Gender, violence and social norms working group

Empowering Women
Legal Rights and Economic Opportunities in Africa
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STRIVE
STRIVE projects related to social norms

- Parivartan -- sports based girl’s empowerment intervention in Mumbai slum
- Maisha – adaptation of IMAGE project in Tanzania
- Samata – multi-faceted intervention to keep girls in school, delay marriage and reduce entry into sex work in Karnataka
- Samvedana – intervention to reduce violence and increase condom use in
Need to ‘unpack’ the ‘social’ box

Factors that influence behaviours and practices

- Legislation
- Policies
- Beliefs
- Values
- Social norms
- Attitudes
- Supply and quality of services
- Economic factors/financial access
Some Definitions

Attitude

An *individual’s* psychological tendency to evaluate something (a person, symbol, belief, object) with some degree of favour or disfavour

- “I really like swimming in the ocean”
- “Walking alone at night scares me”
- “It is ok for a husband to hit his wife but only if she has done something wrong”

Behaviour

- What a person actually does
Working definition of a social norm

- A reciprocal, interdependent set of expectations held within a valued reference group

- Often (but not always) there are informal sanctions if one does not comply (gossip, loss of face, ostracism, beating, etc.)

- Compliance can yield positive sanctions (social standing, prestige, marriageability, less conflict)
Two Types of Expectations within norm

- Empirical Expectations (what one thinks others do)
- Normative Expectations (what one thinks others believe should be done)

-Normative Expectations are crucial as they distinguish social norms from other social practices

- Empirical and normative expectations can align or diverge
  - When they diverge, people more often follow the empirical expectations than the normative one – they follow what others do rather than what others say should be done
  - (this varies; I don’t have examples off the top of my head, but there are contexts in which the normative expectations triumph)
Implications for programming

- To abandon a social norm, it is necessary to change people’s social expectations within the relevant reference network.

- To create a social norm, it is necessary to induce the right kind of social expectations (empirical and normative) within the relevant reference network.

- Often it is easier to create a new positive norm, than dismantle an existing problematic one.
Activities

Annual Meeting

- Reviewed and refined specific norms that each project is seeking to transform
- Reviewed strategies for new strategies for measuring social norms
- Reviewed and refined the instruments of key projects
- Clarified objectives for our KIA strategies
Knowledge into Action Strategy

The KIA objectives of the group are to learn and share:
- conceptual clarity on norms
- insights into measuring norms
- intervention methods to address norm change

End users include STRIVE partners, programme and research coalitions/forums (SVRI), donors (DFID, UNICEF, UN women)

Objectives will be achieved through the creation of:
- Evidence brief
- Measurement brief
- Case studies from interventions
- Synthesis workshop and report
- Webinars, knowledge packs
Considerations in measuring social norms

- Identify the reference group
- Establish the respondent’s beliefs about what others do (their empirical expectations)
- Establish what they believe others expect (normative expectations)
- Investigate counterfactuals to discern causality
  - What would happen if one did not comply?
Sample Questions

Among members of your church community, it is shameful if a young woman has sex before she is married
   - Very true
   - Somewhat true
   - Not at all true
   - Don’t know

If a boy your age walked away rather than fight when another boy insulted him, what would happen?
   - His friends would respect him more
   - It would not affect his friend’s respect
   - His friends would respect him less