

KENYA

Examining the effectiveness of a gender transformative approach in economic empowerment programs to reduce intimate partner violence

RESEARCH TEAM: Peg Bavin Butler, Maureen Murphy, Mary Ellsberg, Manuel Contreras Urbina

RESEARCH PARTNERS: Send a Cow and George Washington University

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT?

Despite an increasing evidence base, the exact impact of economic empowerment programs on violence – and particularly on intimate partner violence (IPV) – is still unknown. While several studies have found associations between the economic empowerment of women and girls and rates of IPV, it is still unclear if these interventions increase or decrease a woman's risk of experiencing violence. The proposed research study aims to address a gap in the evidence around whether economic empowerment combined with training in gender relations is a promising mechanism for reducing intimate partner violence.

THE INTERVENTION

Send a Cow's (SAC's) programming employs an integrated gender and farm systems approach to bring about social and economic change for poor and vulnerable small-holder farmers. The gender transformative approach involves men and women and their families engaged in facilitated workshops and dialogue centred on SAC's Transformative Household Methodology (THM) participatory activity. The farm systems element involves training in sustainable agriculture, kitchen gardening and improved animal management to enhance farm productivity, food security and income generation. The aim is to increase economic production, thus improving economic stability, as well as to address inequitable gender dynamics within the household such as shared decision-making and control of assets.

THE STUDY

Send a Cow and the Global Women's Institute, will undertake a two-year research study to examine the effectiveness of SAC's economic interventions on reducing rates of IPV in target communities in Western Kenya.

The study will incorporate 3 strands:

1. Collect qualitative data to examine the effectiveness of SAC's traditional, gender approach using the THM tool and identify lessons learned and best practices.
2. Develop data collection tools for use by SAC's economic empowerment program teams to collect data on IPV through their M&E systems and collect baseline data.
3. Conduct capacity building trainings for SAC staff to improve program delivery and data collection mechanisms.

WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

This study will build the field by:

- Developing approaches and tools to measure changes in acceptance and rates of IPV for SAC's economic empowerment programs in Western Kenya.
- Strengthening the capacity of SAC program staff to deliver quality IPV prevention programs and ethically collect data on violence in their program areas.
- Sharing best practices and lessons learned from SAC's gender-transformative economic empowerment programming model to change attitudes and experiences of violence for residents in their target communities.

