conflicts before?”
Participant: “Very aggressive, my dad fought with my mom sometimes.”
Interviewer: “What was the reason for the, for the fights?”
Participant: “My mom would lend money to my dad, ehh, my dad didn’t pay her sometimes, he forgot the money, my mom would get angry…” (Male, Age 13, Tierralta)

“I got paid 25,000 COP (~ 9 USD) for the day, but then, no it was too draining and I would arrive not wanting to hear about anything, nothing the girl would try and talk to me about and I wouldn’t want her to look at me or to talk to me. The boy would try and say something about some homework, ‘there is no time, I don’t have time, no,’ stressed because maybe I had left some dirty dishes, or maybe the bathroom was dirty, or maybe [name erased] didn’t make his bed for me, so I would start fighting with them, or [name erased] made a mess with her toys. So I would clash constantly with my kids, because of that, because I would get home exhausted and it was like I wanted to be there and not do anything. And well, then I haven’t been to [previous employer] anymore, for about four months now I don’t go to [previous employer], I’m with [new employer], she has given me a salary. It has helped me out that [new employer] gave me a fixed salary to put it that way, and well it’s not minimum wage but what she pays me really helps me a lot.” (Female, age 40, Soacha)

Lack of social support

Participants reported conflict and violence stemming from the lack of a strong social support network where victims’ fear of reprisal and familial disbelief were commonplace. Women’s social support, in particular, largely consisted of familial aid and was often made visible in cases of intimate partner violence. Women and girls who lacked familial or community support reported greater risks of violence.

“Perhaps the thing, is with her, what do I know, but she looks, she stays quiet, and I think that’s how she must be in many homes, with many of the girls out there, neighbors, friends, others, a relative, what do I know, that she stays quiet there, and doesn’t say anything out of fear, for fear of something. Because if she says something to her mother, my brother or my cousin, or he abused me, perhaps she thinks that her mom is going to hit her, or kick her out of the house, something like that. It can happen, that happens but as you can see that is internal, everything is quiet, nothing is said…But I think there are people like that that do that and the women keep quiet. And they see them around, they see them pass by and it’s like uh-huh what can they do?” (Female, age 35, Tierralta)

The same participant also reported that in cases where abuse was brought to a parent by a child, it should be investigated before being perceived as a truthful claim.

“...if I would have had my daughters there, and my boyfriend my husband touched my daughter and my daughter told me, first off, I would look to see if it's true, because there have been cases where, sometimes it's a lie to cause jealousy because they don't want so-and-so man to live with my mother, they do anything so that they don't, and sometimes they are good, sometimes. Or bad whatever the case may be, but if the daughter doesn’t want, because sometimes it can be true or false. So then I would keep my eye out for anything, always until, it wouldn’t be that I expect it to happen again, it's just that I would remember,
and I would look for how to, to see how true it is. Of course you have to believe your children, but sometimes they are liars, or depending on how they were taught, they also make up lies. Then he comes, I immediately and no, do me the favor.” (Female, age 35, Tierralta)

Similarly, another participant connected her experience of rape to her family’s unwillingness to believe her accounts.

“… and they raped us all at around that age, and that, he really hurt us, and he said, ‘If you tell my, my, my niece, or if you tell my sister, I’ll say it’s a lie’… and we couldn’t say anything to my mother that he’d hit us, because they would say it was a lie. ‘The girls are little liars.’ Then afterwards, we lived together for a very long time, all together, and we were there for a good many years…” (Female, age 67, Soacha)

The connection between family support, community support and violence against women emerged throughout the data. One respondent relayed an incident where her cousin was punished by her family and husband by being placed in community stocks. The participant reported that after punishment by her family, her cousin was returned to her husband.

Participant: “She was punished, they had a meeting, we gathered and they punished her, and the boy was there, she had escaped because she did not want to be with him, so it was then that they looked for her and, and, they punished her, then she had to be with him again.”

[…]

Interviewer: “So the father and the mother, and they forced her to return. And what does the punishment consist of?”

[…]

Participant: “They put her in the stocks. […] those padlocks in there, they put their legs in there, but they do that in a big plank, a big one, and that’s where those little holes are made, and above, they put another one, where they press her hard on her feet here, down here almost on her heels, that squeezes her hard and they punish her with no food, without anything.”

Interviewer: “And how long did they have your cousin there?”

Participant: “15 days. […] They only gave her very little water, they would barely give her water, or there were times that other cousins secretly gave her food, but they had her watched over, yes that’s hard. […] Secretly, and she is lying like this on the floor lying down with her foot tied up like that outside, where everyone passes by and sees her.” (Female, age 14, Tierralta)

**Poor communication skills**

Compounding issues of substance use and economic instability, participants reported that a lack of effective communication skills contributed to household violence. In particular, participants stated that healthful familial communication techniques were lacking. As a result, family members – particularly caregivers – employed violence. Violence by caregivers, in lieu of verbal communication, was discussed as an inherited intergenerational practice, often identified in connection with the escalation of verbal disagreements.
“… let’s say, if you are fighting with your mom, and you respond to your mom for raising the same argument, what is going to happen? Or the mom hits the kid for talking back, or the mom comes back and responds, and like that they go on responding to each other, you understand? Then that well means a bigger problem.” (Female, 14 years, Soacha)

Another participant reported that violence arises because of misunderstandings between partners and suggested that regular communication between partners prevents the escalation of verbal disagreements.

Interviewer: “And do you have any idea of why that happens within couples? Like, ‘Why do they have to resort to violence?’ The partner that wants that.”
Participant: “Because they don’t understand each other. For example, what would it be, if she makes a point to him why does he have to explode like that, and of course we women are more feisty, louder, and how, we make a point, with anger, and he also doesn’t like for a point to be made either, or it might be true but he’ll say it’s a lie. Especially women, you have another woman, you have another woman in the street, then he comes, since you, and then he comes and hits her, for arguing, and for whatever other reason that she shouldn’t be that way well and if he has another woman and if he comes back late or doesn’t come at all it’s because of that very fact that he has someone else. Because who else would he be with out in the streets. Or what happened that he’s out there.” (Female, 35 years, Tierralta)

The above quote additionally illustrates how disagreements are influenced by gender norms and expectations for men's and women's behavior (e.g., women should not argue).

Household responsibilities

Violence against women and violence against children were repeatedly found in connection to the division of and expectations associated with household responsibilities. Violence against women often stemmed from a perceived deviation from expected gender norms. Specifically, household tasks, such as meal preparation, were regarded as a woman’s responsibility; women who failed to perform this duty experienced physical and verbal abuse.

“The woman has to have food ready for him, and if she doesn’t have it, he beats her.”
(Female, age 14, Tierralta)

“The woman? She works using her sewing machine, she works in the day and gets home terrified because there’s no food for her children, and because they shout at her and everything. She lives with her children.” (Female, age 56, Soacha)

A perceived lack of contribution to household responsibilities also drove violence against children. A range of adult caregivers – including mothers, fathers and extended family members – perpetrated violence against children. Within the home, such violence appeared to reflect hierarchical familial practices, with mothers committing violence against children most frequently, followed by fathers and extended family members.
“…[stepmother] you see how she drags them out with kicks and punches if they don’t clean their shoes right then and there. The child’s father will come and she’ll tell him and he’ll give them another thrashing.” (Female, age 67, Soacha)

Interviewer: “And for instance now, why does she punish you, before you were saying that you were telling me that you were, because you were very messy, and now why does she punish you sometimes?”
Participant: “Because, I mean, because sometimes I don’t listen to her. I mean I don’t do the errands or that she tells me to, I leave and I go somewhere else and she scolds me, sometimes she hits me.” (Male, age 14, Tierralta)

**Behavior regulation**

For women and girls, behavior regulation occurred through the restriction of sexual autonomy, access to activities outside the home and, in one instance, reproductive coercion.

“… and that’s how he began to get suspicions and so, until he found out she was with another, and he made a home for her and everything, he left his wife for her, and that man made a house for her and everything for that girl, and one day he had her killed because she didn’t want to be with him anymore.” (Female, age 46, Soacha)

Similarly, women were more often described as the victims of intimate partner violence aimed at regulating behavior and preserving traditional power structures. One participant described how his mother ended her abusive relationship, saying “She did not let him dominate her.” Other participants recalled observing stated expectations of male aggression as the basis for intimate partner violence in their homes.

“My dad, my uncles they are all extremely chauvinistic, where the woman is your servant, where the woman eh... yeah. For example, I have an uncle that says that if wives go off to work, they go to find lovers. Nowadays you don’t think…yes, they worked, they both worked. But my dad was jealous, but he let her work. And plus, my dad did use violence, because my dad hit my mom pretty hard for a while, because he saw that his brothers were telling him, ‘You have to get her in line, you can’t let her talk back to you, you have to…’ That is what my mom told me, right? I mean, my dad was a good boyfriend until he went drinking, for example, with his friends, or with his brothers, or the family. They’d tell him, ‘You have to give it to your wife every now and then. I mean, give it, hit her like to keep her subjugated, in line,’ like they said, so my dad would hit us hard.” (Female, age 33, Soacha)

For children, behavior regulation manifested as punishment. Violence as a form of punishment occurred in response to a number of actions, including disobedience, poor school attendance or performance, substance use, and missed curfews. Some respondents justified violence against children as a socially normative parenting technique that teaches children how to behave appropriately.

“Well, because she would get so ma- well, she says that well, that’s how they used to teach you before, and she like learned that and copied it, to like teach me, to teach me, because that’s how they used to teach you, before. And she had, I mean, she had that like habit from
when they used to hit her, and so she thought, well, I'll hit my children, too, like they taught me to.” (Female, age 15, Soacha)

“He once caught my brother smoking marijuana in my room and hit him so hard. And my brother left the house. He left the house, and I helped him escape. He escaped and didn’t want to come back to the house because my dad always beat him.” (Male, age 13, Soacha)

“Because ah because I had given him a hit with the other side of the machete. I hit him with the flat side, I told him no, no don’t do that again, it’s bad, so [he continued], so I got angry…” (Male, age 62, Tierralta)

**Children intervening to stop intimate partner violence**

Children intervening in intimate partner violence perpetuated against their mothers emerged as a common source of violence against children. The data showed that boys were often the victims of violence in this context, as they intervened in intimate partner violence more frequently. Intervention by adolescent boys aligns with this study’s findings of benevolent sexism, where males are perceived as protectors (i.e., the adolescent son) but in reality often also function as aggressors (i.e., the male intimate partner). Additionally, reported interventions by boys more frequently took the form of physical interventions rather than verbal.

“…I remember we were in the dining room with my mother and my brother and that man was drunk, arguing and arguing, and I, ‘hum, what happens to his man?’ Then my mom was serving the dinner when ‘PAAAAH,’ I saw him hitting her. I was really mad. I jumped on top of him and threw everything, the table in his head. Then I went to the kitchen. I got a knife and stabbed him in his leg. […] The man had a big knife, and he said, ‘Come, try to stab me.’ And I jumped at him. He tried to stab me, but I stabbed him in his arm and took the big knife from him. So in that moment, ‘So you were going to kill me? What’s up?’ He went away.” (Male, age 17, Soacha)

Participant: “…He returned after some time to see if his father had changed, but he hadn’t. He was worse. He would come home drunk, when he wanted to hit the mother and things like that.”
Interviewer: “Then he would try to defend the mother.”
Participant: “Since there are children who don’t want anything to happen to their mother. And he would do that, but he would also get hit.” (Female, age 15, Tierralta)

…Because he [father] was offending my brother and my mother, so he went and hit me because I got in the middle. When I saw him there, he said it to me, ‘come kid’ and I did it too. So he could tell me something.” (Male, age 13, Soacha)

While most reports of violence as the result of intervening in intimate partner violence were by boys, an adolescent girl in Soacha reported experiencing violence for intervening as well. In this case, the participant reported interceding verbally during a fight between her mother and father.

Participant: “Yesterday I talked with my dad. Yes, he was fighting with my mom.”
Interviewer: “And why were they fighting?”
Participant: “Because, I don’t know what he told me and I answered, so he went and hit me, yeah, hit me hard, really abusive.” (Female, age 15, Soacha)

Research question #2: How does exposure to conflict and/or relocation affect families?

The experience of relocating from a rural to urban environment or between urban communities was commonplace. Respondents highlighted several reasons for relocation, though the two most commonly cited scenarios relayed experiences with interpersonal violence – either having experienced or witnessed interpersonal violence in the community or within the household. Some respondents who had relocated from rural areas, for instance, described relocating because of armed conflict and rebel group activities.

Interviewer: “But, why did they want you to leave?”
Participant: “Because of the other person who was in the other farm and he didn’t like my dad, so, he went and accused him to the guerrillas. Then, they came to say to my dad that if he didn’t leave they were going to kill him. But we were leaving in that moment.” (Male, age 19, Soacha)

“We lived in an area called Toloba, here on this side, well we left, we grew up in the country and we lived very happily in the country until that moment when well the armed groups had already started to invade the country, and then there was an armed confrontation, ch guerillas attacked a paramilitary base in that area and there was a lot of killing, that horrible, horrible, horrible fighting.” (Male, age 60, Tierralta)

“My, my grandparents, my cousins, ch some friends of the family as well, practically all of us were living there; but since there the economy the situation got difficult such that you couldn’t find, my uncles couldn’t find work, no, because there they also worked with that, with the coca. So since they arrived there, when that was the guerrilla who was working, managing that issue, but when the paramilitaries arrived, everything fell apart, they started to kill people for, for planting that, or because they were collaborators with the guerrilla. So the paramilitaries killed them, and if you were a collaborator with the paramilitaries, the guerilla killed you, so the situation there became very bad, so, since here they already had a farm, so we decided to come here, about nine years ago now.” (Female, age 16, Soacha)

However, many respondents (especially women and children) described relocation as a response to experiencing household violence between intimate partners or against children.

“Um, well, when we were little, well my dad, he drank a lot, so he would come home and hit my mom, so well, when we were little, well, we would see that, so, then when my mom made the choice to leave him, well for us it was difficult.” (Female, age 17, Soacha)

Interviewer: “Ok, you, how was, how your mom says that separation was, coming here?”
Participant: “Well I remember, my dad was going to hit my mom and I stood up. I stood up with my brother, we went out from the house and we came here.” (Male, age 17, Soacha)
Notably, several participants who had relocated perceived the relocation as not having directly affected intra-familial safety, levels of violence (which often occurred prior to relocation as well), well-being or altered social norms.

**Interviewer:** “Why did you decide to come and live in Bogotá with your aunt?”
**Participant:** “Because she got married and I had spent a lot of time with her, so I just came to live with her.”

**Interviewer:** “And how did that affect your relationship with your parents, and your brothers?”
**Participant:** “Fine, because it didn’t affect us at all. My dad used to come and see me or he would send me money every month to pay for school, for snacks, for food, which he gave to my grandmother and my aunt because I was living with them. You know? And no, everything was fine thanks be to God.” (Female, age 57, Soacha)

**Interviewer:** “How has your family changed, the roles of each member since you moved here, from where you were, in the town you were before, to where you are now?”
**Participant:** “In nothing, the one who has sustained the house is my dad, he has always been the head of the house and as [it was] in the farm it’s here in the city.” (Male, age 19, Soacha)

“No well, at the beginning like [it was] hard because coming from the countryside to live in the city is a radical change, but what you think mostly is about everything you leave behind, so, the friends, the school, everything. But we got here and it’s just a matter of time and you get used to it.” (Male, age 18, Soacha)

A few participants observed positive changes associated with relocation from rural to urban settings. Typically, denotation of positive change included increased access to education. One 64-year-old man in Soacha described the benefits of having increased opportunities after relocation in comparison to the countryside where he came from: “…because there weren’t that many opportunities, here there are lots of opportunities where you can get ahead […] Because it’s a town, so there’s just countryside, there were no benefits…”

Despite these explicit observations of relocation experiences, the study observed several ways in which relocation negatively affected families. The following elucidates potential pathways through which relocation seemed to affect violence against women and children.

**Shifting family structures**

A central theme related to relocation was the shifting of family structures and composition (see Figure 2). Because relocation was often associated with exposure to interpersonal violence, the particular shifts in family composition were frequently due to the death or disappearance of family members or separation of intimate partners. While not uniform, the theme of shifting family structures elucidated what emerged as a frequent family composition of women and their children. Participants described women as losing husbands to conflict and divorcing or separating from abusive male partners, and sometimes later partnering with other men.
“Because we were used to seeing them [mom and dad] both, so then when they split up, well my 19-year-old sister, she left with him, my brother, well, he started to smoke and was sent to a boarding school, and so we well, stayed with my mom and that’s when she found my stepfather.” (Female, age 17, Soacha)

“Some [families] that I know because the woman is single because they killed the husband. They are displaced, and the woman makes the decisions.” (Female, age 47, Tierralta)

Irrespective of whether people had relocated, almost all participants described their host communities as fraught with problems: most notably as being unsafe, being unprotected by formal institutions (e.g., police) and posing economic and related challenges for families.

Interviewer: “How have the conflicts changed since you were in [name of community] to this moment?”

Participant: “There are not so many conflicts, well there are armed issues, the red zone, but you could leave in peace, you can talk, look, you live in peace. But here you don’t. There are many dangers.” (Male, age 34, Soacha)

Urban communities additionally presented more opportunities to obtain and engage in substance use. Substance use in turn was associated with increased fighting and problems in the community.

“One of the challenges that these displaced families have or at the level one is that the displaced woman doesn’t always think of the children, and we are seeing a lot of addicted children. It’s sad. We didn’t see that before.” (Female, age 47, Tierralta)

“…But now there aren’t very many conflicts in the countryside because people say there is peace. There’re a lot of soldiers everywhere, so there isn’t very much conflict. But here in the city, we see a lot of conflict because people want to fight all the time, or want to have… For example, there’re a lot of people who work all the week to drink on Saturday and Sunday.
And in those days, unexpected things can happen. For example, there may be problems, or another person who doesn’t bear what the other person is saying to him, and they can fight.”  
(Male, age 19, Soacha)

Respondents described being exposed to violence in others’ homes because of living in a crowded urban environment. One man described the problem of increased access to (i.e., more availability of) sexual partners and its associated consequences for relationships with intimate partners. His narrative further highlights assumptions about men’s sexual desire as being essential to maleness or “because one is a man.”

Interviewer: “And let’s say, those problems that you had with your wife, were they generally before or after you arrived here?”
Participant: “No, no, that was when we arrived here, not there. Because, because, not there in the farm. That was here.”
Interviewer: “It was upon arriving here to town.”
Participant: “Here to town because there is more abundance here.”
Interviewer: “Of course.”
Participant: “The abundance, not there, there everything is good. But since we arrived here, if I saw another women that I liked, because one is a man, and because, because, like I told you, this is a stumbling block that one has here, but, it’s difficult, difficult.”  (Male, age 62, Tierralta)

One woman commented on increased observation of pregnancy in young girls in urban communities – a community problem observed by many participants.

“Here you see little girls of 10, of 14, 15 years old expecting babies at primary school, at secondary school. Because around here, yes, they say around here that ‘pinch yourself and you won’t wake up – this is reality.’”  (Female, age 67, Soacha)

The data revealed that the shifting of family structures was a dynamic process that interacted with the host community environment. Family compositions changed when relocating and continued to alter due to problems faced within and qualities of the host community. The stress of poverty and the need for income generation was linked to continued instability and separation of family members.

Participant: “Because my dad left.”
Interviewer: “Your dad left? ((mmm)) But, tell me a little bit more.”
Participant: “He left to, to the farm, to work there.”
Interviewer: “He left for the farm?”
Participant: “Mhmm, to send money to my mom.”  (Male, age 13, Tierralta)

Interviewer: “And your 2 children left after the displacement to Bogotá.”
Participant: “Yes the oldest, she left like 4 years, it’s going to be 5 years, 5 years that her partner went to work there and then took her away. The male was going up there as they have never stopped planting coca there…”  (Female, age 37, Tierralta)
“So they began to give him work, and he was working, and he began to hang out with all those guys, the ‘patos.’ Some of them are annoying, some of them bother so they say some of those guys were going to kill him because once he saw a thing that they were going to assault a bus in which he was working as ‘pato’ and they killed the driver. He saw everything. He saw who was the one who killed the driver, so they were going to kill him because of that, because he could talk, so that’s why they took him away from here.”
(Male, age 17, Soacha)

Interviewer: “Which would be like the reason of force, like the most urgent reason to have to move again?”
Participant: “Maybe, well, the economical, I mean, I think that’s the only reason for moving, the economical, no more.” (Male, age 18, Soacha)

Increased stress on the family system

Many participants discussed adversity in urban settings, a central theme in narratives of relocation. The familial system, already made vulnerable by its shifting composition, encountered increased stress when relocating or hosting extended family members who had relocated.

“No, in my house, I had to receive her [aunt] because she had no place to go, and she came with two little children and, because her mom and because the cousin that I told you I have here, there’s a daughter of her, and she has two other little ones. So, there are four little children arriving to the house at six in the morning and with another cousin that goes there, her niece and another little boy, like five. So to wash their clothes for all of them, it’s a lot of disorder.” (Male, age 19, Soacha)

Perceptions of and experiences with community violence reportedly affected caregiving practices between adult caregivers and children. Women especially expressed concern about the safety of their children. Lack of community safety also restricted leisure opportunities that were outside the home for youth.

“Aha, here you don’t, here you feel unsafe. You can’t leave the boy alone in the apartment. Wherever I go, I have to take the children or leave them with my oldest daughter, or one of the two of them. For example, now I took after the girl, and I left the boy with the girl, with the big girl, but I can’t, so I don’t feel safe in here. No, here I feel unsafe.” (Female, age 50, Soacha)

“Well, now I feel overwhelmed by the level of safety in the neighborhood, mostly because of the safety of my children. Because sometimes when you’re lying down and you don’t know if they’re gonna throw a bomb on you or who knows where. So if my kids go out into the street, and then always they always take ages, so I’m there like ‘Ah, where are you? What did you do? Where and what did you do? Or maybe you’ve done something. What if something’s happened to you?’ You’re there like with that, that silence without them. And your heart is just going. You live through it every day.” (Female, age 35, Soacha)
As a core component of increased familial stress, participants underscored the intensification of economic adversity when relocating from rural to urban environments – in part because of a lack of labor skills and qualifications demanded in an urban environment.

“… they [displaced people] don’t know how to read, they don’t know how to take transportation. They are going to search [for work]. They go selling candies. They go and find 5,000 pesos [~1.70 USD] and they go sell candies in the, in the buses, yes?” (Male, age 40, Soacha)

For parents, finding and affording childcare presented a notable adversity following relocation. A few respondents offered examples of leaving children with extended family members as a result, representing another way in which the composition of families shifted during the relocation process.

“The roles changed a lot then because, firstly, I changed husbands, from my children’s father. That was a hard loss that I still haven’t got over. I don’t think I’ll ever get over that. Then I was left as a mother and father to my kids. I worked outside the home, and I had to work and come home to see my kids. I used to pay people to look after them for me. I’d pick them up and then the next day carry on the same all over again. And for that same reason, it was so hard for me. And then afterwards, when I started going out with that man, I was working still as well because I was working in the kitchen too.” (Female, age 35, Soacha)

“Well, I really don’t know, the problem was that we were not there because my mother or father wanted, but because, after a year my dad went to live with my mom once again, and we were very little to come here, and there was nobody to take care of us so, as we were fine there, and my grandmother was taking care of us, so, they decided to leave us there while we grew a little bit more, and after that take us to Soacha, because they were working all day and there was no one to take care of us.” (Male, age 18, Soacha)

Women’s urban employment illustrated a gendered trend in employment possibilities and were largely restricted to sex work, cooking, selling food, and domestic work and professional cleaning. Performing sex work at times exposed women to further violence, which women framed as undesirable and dangerous. Vulnerability to perceived undesirable employment was associated with the loss of autonomy that came from the ability to raise one’s own food in a rural setting. In addition to describing the gendered structure of employment opportunities, one woman’s detailed narrative demonstrates the stigmatized and dangerous nature of any work connected to the sex work industry.

Participant: “Like the man wanted to have sex, for, like I didn’t understand that. I asked. She [a friend] said, ‘When you don’t give them your whole body?’ She told me, ‘Then they beat you.’ For me, a woman said to me, ‘Don’t go and do what I did.’ I said, ‘Do what?’ And she said, ‘Ah no! It’s terrifying, it terrifies me, it scares me.’ Because that did terrify me. I used to say, ‘Oh, my Blessed God, don’t let that happen to me.’ Even if I had to go and work as a kitchen worker, an assistant, I’ll do it, but no, not that, not in this life….”

Interviewer: “When you got here, to the city, to Cazucá, Bogotá, was your role as a woman different in the countryside than here in Bogotá?”

Participant: “Oh, yes, 70,000 times yes. Because in the countryside you can raise animals, plant seeds, but here in Bogotá, where are you going to plant things? You can’t have animals
either. You can’t have them. You have to go out and look for a job in Bogotá in restaurants or whatever you can get, in whatever you can get, but yes. I’ve never liked attention seeking, I don’t know. I’d prefer to work as a kitchen assistant, even if I’ll burn my fingers, even if I have to peel a million potatoes, and you can earn your living because it’s a job, for girls, but there’s nothing else. I worked in various restaurants, then I worked in that, where you go to a home [brothel]. You call it a home. Everyone else says, ‘Oh no!’ Right? Lies, because where I was working, I was working there for 13 years. And they would ask, ‘Where are you working?’ And I would say ‘No, I work in a restaurant.’ Lies, because I had to work in that, because they would give me – no – I had to wash sheets, so many people’s sheets, so many…” (Female, age 67, Soacha)

For both men and women, there were examples of the skills gap leading to unemployment and idleness.

“At the moment there is no work, what work, to make the food for the children that are studying. My daughters have little children – little daughters – they make food for them…we don’t have land. If you have land, you can tell the kids, well, come home from school, and you’re not going to just sleep. When they get out from school, leave at 12, rest until 2 in the afternoon, sleep. Well, if you have to work, okay, from 3 in the afternoon to 4, we will plant. You will plant 20 yucca bushes. You will plant 5 plantain trees. You will plant 5 ñame bushes. When you are like that, they learn to study and they learn to work. But where I am, here, how am I going to do that here? So then the kids, there are times the kids ask me, the older kids, grandpa, you don’t have a place to go? That’s sad! It makes me sad.” (Male, age 58, Tierralta)

As noted in the example above, participants frequently contrasted living in rural and urban environments in terms of the relative difficulties of securing food in the respective settings. In essence, rural agrarian environments provided more access to food through harvesting and raising of animals. Occasionally, respondents connected economic adversity (and food insecurity in particular) in urban environments to violence and friction in the home between partners and caregivers/children.

Interviewer: “Well now, when it comes to [name of community], how has it changed or have difficulties, discussions, disagreements in the family emerged since you have been here?”
Participant: “Yes I have already suffered, as my daughter was never taught to endure hunger. When we took her, she was hungry and I did not have food to give her, she would get angry. Then she would make me angry, and I would beat her… I am also feeling hungry, don’t worry about me, that’s why I don’t worry about you. They say things like that, so then you say, I don’t need to buy you things, what am I going to buy things with? Sometimes she [wife] answers me like that.”
Interviewer: “So, she gets serious because there isn’t anything.”
Participant: “There isn’t anything to eat in the house. […] In the mountainside it was content. Because in the mountainside you can fish, you kill fish, kill bushmeat. All the children were happy…” (Male, age 58, Tierralta)

“Everything, and all of that was lost, that house full of rice that lasted from one year to the next. And here it costs me a pound, fifteen hundred and two thousand. And there are times when I don’t buy it because I don’t have any money to buy it with. So this has been difficult.
This life has been difficult because, although I do not, it has felt very difficult.” (Male, age 62, Tierralta)

Urban employment exacerbated family vulnerability through more indirect pathways as well. For example, there were reports of exposure to community violence because of employment hours (e.g., working late hours) or location (e.g., traveling far from home). These problems in the community, in turn, exacerbated economic difficulties for the family. For instance, the woman below shared her experience of being mugged at knifepoint when leaving work, and she subsequently quit her job for fear of her safety.

“That was the time I told you about when they robbed me. I was working in [name of community]. I was living in [name of different community], and I got home at 11pm, and some guys came up to me with knives on a corner, on the other side, like that. And when I saw what had flashed there, it was that, obviously, they’d taken out this knife like this and no, I started shouting like a banshee.” (Female, age 56, Soacha)

Research question #3: What strategies, including coping mechanisms, might help to reduce household violence and strengthen families?

Interviews revealed a wide range of existing and potential interventions that could benefit families and communities in both Soacha and Córdoba. Overall, participant-generated strategies were organized into two themes: (1) parenting and communication to improve family relationships and (2) economic strengthening to address economic insecurity. There was some description that constituted a third theme of substance abuse interventions, though these were less common than parenting and economic strengthening. Within the study communities, informal social support networks were often seen as a means of providing financially for the family and creating a supportive environment for children.

Parenting and communication

As described previously, poor communication was seen as a driver of conflict within the household. Both adolescents and adults suggested relational-level interventions to teach consistent parenting. When describing her ideas for preventing caregiver violence against young children among her extended family members, an adolescent girl explained that changing caregivers’ attitudes toward their children was important:

“Because in order for them to learn it would have to be in a dynamic form or something like that, that they feel like ‘Oh yes, I have to change my attitude with my children’ or something like that…” (Female, age 17, Tierralta)

While participants reported that families lacked strong communication skills, participants also expressed a desire for improved communication styles within the home. Both caregivers and children alike stated that family members should communicate calmly with each other, emphasizing the importance of relationships where talking is utilized over violence. In discussing options for improved communication, a participant recommended speaking with a professional to aid intra-family communication.
“That would be talking to everyone in the family, with a professional, because if one sits to talk with their family but their mom doesn’t like to listen or not, yes, she doesn’t like to listen to them well, what’s going to happen? You’re going to stay in the same thing, you understand?” (Female, age 14, Soacha)

Participants also described contexts in which a person intervened to stop or prevent violence from occurring within a household. Multiple participants noted that neighbors and other community members did not interfere in cases of violence against women or children in the household. Conversely, several women noted that the role of prevention and resolution of intimate partner violence lay with the family, specifically the parents, of the woman being abused.

Participant: “She said that he started hitting her a lot, my mom said she could not stand that and said she had gone to my grandpa’s.”
Interviewer: “And then she didn’t go back.”
Participant: “She got back together with him again, but at the end they did not get back together anymore.”
Interviewer: “And what happened to that man?”
Participant: “He’s around there, he used to go to the house but my dad – the grandparents said that they weren’t going to let her live with him anymore because he mistreated her a lot.” (Female, Age 14, Tieralta)

Another woman provided an example of how she and her son helped resolve physical violence occurring in her daughter’s romantic relationship:

Participant: “…He [husband of participant’s daughter] used to hit her [participant’s daughter] in the beginning. He used to hit her. He hit her across the face here and of course she called me and said ‘Mum, this guy hit me. Look. He’s left all the marks of his fingers across my face.’ And I called [my son], and I said, ‘We’re going to sort this out because if we don’t sort this out right now, at the very beginning, god knows he might be kicking her, punching her tomorrow, really roughing her up, even killing her and well, it’s better that we just sort this out now.’ And so we went, and we spoke to him, and then we said to him, ‘You got a wife, not a person to have as a slave or to hit, no.’ And I said to him, ‘Look, if you see that you can’t live with [my daughter], leave and I’ll take [my daughter], and we’ll give your son the best in life, by any means possible.’” And he said, ‘No, forgive me, mother-in-law. I got home, and I was drunk.’ And well, and my brother, he said, ‘Ah you shouldn’t get involved.’” (Female, age 56, Soacha)

However, receptivity to intervention was cited as a barrier even within the extended family network (as noted with the participant’s brother in the example above). In another example, an adolescent girl noted that while her father sometimes verbally intervened in cases of violence against children in her extended family, she feared repercussions if she were to intervene:

“I would say that in that case, yes, I would like to do something to say to [the aunt/uncle], because one would want to tell them something. It hurts you sometimes that they hit a child and all of that but you, you don’t know how, or say at the moment of telling them you don’t know how they will react with you, nor if they will be bothered by something. And so
sometimes I would like to find options to tell them, how to tell them, because in reality, yes, there is intra-family violence there.” (Female, age 17, Tierralta)

Some adults also expressed an interest in individual-level interventions, such as learning self-regulatory behaviors to effectively manage negative emotion. One woman described the importance of self-control within the context of the home:

“… the self-control is that I’m cooking in my house and my husband arrives or one of my children or the neighbor angry to tell me a lot of things, to scold me because I did something, and I have nothing to do with that problem. I have to have self-control, right? It’s difficult that most of the people, children and adults have to have this self-control. Most of us we don’t have it, just a few.” (Female, age 50, Soacha)

Another woman described how her children have motivated her to work on her bad temper:

“No, I have tried to keep myself calm. If I have changed little, from that time until now. I have changed a little, and well, if I tell you off, if I fight, if I yell, but no, not much, not like it was before, because I myself realized that, I mean if I didn’t, I lived through that, I don’t want my babies to live through that. I mean that these days for my son to not want to come home, no, no, or my little girl doesn’t want to be by my side. My little girl still tells me ‘mommy it’s just that you, you are the best mom in the world, I would like for you to change your temper a little bit, not to tell me off so much.’ She says that to me, so I try to change those little things. I’ve tried. It’s not easy, but I’ve tried…” (Female, age 40, Soacha)

Participants denoted that enhanced communication skills between family members, including the ability to regulate negative emotion, would decrease household violence, particularly between caregivers and children. While there were fears of adults’ receptivity to parenting interventions among adolescents, there were also indications that familial support was imperative for women who experienced intimate partner violence.

**Economic strengthening**

As presented above, respondents frequently identified the community-level variable of economic adversity as drivers of conflict within the household, a condition which was exacerbated by relocation. Participants suggested two primary desired interventions: (1) income generation training and opportunities and (2) opportunities to procure land that might allow displaced families in particular to retain agricultural practices. As reflected in the quote below, opportunities to learn and pursue a trade were viewed as means for gaining economic stability after upheaval caused by displacement or other events that changed the family’s previous structure and resources:

“…my husband did not allow me to work anywhere. He was the one who supported me, and I gave everything because he was good economically. But when I was alone, I had to, so I bought a machine. I rented a small store. Then I had a large store and I set up my good business, and my children lived very well with everything that came into my work, so I had no need…” (Female, age 50, Soacha)
Obtaining land to continue farming practices was also suggested. Especially in Córdoba, the loss of farmland when displaced from a more rural to urban environment was seen as an impediment to economic security that could be remedied by the government or aid organizations. Purchasing land in the location of resettlement was referred to by one man as impossible due to cost: “It’s like saying we are going to touch the sky with our hands, it’s difficult right?” This man’s proposed solution was to ask government leaders and influential people for “five thousand or twenty thousand hectares of land for the indigenous population” so that his community could have their own space to live in peace and engage in income generation activities, such as farming. As seen in this quote, adult men in particular identified some of the barriers to economic independence as structural and lying within the purview of government and local aid organizations. Male and female respondents viewed being able to grow food and harvesting as contributors to self-sufficiency that reduced economic strain:

“…You benefit a lot through, through the, the cultivation of cacao. I mean because you, from that you have for, for, I mean, you have how to feed yourself. I mean you, you produce cacao and sell it and with that you buy food. So for that I, I like cultivating cacao because through that comes the sustenance for your family. You collect it, dry it, and sell it, and with that you buy food. So for that in case like that where some help comes to me, what I would charge would be planting a, that, a hectare, half hectare of cacao…” (Male, age 50, Tierralta)

“Ah, for example, having, for example, my little land, and I would work independently doing my harvests, taking out my products myself.” (Female, age 42, Tierralta)

Substance use interventions

Participant ideas for addressing substance use included two community-level interventions: (1) increasing organizational response support for individuals using illegal substances and alcohol and (2) preventively raising awareness, specifically targeting youth at risk of substance use. Using community structures to change individual-level attitudes regarding substance use was a prominent component of recommendations for both rehabilitation centers and awareness-raising among youth. An adolescent boy described the rationale behind a church organization’s mandate that participants in their drug rehabilitation center – which included his aunt – shave their heads:

“Because when you look at yourself in the mirror you remember what you’re doing, to get out of that, with your family. But… you don’t see that [drug rehabilitation centers] in here so much, I think there is not one around here, in this community, no. There could be some externally but we lack organizations in the community that help kids in drug addiction.” (Male, age 17, Soacha)

Similarly, an adolescent girl recommended awareness-raising activities for substance use as a direct response to her perception that substance use was a security issue in her community:

Interviewer: “And the issue of security has like more divisions? Like some type of [crime]?”
Participant: “Not the security, it would be like that, security for adolescents in the sense that it could be they end up in vices. Because I haven’t heard many people that ‘Agh they entered my house and stole my things,’ right? But I have heard people [say] that ‘My son started smoking, my daughter drinks,’ like that.”
Interviewer: “And how, how would you approach those difficulties?”
Participant: “Ugh, well I don’t know. I think that in the sense of security, it would be making let’s say, campaigns, um, inviting the youth well so that mmm, they don’t fall and into those vices, and that they have the mentality to be able to help people they know with, with these problems.” (Female, age 14, Soacha)

Informal social support from family and community members

In contrast with the many descriptions of community problems, participants also frequently listed assistance from family and community members as a form of support in the face of common stressors, such as economic insecurity. Immediate and extended family members, friends, neighbors and other community members offered economic support via cash to pay for bills, food and other basic needs; they also served as informal networks for finding employment. One woman described obtaining both food and a job through acquaintances in the town marketplace:

“…I was already meeting people. You know, one goes down the street and everyone throws a compliment, good, and I became friends with some porters, some banana loaders and yucca. Well others were fishermen and because we lived there in the market when that was the market that there, and I was making myself known and they already brought me the bananas, the yucca, fish and so on, I became a friend until one of them got me a job at the funeral home, and I went to work at the funeral home…” (Female, age 46, Tierralta)

An adolescent boy also described obtaining employment through networks of friends:

“I’ve met a lot of people. I’ve heard, I have a lot of friends that rap. I have friends that do records. I’ve been with them too, assembling and disassembling cabins, the ones they use to make their shows.” (Male, age 17, Soacha)

Bartering services and resources with other community members was also a reciprocal means for obtaining support for one’s own familial needs. One adult man described the ways in which he and his neighbors helped each other:

“… I work in electronics, when it’s my turn for electricity, they tell me, ‘We are going to, I need you to do me a favor,’ and they ask me to take care of a house… I take care of it for them. There is no problem. To my wife, the neighbors tell her, ‘Take care of the girl for me, take care of the boy for me.’ … Then there they have a resource…” (Male, age 40, Soacha)

Beyond this form of assistance, some participants noted that community leaders and community mobilization efforts were instrumental in receiving and advocating for services from government representatives and other organizations. One woman described how her doctor informed her about an organization that provided food to people in the community:

“When I had no work for about a month, I was looking on one side, and I couldn’t find anything. I looked in, it was my doctor who advised me to go to [name of place] because they give out supplies there. ‘Why would they give out supplies there? (claps)) If I have to work to get it, I’ll do it.’ And he said, ‘No, ma’am, go and there they just give it to you.’ And yes, they gave it to me, sometimes they would throw it away. They would throw away so much plantain, manioc, and it was all good, too…” (Female, age 67, Soacha)
Friendships and positive relationships with parents and extended family members were also described as forms of support for adolescent girls and boys.

Interviewer: “And who do you go to?”
Participant: “My mom, always, always her, but I’ve always been only with her, so like, it’s always her.”
Interviewer: “And, are there situation where you go to a male or female friend?”
Participant: “Yes, my godmother.” (Female, age 15, Soacha)

Summary

This study found a number of shared drivers of violence against women and violence against children in the home; it also illuminated the role of normative male aggression in reinforcing traditional gender roles. In expanding the focus of the study to include both violence against women and violence against children in the home, the team was able to better understand shared drivers and distinctions between the two forms of violence. These points of convergence and divergence offer important considerations for the adaptation of dual target violence against women and violence against children interventions that are locally relevant. While men commonly enacted both forms of violence, descriptions of ideal relationships highlighted the desire for communicative and nonviolent familial relationships.

1. **Intersecting gender norms with local drivers contribute to violence against women and violence against children**

Findings revealed intersections of drivers and gender norms related to both violence against women and violence against children across the four levels of the socioecological framework. For instance, at the individual level, alcohol consumption interacted with expectations and acts of male aggression and subordination of women. Socially prescribed gender roles where men were expected to regulate the behavior of women and children within the relational sphere (often in terms of performing household responsibilities), when coupled with poor communication skills by both men and women, contributed to both forms of violence. Children intervening to stop intimate partner violence against their mothers was often related to violence against children; it also demonstrated a gendered trend, with narratives portraying adolescent boys as most likely to intervene.

At the community level, the accumulation of stressors – particularly economic – heightened family tensions and led to violence against children and women. Additionally, lack of social support for women was associated with violence against women. This interacted with the relational level such that a main form of social support for women consisted of immediate and extended family members.

At the societal level, widespread patriarchal social standards, such as *machismo* and the social reinforcement of male dominance and aggression, drove both forms of violence in the home. These results highlight the importance of broadening interventions to account for intersecting influences at all levels of the socioecological model, attending especially to intersections between patriarchal gender roles and other local drivers.
2. Urban stressors must be considered for relocated families

Relocation affected families in numerous ways. A main driver of relocation was exposure to interpersonal violence at the relational (i.e., household) or communal levels (i.e., armed conflict), wherein relocation emerged as the predominating strategy to maintain safety.

Data revealed a pattern of shifting family structures and compositions during the process of relocation. These family systems encountered increased stressors in host communities which participants characterized as: being unsafe; lacking protection by formal institutions; providing more access to illegal substances; and presenting new economic challenges through the demand for urban labor skills and lack of food availability. The intensified economic adversity faced by transitioning families was especially salient, and economic instability further compounded tensions. Following initial relocation, family structures continued to alter through ongoing separation, illness and death.

While respondents did not often explicitly connect processes of relocation to gender norms or violence within the household, there were several areas of overlap between relocation processes and gender norms/drivers of violence against women and children. Specifically, these areas of convergence consisted of heightened daily stressors and substance use in urban environments.

3. Contradicting gender norms complicate familial roles

At times, familial roles revealed a tension between gender and age. Despite their young age, for example, adolescent boys identified themselves as responsible for protecting their mothers and siblings or for bringing income into the household. This role was likely informed by rigid gender norms that view men as protectors and providers of the family. The role put boys at risk of violence when intervening in conflicts between caregivers.

Despite norms about men being providers and women being caretakers of children, in reality, many women were seeking formal and informal sources of employment outside of the home, and both men and women had engaged in ‘hard labor’ work, such as agriculture. In contrast to norms that valued boys over girls, adolescent girls often described caregivers encouraging them to complete their education. Even while participants frequently depicted men with negative descriptors, adult men described the importance of familial relationships to their own lives.

4. Desired interventions span the individual, relational and community levels

Existing and potential interventions operated at the individual, relational and community levels of the socioecological framework. Suggested substance abuse interventions included changing individual behavior through changes in attitudes and resources at the community level. Recommendations for improved communication sought to enhance familial relationships in order to reduce household violence against women and children. Finally, economic interventions at the community level sought to reduce external stress on the family and to build adaptive individual skills for survival in a new context. In the face of such widespread economic insecurity, respondents often viewed informal relational and community networks as important factors in familial resilience.

Conclusion
This report summarizes drivers of household violence against women and children, the impact of relocation and displacement on families and in household violence, and potential interventions to reduce household violence and strengthen families, as reported by participants in Soacha and Tierralta, Colombia.

Overall, participants identified factors related to violence against women and children that are consistent with previous research. Particularly, the role of substance use and social norms in condoning and exacerbating familial violence reflect previous findings in the literature. Findings from the present study shed light on the relationship these factors have with household violence by identifying ways in which violence against women and children manifests.

When assessing participant-generated strategies to reduce household violence, there are noticeable gaps between existing participant strategies and practices and programs in place within humanitarian settings. Perhaps the most noticeable difference between humanitarian practices and participant-employed strategies is that of familial-based interventions for intimate partner violence. As discussed previously, there is some community acceptance for familial interventions between a woman’s parents and her intimate partner. In several cases, participants noted that while the broader community was not responsible for intervening, the woman’s family could. Most often, this took the form of bringing the woman back to her parents’ home. However, this practice stands in contrast to existing survivor-centered approaches. As noted by a participant in the present study, risk exists in intervening directly in intimate partner violence. Rather, survivor-centered approaches emphasize a dual approach of (1) implementing services and referral systems and (2) addressing norms and justice processes.

The income generation strategy of land distribution, noted by many participants as a means of community economic strengthening, should be situated within the broader Colombian context. Land distribution and use is a complicated issue in the Colombian conflict, as well as within the context of displacement. When conducting data collection, researchers learned from communities that government assistance for displaced persons included various types of aid, ranging from cash transfers to distribution of land parcels to live in. Furthermore, some displacement was reported as the result of the government selling land to companies for development projects. Complexities around land use and distribution also emerged in relation to different armed groups, which have forced people off of their land. One participant in particular alluded to the complications related to land ownership by different ethnic groups in relation to displacement.

Participant recommendations related to substance use interventions focused on using community structures to enact changes in social norms, specifically through rehabilitation centers and youth awareness-raising campaigns about substance use. Literature supports evidence of social norms acting as a barrier to substance use treatment – for example, being perceived as weak. Similarly, religious norms regarding alcohol use were perceived to prevent problematic substance use among persons experiencing protracted displacement in Pakistan. Within conflict-afflicted settings, interventions for mental health care have typically been at the community level, focusing on psychosocial support rather than clinical interventions, and rarely addressing harmful substance use. Recent World Health Organization guidelines have addressed gaps in services within humanitarian settings, providing recommendations for the assessment and treatment of substance use and mental health conditions in emergency settings. However, a systematic review on alcohol use among conflict-affected populations in LMIC found no studies on intervention effectiveness. In light of this finding, much work remains to explore the role between problematic substance use,
household violence and gender norms, as well as which levels of intervention are most effective in conflict-affected settings.

While some conversation around behavioral self-regulation, as well as household conflict resolution, was expressed in the context of expected gendered familial roles, addressing gender norms was markedly absent from participants’ suggestions for strategies to prevent violence against women and children in the household. This absence of discussion contrasted with the consistent narrative of the relation between traditional gender norms and violence in the household. Based on participant narratives, it is evident that some form of intervention is needed to address the relationship between existing social norms and their potential contribution to violence. Potential interventions could emulate existing education or awareness-raising efforts such as the Child Protective Effects of Economic Strengthening and Child Rights Interventions among Extreme Poor Families in Burkina Faso (CPEE) and Creating Opportunities through Mentorship, Parental Involvement and Safe Spaces (COMPASS).44
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