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| Institution: University of Edinburgh | | |
| Unit of Assessment: Education (23) | | |
| Title of case study: Preventing violence against children and promoting safe environments | | |
| Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2012 – 2020 | | |
| Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: | | |
| Name(s): | Role(s) (e.g. job title): | Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: |
| Dr Deborah Fry | Senior Lecturer | 2010 – present |
| Professor Gillean McCluskey | Co-Director of the Safe Inclusive Schools Network (SISN) | 2004 – present |
| Professor Lani Florian | Bell Chair in Education; Co-Director of SISN | 2013 – present |
| Dr Tabitha Casey | Project Manager | 2014 – 2019 |
| Period when the claimed impact occurred: 1 January 2015 – 31 December 2020 | | |
| Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No | | |
| 1. Summary of the impact <p>Research led by Fry in partnership with UN agencies and national partners has identified the common global drivers of violence against children, investigated its long-term effects and evaluated the effectiveness of school-based interventions for its prevention. Fry's research has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevented violence by persuading legislators to ban corporal punishment in schools in Peru, Paraguay and Zimbabwe, improving the lives of over 10.3 million children; • influenced other legislation and national action plans for children in Eswatini, Italy, Peru, the Philippines, Zimbabwe and Viet Nam; • led to the implementation of safe cities initiatives in the Philippines and Thailand that facilitate positive environments for children beyond school. | | |
| 2. Underpinning research <p>Every year, over 1 billion children experience violence. Violence against children undermines every other investment in children and compromises children's health, education and future opportunities, with negative lifelong impact and intergenerational consequences. The challenge is social, economic and political – and it is urgent.</p> <p>The End Violence Lab is a collaboration between the University of Edinburgh and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, a global entity launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2016 to focus solely on Sustainable Development Goal 16:2: ending all forms of violence against children. The Lab convenes, brokers and facilitates research, evidence-based advocacy and practice for preventing violence against children globally. As its Co-Director, Fry has led research that is the first to find that all types of violence in childhood have a negative impact on educational outcomes for boys and girls globally (3.1, 3.3) as well as their subsequent wage earnings and other outcomes (3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6). Her research has also identified the common drivers – as well as risk and protective factors – of violence against children (3.2). Finally, it has contributed to the evidence base that violence against children in schools is preventable through school-based intervention (3.6). Each of the underpinning research studies (undertaken between 2013 and 2020) are elaborated below.</p> <p>Study 1: Global Meta-Analysis of Violence in Childhood on Education Outcomes (3.1) This study, led by Fry, employed a global systematic review and double meta-analysis</p> | | |

methodology – one of the “gold standard” rigorous approaches for synthesising quantitative data from multiple studies – of 110 studies from 21 countries. Findings showed, for the first time globally, that all types of violence negatively affect educational outcomes such as children’s grades, test scores and likelihood of graduating from school. The findings also disaggregated how different types of violence affect boys’ and girls’ educational outcomes differently.

Study 2: The Multi-Country Study on Drivers of Violence Affecting Children (3.2, 3.3)

Co-led by Fry as academic PI in partnership with UNICEF Office of Research, Innocenti, this research analysed over 1,260 primary studies and 44 national-level datasets on violence to map existing prevention interventions in 22 developing countries across the world in partnership with UNICEF country offices, the Young Lives longitudinal study programme countries in partnership with Oxford University, government and national universities. Fry significantly added to the global evidence base by using robust data to show how risk and protective factors are intimately connected to the drivers of violence across countries. The study identified 16 risk and protective factors at the individual, interpersonal and community levels and seven drivers of violence at the structural and institutional levels: poverty, gender inequality, migration, rapid societal transformation, weak child protection systems and/or legal structures and poor school governance. Fry and colleagues at UNICEF Office of Research, Innocenti, developed a new, integrated, child-centred, socio-ecological framework to understand why violence against children happens.

Study 3: Burden of Violence against Children in the Asia Pacific Region (3.4)

Led by Fry, this collaborative project with UNICEF’s Asia-Pacific Regional Office and China Agricultural University was the first education study to use population-attributable fractions and other epidemiological methods from medical research such the Global Burden of Disease Study, to estimate the economic impact of violence against children. With data from 35 countries in the Asia Pacific region, the study found that countries lose between 2% to 6% of their GDP annually due to the impact of violence against children on individuals, families and communities.

Study 4: Analysis of the Impact of Violence in Childhood on Adult Wages (3.5)

Co-led by Fry with colleagues from the University of Cape Town and Georgia State University, this is the first study globally to use longitudinal data to understand the relationship between violence in childhood and young adults’ wages. Using data from the Cape Area Panel Study in South Africa, the researchers applied Heckman selection models and found that, on average, any experience of physical or emotional abuse during childhood is associated with a later 12% loss of young adults’ wages. Wage loss due to the experience of childhood maltreatment is larger for females than males. These results emphasise the importance of prioritising investments in prevention and intervention programmes, including in schools, to reduce the prevalence of child maltreatment and to help victims better overcome the long-term negative effects.

Study 5: Testing of the *Safe Schools for Teens* Programme in the Philippines (3.6)

Co-led by Fry with colleagues from the University of the Philippines and Anteneo University, this study aimed to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of teachers and pupils on child sexual abuse (CSA) based on the *Safe Schools for Teens* intervention with 237 teachers and 1,458 Grade 7 students from 2 public high schools in metro Manila. Phase 1 involved measuring an in-service training curriculum for all teachers on recognising, recording, reporting, and referral (4Rs) of CSA and establishing a referral and support system. Phase 2 involved implementing and evaluating eight student prevention modules through the Health and Values Education subjects of the curriculum. Training of teachers resulted in an increase in confidence for identifying CSA and a decrease in apprehension of reporting CSA. The *Safe Schools* intervention significantly improved student’s self-reported knowledge on abuse, dating violence and how to help friends as well as adolescents’ impulse control and emotional clarity which led to significant decreases pre- and post-intervention in school-based violence.

3. References to the research

3.1 Fry, D., Fang, X., Elliott, S., Casey, T., Zheng, X., Li, J., Florian, L., & McCluskey, G. (2018). The relationships between violence in childhood and educational outcomes: A global systematic review and meta-analysis. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 75, 6-28.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.06.021>

3.2 Maternowska, M. C., & Fry, D. (2018). The Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children: An overview. *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies*, 13(sup1), 12-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450128.2018.1476748>

3.3 Fry, D., Anderson, J., Hidalgo, R. J. T., Elizalde, A., Casey, T., Rodriguez, R., Martin, A., Oroz, C., Gamarra, J., Padilla, K. & Fang, X. (2016). Prevalence of violence in childhood and adolescence and the impact on educational outcomes: Evidence from the 2013 Peruvian National Survey on Social Relations. *International Health*, 8(1), 44-52.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/inthealth/ihv075>

3.4 Fry, D., & Blight, S. (2016). How prevention of violence in childhood builds healthier economies and smarter children in the Asia and Pacific region. *BMJ Global Health*, 1 (Supp 2). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2016-000188>

3.5 Zheng, X., Fang, X., Fry, D., Ganz, G., Casey, T., Hsiao, C., & Ward, C. L. (2018). Association of Child Maltreatment with South African Adults' Wages: Evidence from the Cape Area Panel Study. *Health Economics Review*, 8(20), 1-12.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13561-018-0206-6>

3.6 Madrid, B., Lopez, G. D., Dans, L. F., Fry, D., Duka-Pante, F. G. H., & Muyot, A. T. (2020). Safe schools for teens: preventing sexual abuse of urban poor teens, proof-of-concept study: Improving teachers' and students' knowledge, skills and attitudes. *Heliyon*, 6(6), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04080>

4. Details of the impact

The End Violence Lab, co-led by Fry, has pioneered explicit ways of working with external partners to maximise impact from research in preventing violence against children. A key element of each study included partnering directly with UN agencies like UNICEF or national and international organisations, with a lead government ministry and a multi-sectoral advisory group drawn from academia, government, civil society organisations and children's organisations. Joint curation has allowed this body of work to generate global impact in a short timeframe – and to respond to the real world, on-the-ground challenges faced by policymakers and child protection practitioners.

The research has contributed to legislation banning corporal punishment in schools in three countries impacting over 10.3 million children. The finding from the Multi-Country Study that violence in schools, including corporal punishment, has a significant negative impact on learning outcomes (3.2, 3.3), led both the Peruvian National Congress (in 2015) and the Congress of Paraguay (in 2016) to pass laws prohibiting corporal punishment against children in schools [5.1]. These policy changes effect over 7 million school-aged children in Peru and over 1.4 million children in Paraguay.

Funded by an ESRC Impact Acceleration grant and DFID, an independent qualitative impact assessment was conducted in 2017 to ascertain outcomes of the Multi-Country Study on impact in policy and practice in Peru. It gathered data directly through interviews and questionnaires from 33 government officials, staff from UN agencies and key stakeholders; it also collected 13 testimonials and examined 36 pieces of evidence during in-country fieldwork [5.1, p. 24]. This evaluation found broad agreement among interviewees that the research influenced the change in Peruvian law on corporal punishment. In a public speech

three months before the passing of the law, Fernando Bolaños, then Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, also highlighted how the Multi-Country Study contributed to the National Congress decision-making process: *“...Finally, there is a milestone that we want to achieve as a country: to pass a law that prohibits corporal punishment against children. We have already sent a proposal to the National Congress based on the Multi-Country Drivers Study findings. We realized laws are not enough; laws do not change social practices by themselves. But they can catalyze efforts to make society and daily living better for our children”* [5.2, p. 8].

The impact assessment of the work in Peru also found that the response there had influenced Paraguay to use its own data from the Multi-Country Study to pass similar legislation banning corporal punishment [5.1, p. 25].

Zimbabwe also passed legislation to ban corporal punishment against boys in schools (it was previously banned for girls) with UNICEF confirming that evidence from Multi-Country Study was a critical contribution to the passage of this law in 2018, which has impacted over 1.9 million boys in the country [5.3].

The research has directly influenced national plans of action to prevent violence against children and additional legislation in six countries. The Multi-Country Study's findings have been cited in national action plans and by government leaders launching those plans in Italy, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe, Peru, Eswatini and the Philippines [5.2, 5.4, 5.5]. These strategies have directed and continue to influence government spending for prevention and response services across child protection systems:

- Italy's Vice-Minister for Equal Opportunities stated that findings from the Multi-Country Study (3.2) fed directly into Italy's National Plan of Action for Children (2016-2017) and the National Plan to Prevent and Combat the Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children 2014-2016 [5.2, pp. 4-5].
- Viet Nam's Minister of the Department of Child Care and Protection from the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) stated that findings (3.2, 3.4) led directly to the new Program on Child Protection 2016-2020: *“The findings from the Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence led to Viet Nam's Child Protection Creed, a new sub-law of the Child Protection Law enacting multi sectoral action against violence in Health, Education and Justice and this evidence-based dialogue has moved violence prevention to the front of the National Program 267 (2011-2015) in Viet Nam, led by MOLISA with line ministries and agencies”* [5.2, p. 10].
- Zimbabwe's Minister of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW) stated that the Multi-Country Study: *“... findings are influencing our current policy dialogues around the new OVC II [Orphaned and Vulnerable Children II] National Plan of Action and the roll out of our national case management system for responding to cases of violence against children”* [5.2, p. 12]. Findings from the Multi-Country study also contributed to improving child protection response systems in Zimbabwe as also stated by the MoPSLSW Minister: *“The Multi-Country Study on the Drivers has also helped to facilitate data linkages between ZIMSTAT [Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency] and Childline which has improved our case management responses and also our ability to plan preventative responses”* [5.2, p. 12].
- In Peru the Ministry of Children and Vulnerable Populations issued a legislative decree for the protection of children deprived of or at risk of losing parental care (Decreto Legislativo N°1297) in 2016. An officer from the Ministry said that the Multi-Country Study had helped to develop indicators to identify at-risk children and had provided more information supporting the need for the decree, including the fact that one of the main reasons children are in institutions is because of violence [5.1].
- In a public speech in 2017, the Principal Secretary of Swaziland's Deputy Prime Minister's Office said the Drivers of Violence Study was influential to the development of the National Strategy to End Violence in Swaziland (now Eswatini)

[5.4]. UNICEF Swaziland also stated that the study “...provided an opportunity for strategic and high-level advocacy for the enactment of the sexual offences and domestic violence bill that has been under discussion for over a decade” [5.5, p. 2].

- The Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children, PPAEVAC (2017-2022) cites in the plan that “Two complementary studies on VAC [Violence Against Children] served as the basis for the development of PPAeVAC: One was the 2015 NBS-VAC [National Baseline Survey on VAC]. ...The other, A Systematic Review of the Drivers of Violence affecting Children: Philippines, was conducted by the University of the Philippines-Manila, University of Edinburgh, and the Child Protection Network Foundation, Inc.” [5.6, p. 5].

The research has directly influenced the creation of safe environments for children beyond school through the development of the safe cities initiatives. An evaluation conducted by UNICEF of the 3rd High-Level Meeting (HLM) for Children’s Rights directly cites Fry’s research (3.4), the only paper on violence against children informing the meeting, as contributing to citywide safe environment interventions in the Asia-Pacific region:

“Through the presentation of quality research papers and insightful panel discussions that fostered South-South learning, senior government ministers and officials from nearly 30 countries showed how child-sensitive investments can deliver significant returns – for children, for communities, and for nations. Specifically, governments and partners looked at challenges and solutions in... preventing violence against children.

...Specific country results have been achieved, e.g. as a result of the HLM, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (DCY-MSDHS) of the Government of Thailand established a Child Friendly Cities Initiative, piloting this in ten municipalities in the country” [5.7, pp. 40-41].

Furthermore, the evaluation of the Safe Schools intervention in two schools (3.6) has contributed to its adoption by the Mayor of Valenzuela City in the Philippines as an evidence-based intervention for his safe cities initiative, as highlighted in his application to becoming the first Pathfinding City for ending violence against children through the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. The Mayor wrote: “Our recent Safe Schools project, [is] an initiative using school-based mindfulness interventions for students and specific teacher training in relation to reducing violence against children. Valenzuela is committed to working with local researchers and implementers to scale up this initiative and, importantly, contribute to the international Safe to Learn Campaign” [5.8].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 Evaluation Report “Changing national policy on violence affecting children: An impact assessment of UNICEF and partners’ Multi-Country Study on the drivers of violence affecting children in Peru”

5.2 Violence Prevention Special Session: transcripts from the public speeches by ministers from Italy, Viet Nam, Peru and Zimbabwe

5.3 Testimonial from former UNICEF Zimbabwe Chief of Child Protection about the impact of the Drivers Study on legislation in Zimbabwe

5.4 Evidence from Eswatini (then Swaziland): Speech transcript by the Principal Secretary, Eswatini Deputy Prime Minister’s Office

5.5 Dissemination brief from the Swaziland UNICEF Country Office

5.6 Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children, 2017-2022

5.7 South-South Cooperation for Children, UNICEF evaluation of 2016 Third High Level Meeting results, January 2018: <http://www.plan-eval.com/repositorio/arquivo/projeto/South-South%20Cooperation%20for%20Children.pdf>

5.8 Letter from Rex Gatchalian, Mayor of Valenzuela City, Philippines