Outcomes of the Stepping Stones and Creating Futures trial to prevent IPV and HIV-risk in urban informal settlements in South Africa

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Rationale

• Exceedingly high HIV/IPV amongst young people in urban informal settlements
• Reviews show very little evidence about effective ways to reduce HIV-acquisition and IPV amongst young women in these contexts [Gibbs et al, 2012; 2017; Swan, 2018]
• Very little research on inclusion of men in gender transformative and economic strengthening interventions [Gibbs et al, 2012]
Stepping Stones and Creating Futures: supporting gender equity and stronger livelihoods

Two components:
1. Gender transformation
2. Livelihood strengthening

21 sessions; each session 3 hours long; primarily single sex; women and men are not in relationships

Delivered by trained peer-facilitators; based on assumptions of participatory methodologies
Stepping Stones and Creating Futures methodology

- Learner centred
- Participatory
- Experience based
- Role plays, discussions, games
Cluster randomized control trial

- 678 women
- 672 men
- 34 clusters
- 2 year follow up
- Sept 2015 – Oct 2018
- 74.9% men & 79.8% women followed up
Baseline data

Men’s perpetration and women’s experience of IPV

Drivers: poverty, gender inequalities, trauma, racism

Average age
Men: 23.8 yrs
Women: 23.9 yrs

Balance between arms
Trial outcomes
Men’s outcomes

Men’s self reported VAWG perpetration

aOR0.70 (0.52, 0.94) p/s IPV

aOR0.65 (0.44, 0.97) economic IPV

aOR0.78 (0.57, 1.07) non-partner rape
Men’s outcomes

Substance use

$\beta=-1.03 (-2.01, -0.04)$
overall alcohol use

$aOR=0.74 (0.52, 1.04)$
Drug use
Men’s outcomes

Men’s livelihoods
Savings (total and past month)

aOR2.56(1.61, 4.09)
Past year work consistency
Women’s outcomes
Women's outcomes

Women's work and earnings

Work patterns improved:

- **aOR1.63 (1.20, 2.23)** past 3 month work
- **aOR1.74 (1.14, 2.65)** past year work

Past month earnings increased significantly
Women’s outcomes

Women’s savings
Total amount, and past month savings improved

Baseline | Endline
---|---
Intervention (past month) | Control (past month)
Intervention (total) | Control (total)
Women’s outcomes

Women’s experiences of violence
No impact on past year IPV or non-partner rape experience
Men: Summary

- Consistent patterns for reductions in IPV & non-partner sexual violence perpetration, and reduced substance use
- Strengthened work engagement and savings
- No impact on HIV-risk
- Very similar, and stronger, the findings from the initial Stepping Stones evaluation in the Eastern Cape of South Africa (Jewkes et al, 2008)
Women: Summary

- Strengthened economic position, and no increase in VAWG

- Why no impact on women’s IPV or HIV-risk?
  - Significantly improved economic outcomes, but absolute earnings low (mean R565/$60/month)
  - Assumption of dyadic relationships
  - High levels unresolved trauma/mental health, may limit engagement in transforming relationships
Other presentations

• Samantha Willan: Young women in urban informal settlements in South Africa display agency after participation in the Stepping Stones and Creating Futures intervention (Today: 14:30, Prevention Programmes)
• Laura Washington: Examining the precariousness of young men’s realities in the context of high levels of intimate partner violence perpetration (Wednesday: 16:30, Understanding VAW)
• Abbey Hatcher: Which men change in response to VAW prevention interventions? (Thursday: 9:00, Complex Research)
Stepping Stones and Creating Futures evaluation team

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