
**REPORT OF THE 7TH ANNUAL
LEARNING CONVENING ON
PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN IN EAST AFRICA**



The Learning Partner

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**THEME: SYSTEMS APPROACH TO CHANGING AND
SHIFTING SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS**

Kampala Nile Resort Hotel, 18 – 20 July 2023

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SUMMARY

This report contains details of the 7th Annual Learning Convening on preventing violence against children in East Africa, that was organized by Impact and Innovations Development Centre and Raising Voices. The theme of the learning was on the importance of understanding and applying Systems Approach to changing and shifting social and gender norms, as a sustainable approach to preventing violence against children and young girls. Participants also learnt about the importance of learning from failure and lastly, they obtained tips and practical exercises for self-care as a strategy for maintaining productive programmers within the VAC prevention sector.

The convening was attended by 91 participants, from two Ugandan line ministries, five schools and 29 Child Focused Organizations working on prevention of violence against children in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. To bolster the learning, Raising Voices took the participants to a field trip where they observed how the Good School Toolkit (GST), a whole-school approach, works to transform the operational culture of schools to prevent VAC and shift social and gender norms by nurturing positive relationships, safe learning environments and good school administration in both primary and secondary schools. Other implementers also shared their experience of transforming social norms in and outside the school environment.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1) Understanding Contextual Perspectives:** Understanding a norm from a contextual perspective involves comprehending its significance to those who practice it, exploring why that particular norm is followed, and offering viable alternatives. The process of changing and shifting norms should ideally commence with addressing the fundamental issues that are related to negative cultural beliefs and gender values that promote patriarchal powers and promote violence.

- 2) **Distinguishing Norms and Stereotypes:** It is important to differentiate between norms and stereotypes. Norms are the desired standards for behavior, while stereotypes are potentially harmful misconceptions. This distinction helps to identify what aspects can be shifted in both the short and long terms.
- 3) **Identifying Early Adopters:** Recognizing and engaging early adopters is of great importance to maintain the momentum of norm change initiatives.
- 4) **Scaling Impactful Social Norm Interventions:** To ensure the sustainability of interventions targeting social norms, utilizing existing multisectoral actors within the communities is crucial.
- 5) **Building systems:** There is the need to involve all stakeholders and the most influential people when building systems for eliminating VAC.
- 6) **Continuous Learning:** The learning process is ongoing and unceasing. It is important to continuously seek knowledge and remain receptive to new insights. What works in one environment may not work in another. Therefore, improvement of each other's work is a necessity to reach goals.

Participants noted that practical experiences and fieldwork enriched their learning. They acknowledged that embracing learning as an organizational identity is empowering. They therefore appreciated the need to be intentional about learning and documentation. Sharing experience about failure is part of the learning process. Application of systems approach to social and gender norms change interventions is a driver to shifting conditions that hold a problem in place. Self-care is vital to maintain physical, mental and emotional health as the people do their day to day work.

Hosts:


Impact and Innovation Development Centre (IIDC) is a not-for-profit technical assistance organization that promotes evidence-based social development interventions that improve the wellbeing of vulnerable groups in Africa. IIDC uses a learning-centered approach to support non-profit organisations to develop and implement programmes that are effective and sustainable.



Raising Voices is a non-governmental organisation that implements evidence-based violence prevention programs based in the everyday realities of schools and communities and supports others to use those methodologies. It rigorously learns what does and doesn't work to keep women and children safe and then builds on these insights to influence violence prevention efforts around the world.

Participating organisations in the 7th Annual Learning Cohort on PVAC in EA included

1	AfriChild Centre	17.	Kamuli District Local Government
2	Amani Girls Home	18.	Kimira Primary School
3	Bantwana Initiative Uganda	19.	LVCT Health
4	Bugeywa Secondary School	20.	Ministry of Education & Sports, Uganda
5	Busoga High School	21.	Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, Uganda
6	CARE International Uganda	22.	Mirembe KCCA Primary School
7	Child Health and Development Centre, Makerere University, Kampala	23.	National Institute for Medical Research, Tanzania
8	Children Rights and Violence Prevention Fund	24.	Save the Children
9	Children's Dignity Forum	25.	Tanzania Education Network / Mtandao wa Elimu Tanzania
10	CivSource Africa	26.	Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Kenya
11	Cotton on Foundation	27.	Ticaf Primary School
12	C-Sema	28.	Trailblazers Mentorship Foundation
13	FAWE Uganda	29.	Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation, Uganda
14	Fhi360	30.	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
15	HakiElimu	31.	University of California San Diego
16	Investing in Children and their Society (ICS), Kenya and Tanzania	32.	Women Fund Tanzania Trust

1. BACKGROUND

Since 2016, IIDC has been facilitating learning and supporting partners under the Learning Initiative on preventing Violence Against Children (VAC) in East Africa, working with a group of child protection organizations that operate in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Within the Initiative, the learning cohort holds annual learning convenings for partners and other actors to reflect on trends and solutions in preventing VAC. This year, the seventh annual convening took place from 18 to 20 July 2023, co-hosted by Raising Voices who show-cased the outcomes from implementation of the Good School program that transforms the school culture by building relationships between teachers, students, parents and support staff. Other organisations that made presentations and also shared their experience on shifting and changing social and gender norms included IIDC, Bantwana Initiative, CARE Uganda, FHI360, East African Social Norms Learning Collaborative and Save the Children.

2. CONTEXT FOR THE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO CHANGING AND SHIFTING SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS

Social norms are unwritten rules regulating what actions are acceptable, appropriate, and obligatory in a given situation that are shared by members of a group. They are learned and accepted from an early age, often in infancy, and held in place by social sanctions ('punishments') for non-adherence to the norm, and social benefits ('rewards') for adherence. In many East African societies, harmful social and gender norms are dominant. They often amplify male privilege and exacerbate discriminatory treatment of girls and women. As such, they not only inform girls and boys about how they should see themselves growing up, but also constrain what they can aspire to, influencing their behaviours and choices, such as education choices. They also contribute to sustaining environments in which violence against women and children are tolerated and socially condoned.

Harmful social and gender norms or discriminatory practices are a result of deeply engrained beliefs, values and mental models, and any attempt to transform them needs to move beyond a purely technical, simplistic approach to a system change approach that supports deep individual and collective transformative processes as the foundation for new patterns of thinking and behaviours. It is true that social and gender norms transcend the individual as per the ecological model. It is however important to note that norms sustenance is a function of inter-linkages of various systems namely; legal systems, social systems, cultural systems, education systems, and economic systems – hence norms change can equate to systems change. This is the direction where implementers need to refocus, and the starting point can be examining the extent to which social norms change interventions have a systems' change outlook, and how systems are changing to achieve norms transformation.

It is against the above background that Impact and Innovations Development Centre (IIDC) organised the seventh Annual Learning Convening on Preventing VAC in East Africa under the theme "***Systems approach to shifting harmful social and gender norms***".

3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

It was expected that by the end of the convening, participants would have;

- ◆ Gained practical learnings from the Good School program on shifting harmful social norms in schools.
- ◆ Deepened understanding of the theory, design, practice, and measurement of social norms interventions.
- ◆ Conceptualized the Systems Approach to implementing social and gender norms change interventions
- ◆ Identified and documented action points on how they will use the learning to improve their programming.

METHODOLOGY, TOOLS & RESOURCES

The convening was mainly physical with virtual input presentations by two participants who could not attend physically for three days. The main **methods** of learning and sharing that were used in the convening included;

- a) Plenary sessions (presentations, Q&A sessions, discussions)
- b) Group discussions
- c) School visits

Tools included:

- a) Social norms design checklist
- b) Learning questions
- c) Selfcare practical exercises

Resources included:

- a) Convening booklet
- b) Information materials provided by Raising Voices

The three-day convening was structured around eight sessions, each addressing critical aspects of social norm transformation. The opening day primarily encompassed introductory and ceremonial proceedings, along with a school visit to enhance participants' understanding of how the GST transforms the school culture and creates a good learning environment.

The second day commenced with a thoughtful reflection on the insights gained from the school visit, paving the way for a series of technical sessions and discussions about approaches to social norms change. These sessions were dedicated to exploring the multifaceted dimensions of changing social norms within schools, contextualizing the implementation of the Good School Program, and delving into the theory, design, practice, and measurement of interventions aimed at shifting social norms. Day two also featured discussions on evidence-based solutions

for preventing violence against children, by transforming social norms and applying systems thinking to gender norm change interventions.

The final day of the convening culminated with sessions emphasizing the importance of continuous learning as a prerequisite for scaling up programs focused on social norm transformation. Additionally, self-care was discussed as a crucial topic, underlining the significance of well-being of the people that work in different contexts. Throughout the convening, participants engaged in meaningful discussions, sharing knowledge and experiences aimed at advancing the understanding and practice of social norm transformation in various contexts.

4. OPENING REMARKS

Prof. Paul Bukuluki, Board member, IIDC



On behalf of IIDC Prof Paul Bukuluki welcomed all participants to the convening and provided a brief overview on the learning initiative. He set the scene by triggering participants to reflect on the importance of adopting a Systems Approach to shifting social and gender norms. To put the issue into context, he highlighted that norms don't operate individually but they are nested in systems. Social determinants of cultures are diverse including political, social and economic factors. For gender norms, there are social identifiers, including education, class, social-economic status, ethnicity and age. Norms are deeply

entrenched within larger systems, thus social norms and systems change are interconnected. It is therefore necessary to shift both norms and systems, paying attention to all the contributing factors and structural components in the various sectors. He highlighted the limited focus among practitioners on exploring the nexus between social norms transformation and systems change. To this note, he highlighted IIDC's commitment to implementing and supporting partners in developing transformative programmes and approaches that have meaningful impact, along with a strong focus on continuous learning and adaptation.

Social norms operate within systems – they go hand in hand. They are perpetuated through different systems. If you change systems, there is potential to change norms. There is need for learning and adapting our programs.

Mr. Devin Faris, Director VAC, Raising Voices

Devin highlighted the pressing need to reshape social norms within schools to combat Violence Against Children (VAC). He stressed the importance of ongoing learning about social, gender, and non-violent norms. While schools should nurture positive norms, they can also harbor negative ones. Adults have a collective responsibility to unlearn dysfunctional systems and address violence within families and communities.



Shifting social and gender norms is a movement and each person has a responsibility. GST looks at the school system including governance and the learning environment. Learning is at the core of Raising voices.

Ongoing learning and systemic change are key in reshaping social norms in schools. The Good School Toolkit (GST) approach of Raising Voices centers on the "whole school ecosystem system". Conceived in 2009/2010, the approach encompasses school relationships, community behavior and policy environments to address negative norms as well as sustaining and positive norms. The three-pillar

framework for a safe environment include advocating for gender-responsive participation, implementing the Good School Toolkit, and empowering parents through skillful parenting.

GST impact is notable, as evidenced by two studies that showed a remarkable 45% reduction in VAC incidents in schools. Using the lessons from the Good School Toolkit, the organization's approach spurred adaptations in secondary schools, targeting gender discrimination and sexual harassment through the GST AGILE.

Mr. Ismail Mulindwa, Director Basic and Secondary Education, MoES



Mr. Ismail Mulindwa shared the progress made by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in addressing violence against children, as mandated by the UN Convention on the Rights of Children, to create violence-free environments for children's growth and learning. He emphasized the importance of reporting, tracking, and responding to violence against children across school, home, and community settings. He underlined that violence has no borders thus addressing it is a shared responsibility involving learners, teachers, police, communities, and the government. He

pointed out that both the Ministry of Education & Sports (MoES) and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) are working to reinforce Child Wellbeing structures at national and subnational levels. This action is aimed to putting into practice the 2020 National Child Policy (NCP) and its operational plan.

Violence has no borders. Education is key to shape individuals, and education is beyond academics. It involves a whole education systems approach. Safe learning should go beyond the school environment and address multiple forms of violence

Referring to the development of simplified Child Protection guidelines and manual, he highlighted the inclusion of a module on School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) within the teacher training curriculum, designed to increase awareness about gender biases. He shared that the MoES is emphasizing the roles of senior women and male teachers within schools to contribute to a safer environment. He also mentioned that within schools, the ministry is improving the physical environment by constructing school buildings to accommodate all learners, especially girls and children with special needs for whom features like ramps and menstrual hygiene facilities are put in place.

The MoES also created a toolkit for both in-school and out-of-school adolescents, providing resources and guidance. The Ministry revised its guidelines on managing teenage pregnancies, offering pregnant girls and child mothers a chance for re-entry into education with comprehensive guidance. He highlighted the adoption of gender-responsive pedagogy for teachers, helping them address violence during school hours effectively. He concluded by urging schools and community stakeholders to collaborate closely in preventing violence against children

Official opening by the Minister of State for Primary Education Hon. Moriku Kaduco



Hon Moriku Kaduco, Minister of State for Primary Education in Uganda, highlighted the commitment of the Ugandan government to address Violence Against Children (VAC). Referring to SDG 4, the Minister mentioned the requirement to promote inclusive education for all, stressing the necessity to construct educational facilities tailored for children with disabilities. She emphasized the need for a gender-responsive approach and the creation of safe spaces for children within the education system.

The Minister pointed out that children often experience various forms of violence, particularly within school settings. She noted that the perpetrators of violence sometimes include teachers and relatives—individuals who are entrusted with protecting children. She called for a unified effort to prevent VAC, recognizing that it is a complex issue with both short-term and long-term consequences that transcends borders. The Minister stressed the importance of a systems approach to drive meaningful changes, especially in terms of gender norms.

The Minister underlined the pivotal role of education in societal progress, emphasizing that education goes beyond academics. She highlighted the need for a holistic education system that nurtures children's emotional and psychosocial well-being. To achieve this, she emphasized the necessity of creating safe environments within schools to shield children from harm and violence. She acknowledged the challenges posed by the closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed children to various forms of violence.

Addressing the prevalence of harmful social and gender norms, the Minister mentioned issues like child labor, sexual violence, and child marriage, which persist daily. She urged a shift in focus, prioritization, and examination of the extent to which both social and systemic norms need to change. The Minister called for collective action at various levels, including individuals, communities, organizations, and governments, to tackle systemic negativity.

The Minister emphasized the importance of going beyond dialogues and information sharing, encouraging the exchange of interventions that have proven effective. This collaborative approach has contributed to building a strong East African community that possesses knowledge and implements a comprehensive, integrated strategy to address these issues, she concluded by wishing participants good discussions and officially opened the 7th Annual Learning Convening on preventing VAC in East Africa.

5. PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING FROM THE GOOD SCHOOL PROGRAM

In order to contextualize learning from implementation of the Good School Toolkit Program, participants visited five different schools (three primary schools and two secondary schools) in the districts of Kamuli and Bugiri, both located in Eastern Uganda. The school visit was intended to draw lessons from participants of the Good School Program and to determine whether the schools' results are self-provable and evident. The Good School program changes the systems that allow violence and gender discrimination to continue and prevent all forms of VAC in schools including violent disciplining, sexual violence, and emotional violence.

The names of schools visited are;

- i. Kimira Primary School; a government aided rural primary school found 30kms from Bugiri town in Lwemba sub-county with about 500 learners and 8 teachers.
- ii. Nabukalu Primary School; a government aided rural primary school found 30kms from Bugiri town in Nabukalu town council with about 400 learners and about 8 teachers.
- iii. Namatu Primary School
- iv. Bugeywa Secondary School; a government aided secondary school located 20kms from Kamuli town with about 500 learners and 23 staff.
- v. Busoga High School; a secondary school located within Kamuli Municipality with about 700 learners.




Lessons from participants of the Good School Program

1. **Effective Model:** The model is viable, focusing on the partnership between the government, the community and the school to address violence against children. At Kimira Primary School, the committees have members like LC III representatives, head teachers, community members, the pupils and parents from the school.

2. **Community Engagement:** Community involvement, particularly through influential members such as Village Health Teams and Para Social Workers, plays a pivotal role in the prevention efforts.
3. **Parental Involvement:** The engagement of parents is prominent and has a positive impact on tackling violence against children.
4. **Improved Enrollment and Retention:** There's evidence of increased enrollment and retention rates in schools, indicating progress in preventing violence. The headteacher of Nabukalu primary school pointed out that the school enrollment had increased from 900 to 1500 pupils because of implementing the Good School Program. This was further observed through a story shared - Stories of change: of a notorious criminal in the village, in and out of cells, several times out of school. However, when they learnt about the good school and positive discipline and with the One-on-one. A solution was got, feeding at school, dinner at the committee houses and stopped stealing and now doing well in school.
5. **Reduced Child Labor and Marriage:** Positive changes are observed as child labor and child marriages show a decline, indicating a step forward in safeguarding children's rights. However, the question remained that if there is reduced child labour, then when, how does the school report that students are able to dig for their own food in school gardens? Arent they doing this during school hours? Isn't involving children in manual labour also a case of child labour? – These were raised by participants who visited Kimira Primary School.
6. **Utilization of Influential Members:** Utilizing influential individuals within the community, like Village Health Teams and Para Social Workers, serves as an effective approach in establishing community committees.
7. **Sustainability:** The use of existing community structures ensures the continuity of prevention efforts even after the involvement of organizations like Raising Voices.
8. **Learners' Empowerment:** The establishment of a pupil's court empowers children to support each other and report issues to different community structures. In school, the children have taken lead in forming the children's court. For cases they cannot handle, they would refer to the administration.
9. **Leadership Commitment:** The commitment of leaders—teachers, parents, school management, and head teachers—plays a crucial role in preventing violence in schools and within the community.
10. **Alignment with Curriculum:** The Good School program aligns with the school curriculum in Uganda, ensuring it doesn't detract from educational goals and does not disrupt the school timetable.
11. **Religious Leaders' Collaboration:** Collaboration with religious leaders adds value to the prevention efforts and strengthens community engagement.

- 12. Empowerment of Students, Parents and Teachers:** Empowerment initiatives among parents and teachers contribute to a more comprehensive approach to addressing violence. Students exhibit hands-on leadership and problem-solving skills, contributing to a safer school environment.
- 13. Commitment to Action:** There's a clear commitment among all stakeholders to act against violence.
- 14. Capacity Building:** Observations reveal that committees and courts are well-equipped and capable of addressing various issues effectively.
- 15. Reporting Mechanism:** The establishment of a toll-free number facilitates the reporting of violence cases.
- 16. Documentation and Referral:** Proper documentation, including files and referrals, showcases the structured approach taken in handling cases of violence.

Observed verifiable evidence about the Good School Program

- 1. Informed Awareness:** Observations revealed a heightened awareness of the different structures addressing violence prevention, with parents demonstrating an understanding of what constitutes a safe and effective school. This was evidenced by the discussions from parents during the visit, posters in classrooms and a consistent communication approach across all structures.
- 2. Visible Initiatives:** Physical elements like the Talking Compound and the Wall of Fame showcased the tangible commitment of the school community to prevent violence. The presence of the three committees, equipped tool kits for guidance, and trained teacher protagonists also indicated active engagement.
 
- 3. School Attractiveness:** The school's positive changes were evident as it drew interest from learners outside the immediate vicinity.
- 4. Community Engagement:** The school's capacity to influence change extended to the community, where even the school's fence was utilized as a resource, reflecting a proactive approach.
- 5. Empowered Children:** The empowerment of children was evident, as they exhibited agency and capacity to be proactive in preventing violence.
- 6. Empowered Teacher:** Teachers showcased a sense of empowerment, demonstrating their commitment and speaking authoritatively on matters related to violence prevention. Meanwhile, some children lacked proper footwear.

- 7. Visual Messages:** Catchy messages displayed on Manila papers throughout the school effectively conveyed messages against violence and for a safe environment.

The verifiable evidence observed collectively highlights the progress made in the prevention of violence against children, encompassing both physical changes and shifts in mindset and engagement.

Feedback and recommendations for improving the GST

After visiting schools, participants identified areas that can be improved and provided the following recommendations to make the GST more effective in addressing VAC.

- 1. Incorporate Commendable Features:** Utilize the commendable features observed, such as the Hall of Fame highlighting the smartest and most disciplined pupils. Additionally, consider enhancing the suggestion box by periodically changing its position to encourage broader participation.
- 2. Strengthen Community-School Relationship:** Address the gap that exists between the community and the school. Implement strategies that bridge this relationship, fostering cooperation and shared responsibility in preventing violence.
- 3. Enhance Child Safeguarding:** Focus on comprehensive child safeguarding measures that encompass the well-being of both students and staff within the school environment.
- 4. Improve Feeding Programs:** Review the school's feeding programs to ensure that they are well-organized and executed. Clarify responsibilities for food preparation and timings, with a keen focus on safeguarding children's nutrition.
- 5. Streamline Children's Court:** Evaluate the process of handling cases received by the children's court. Enhance mechanisms to protect both the integrity of the court and the privacy of the cases being addressed.
- 6. Amplify Mentorship Efforts:** Develop a structured mentorship program based on the chairperson's mention of ongoing initiatives. Create a mentorship checklist to ensure consistency and effectiveness.
- 7. Focus on Life Skills:** Shift from activity-based tool kits to those centered around life skills. This approach can foster a more holistic development and equip students with essential skills to prevent violence.
- 8. Menstrual Hygiene Management:** Integrate menstrual hygiene management into the school's curriculum. This can contribute to a more supportive environment for girls, ensuring their dignity and well-being.
- 9. Empower Girls on VAC:** Intensify efforts to empower girls specifically on issues related to violence against children. Provide resources and platforms that enable them to understand, prevent, and respond to such challenges.

6. THE THEORY, DESIGN, PRACTICE AND MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL NORMS INTERVENTIONS

This session included an input presentation by East African Social Norms Learning Collaborative led by Prof. Rebecka Lundgren and Care Uganda. It also included a panel discussion by CARE Uganda and Save the Children plus a plenary exercise and discussion on designing transformative social norms interventions. The objectives of this learning session were

- I. Identify the differences between norm-shifting interventions and other social behavior change interventions
- II. Recognize common characteristics of a community-based norms shifting intervention
- III. Discuss strategies to integrate social norms shifting into project design.

The difference between social norms and gender norms was learnt as follows

Social norms are often **implicit, informal rules** that most people accept and adhere to. They are influenced by **belief systems**, perceptions of **what others expect and do**, and sometimes by perceived **rewards and sanctions**. Norms are embedded in **formal and informal institutions** and produced and reproduced through **social interactions**.

Gender norms are attributes and behaviors that are valued and considered acceptable for people of a gender within a given culture or social group. They are learned and reinforced from childhood to adulthood through observation, instruction, positive and negative sanctions, media, religion, and other social institutions. They can be so pervasive that people mistakenly assume they are “natural” or “ordained” and thus immutable.

Norms change: Changing and shifting social norms happens when a critical mass of individuals perceive that others are also changing their attitudes and behaviors. Change happens when enough people see that enough people are changing.

Norm change strategies: The strategies for norms change which were discussed at the convening include Laws and policies; Mass media; and Group discussion. These norms change strategies could be used in combination for maximum impact.

- **Laws and policies** involve legislating change, e.g. creating national legislation on a minimum age of marriage for girls and boys.
- **Mass media** approaches share information about harmful effects of a practice, but often focus more on the fact that the population is abandoning the practice. The goal is to change social norms (people’s perceptions about what others around them do and approve of). Mass media initiatives should be purpose-driven. The techniques used include radio broadcasts, billboards, theatre plays, and role model approaches
- **Discussion groups** include community conversations that create opportunities for critical reflection about issues experienced by group members. They are particularly effective when working with a people-led approach in mind, as they help group members identify the issues they want to work on and the best solutions to change the norms related to them

Program design for shifting social norms: Prof. Rebecka Lundgren introduced the concept of Community-Based Norms Shifting Interventions (NSI) and provided insights into the components: who is involved, what they entail, how they are executed, and the overarching aims. NSIs that seek to influence behavior, promote examination of existing norms in relation to new ideas and new desired behaviors by: Correcting incorrect information; Catalyzing different norms and Supporting collective action as it emerges

Common Attributes of Community NSI



NSIs seek to correct misperceptions surrounding harmful behaviors and address power imbalances, particularly those rooted in gender and marginalization. They create safe space for critical reflection among community members, accurately assess prevailing norms, and employ organized diffusion strategies to foster change beyond direct program participants. It is importance to ground the issue within the community itself to ensure relevance and sustainability.

In a panel discussion, **Mr. Rogers Tumusiime, the Project Coordinator for Basic Education at Save the Children**, discussed strategies for shifting teacher and gender norms to combat gender-based violence and violence against children. He shared the key actions and outcomes of the "Everyday Heroes Program" by Save the Children implemented during COVID 19 lockdown that targeted teachers. This approach involved raising awareness about child-to-child violence, teacher-child violence, and parent-child violence, thereby cutting across various levels: the individual, the institution, and the community.

The program aimed to redefine how teachers perceive their roles by engaging them in discussions about their identification in relation to their workplace and methods. It incorporated two main components i.e. Social media and Group discussions. Notably, the use of social media, particularly a WhatsApp teachers' community, emerged as a robust platform for engagement. Six specific behaviors were addressed through the program, including treating children kindly, addressing abusive language used by teachers, promoting gender equality in treatment, combating name-calling, and fostering productive discussions and practical activities.

Save the Children assessed the quality of the learning environment and also discussed with children to know their feelings in terms of safety in school and how potential concerns could be addressed. Additionally, literacy and numeracy assessments involving parents were used

to analyze and identify norms impacting learning outcomes. Results showed that 73% of the participants expressed feeling safe in school due to the interventions, particularly the Gender-Sensitive Teaching approach.

In a panel discussion **Mrs. Ritah K Lwanga** shared that they conducted a cultural learning initiative in Uganda's Eastern region, specifically in Busoga, with funding from Care International Uganda. The focus of their intervention revolved around addressing household and dietary norms in relation to prevention of Violence against Children (VAC). Lwanga highlighted the impact of dietary norms on health, which, if left unaddressed, could escalate into instances of violence against both children and women, plus broader implications for the community.

A social norms exploration tool, employing a problem tree methodology was used to delve deeper and know the root causes of norms plus conducting focus group discussions to gain deeper insights. These methods allowed them to better understand the underlying dynamics contributing to the negative norms. As part of learning from practices, they developed a new approach, that is expected to contribute to the ongoing efforts in addressing household and dietary norms as part of the strategy to prevent VAC.

Gender and Social Norms Checklist

Mrs. Natalie Kimbugwe from, Care Uganda facilitated a group exercise using the social norms design checklist. The social norms design checklist is a tool that can be used when developing a gender and social norms programs. The checklist encouraged critical thinking about prevailing norms, and fostering systematic positive societal change. The checklist included 5 actions namely:

- Action 1: Find early adopters.
- Action 2: Map allies and ask for their support.
- Action 3: Open space for dialogue.
- Action 4: Use future-oriented positive messages.
- Action 5: Expect bystander action. Help people move from inaction to action.
Helps positive behavior become normal.

Participants split into groups to discuss the different case studies in which their initiatives made use of the social norms design checklist. It was observed that the actions on the checklist were used although not intentionally.

Case studies on designing projects / programs using the social norms design checklist

- i. The **"Girls Get Equal Project"** in Adjumani district focuses on bringing girls back to school by reducing early and forced marriages. They used strategies like identifying early adopters, mapping allies (including cultural leaders and teachers), and opening safe spaces for dialogue through community barazas and meetings. Positive messages were spread through various media, emphasizing a future-oriented perspective. Bystander action involved following up on teenage pregnancies and supporting child mothers.

- ii. **Empowering girls economically:** Highlighted the significance of finding and supporting early adopters. Mapping allies, including influential individuals and radio talk shows, was another strategy. Creating safe spaces for dialogue through parenting groups and leveraging future-oriented positive messages were emphasized. Bystander action wasn't clearly outlined in their discussion.
- iii. **Transformation of school norms in Kamuli:** Found early adopters among religious and political leaders. Mapping allies involved engaging with these leaders and Plan International. Safe spaces for dialogue ranged from local meetings to national events, emphasizing music, dance, and drama. Positive messages focused on replacing pregnancies with academic achievements. Bystander action involved community support and the success celebration.
- iv. **Community action on violence against children in the Rwenzori region:** identified early adopters through school clubs and parents. Mapping allies encompassed cultural and religious leaders. Safe spaces for dialogue included parenting groups, barazas, and mass media. Future-oriented positive messages revolved around gender-responsive pedagogy, school toolkits, and skillful parenting. Bystander action was anticipated from the community.
- v. **Maternal health using the digital space:** Early adopters included advisory champions. Mapping allies required government support and collaboration with digital health providers. Safe spaces included chat boards and trained counselors for sensitive topics. Positive messages focused on promoting well-being. They recognized that many organizations invest in similar spaces and called for policy and community support. Bystander action was anticipated from the whole community.

Each group's discussion centered on distinct strategies for their specific initiatives, such as empowering girls, addressing violence, and improving maternal health. They shared common ways in which they used the social norms to create meaningful and lasting change within their communities using collective efforts.

Key Highlights from Group Presentations

- Leverage Community-Based Research: Conduct research within the community to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and identify tailored solutions.
- Emphasize the importance of involving the community in decision-making and ownership of the initiatives. Empowering community members to take the lead can lead to sustained change in norms and a sense of ownership.
- Recognize the importance of tailoring initiatives to fit the cultural and social norms of the community. Cultural sensitivity can enhance acceptance and participation, leading to more meaningful and lasting change.

7. EVIDENCE AND SOLUTIONS FOR TRANSFORMING SOCIAL NORMS IN VAC PREVENTION

A reflection on how different organizations stay gender responsive and support the different needs of girls and boys was held in different groups.

- i. **Mrs. Monica Asekenyi from Western Uganda Bantwana Program (WUBP)** made an input discussion and also facilitated a discussion on who decides what the right (positive) and wrong (negative) social and gender norms are. The group also shared experience of the ideal and real situation regarding shifting gender norms.

WUBP highlighted that in addressing social norms, it is important to operate through a comprehensive approach and social norms diagnosis should be done to inform design of the norm transformation approach. The norms diagnosis helps to know what society perceives as positive or negative. Shifting social norms requires development of a holistic package catering to the different target groups and tailor packages to suit their specific needs. For the sustainability of interventions, there was consensus on channeling efforts through existing government and local structures. This approach is believed to enhance the long-term impact and effectiveness of the programs.

- ii. **Gender and social norms around unpaid care work:** The input presentation was made by Mrs. Natalie Kimbugwe from CARE Uganda included highlights on how care work in the traditional settings has been normalized. For example, the work which women do at home e.g mopping and cooking is not paid for yet men who do the same work in hotels are paid. Secondly, girls stay home and work as baby sitters and may become victims of violence. Additionally, when men are in the kitchen, they are told to leave the kitchen. And lastly, child marriage is normalized in some communities. People observe and know that child marriage is not right but shy away from talking about it. The message from the presentation was to Recognize, Reduce, and Redistribute care work within households.

For most participants in this group session, there was a bit of struggle to understand the concept of unpaid care work. Whereas the key message/ take away was to recognize, redistribute and reduce unpaid care work at the household level, most of the participants seemed to suggest that the idea of monetizing unpaid care work was far-fetched. Consequently, participants felt the need to demystify the concept and understand it further.

- iii. An input presentation by Mr. Douglas Nsibambi from FHI360 was built on to facilitate a discussion on how to identify social norms; strategies for shifting norms and signs of norms change.
 - To **identify social norms**, community engagement could include different methods like social analysis and contextual factors analysis.
 - **Strategies** for shifting social norms may include; Information and communication linked to the norm and it has to be something people believed in; Community engagements; Norms marketing; Role models and feedback. Norms shift could be layered looking at all stakeholders e.g teachers, parents and learners.

- Whereas measuring social norms can be challenging, using a triangulation of methods e.g qualitative and quantitative studies is important. It's possible that behavior shifts but attitudes don't. E.g a teacher can stop using corporal punishment in a school setting but still believes in doing it outside the school environment. Social norms take long to be shifted. There should be accessible alternatives.

8. APPLYING SYSTEMS THINKING TO SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS CHANGE INTERVENTIONS

This session was led by Mr. Ramadhan Kirunda from IIDC who made an input presentation and also facilitated a discussion about the need to apply systems thinking when designing social and gender norms change interventions.

Systems change could generally mean, shifting the conditions that are holding the problem in place. Systems change is about mobilizing whole networks of diverse actors to create new patterns of an organisation. The concept of social norms and systems thinking are interconnected in a way that they shape and influence societal behaviour and functioning. Systems change is important to social change programming because;

- It helps to focus on the root cause of the problem with the right people rather than just addressing symptoms.
- It is the scope, scale and potential impact of the innovation.
- It gives potential for sustainability and long-term change.
- It leads to collaboration and collective actions.

Conditions for systems change include; Policies, Practices, Resource Flows, Relationships & Connections; Power Dynamics; and Mental Models.

In order to appreciate the importance of systems thinking, participants worked in groups per country and discussed the issues that affect children in each of the three countries i.e Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Each country presented 12 diverse issues that are multifaceted. The issues raised included child trafficking, child soldiers, gender inequalities, child marriages, neglect, and teenage pregnancies. The young population is also confronted with exposure to drugs, exploitation, and harmful cultural practices, while also grappling with health adversities like HIV/AIDS and malnutrition. Education remains a struggle due to limited access, dropout rates, and inappropriate career choices, often exacerbated by issues such as child labor and absent parents. The digital age brings forth concerns like online abuse and the normalization of violence. Early marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM), and intergenerational sex compound the difficulties. Amidst these challenges, efforts to address inadequate parenting, bullying, and menstrual hygiene issues seek to create safer, healthier environments for children to thrive in the East African context.

After the exercise, the facilitator explained the inter-connectedness of the different structural issues affecting the children in East Africa and called upon the conveners to embrace partnerships that fill the gaps in program implementation and system change. Giving an example of a partner that may be working to address the issue of teenage pregnancies but cannot address issues of HIV/AIDS within the communities yet the two issues are inter-related and interconnected.

Key takeaways:

- **Deep Root Cause Analysis:** Undertake comprehensive analyses to unearth the hidden root causes of issues, forming the basis for meaningful change. The presentation emphasized that root causes often remain hidden, lying beneath the surface. To bring about real change, it's crucial to address these underlying issues.
- **Embed Norms Change:** Ensure that designs and interventions are infused with strong norms change elements to enhance their effectiveness. The presentation highlighted the necessity of incorporating robust norms change components into designs. Initiatives lacking this aspect may encounter difficulties in achieving their intended goals.
- **Target Underlying Issues:** Shift focus from surface-level indicators to tackling the core root causes that fuel problems. Instead of merely targeting indicators that signal the existence of a problem, the presentation underscored the importance of directing efforts towards addressing the fundamental root causes.
- **Holistic Approach:** Emulate the Bugiri case study by addressing the entire ecosystem surrounding an issue and identifying ways to overcome challenges. It showcased the significance of approaching change by addressing the entire ecosystem and assessing what actions are currently challenging and how they can be overcome.
- **Emphasis on partnerships to fill gaps**

9. Coalition for Good Schools as an approach to shifting social norms

This sub-section was facilitated by Mrs. Stella Adong Ayo, who presented the rationale for the coalition of Good Schools. The purpose of the presentation was to interest organisations into joining the coalition for Good Schools in order to collectively learn and continuously share progress as well as influence policies for creating safe schools in the global south.

The Coalition for Good Schools is a collection of Global South practitioners committed to preventing violence against children in schools across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Coalition has three main objectives which are;

- to share knowledge, insights, and perspectives on the work of preventing violence against children in and through schools;
- to contribute to building a conducive environment for development and establishment of a community of practice addressing VAC in schools;

- to consolidate capacity of leaders and practitioners in the Global South to participate in the development and implementation of global priorities for preventing VAC in schools.

The coalition approaches shifting norms through advocacy, convening and synthesizing of data. Key milestones of the coalition so far include;

- In 2021, the coalition undertook an evidence review on prevention of Violence Against Children in and through schools in the Global South and also formally launched the Coalition.
- In 2022, the coalition convened Africa Hub Seminar Series that focused on successful interventions, learning from practitioners and future action.

10. LEARNING AS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR SCALING UP SOCIAL NORM TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMS

In this session, participants learned about how to use practice-based learning and learning from failure as a pre-requisite for scaling up social norm transformation programs. The session was moderated by Raising Voices and facilitated by Ms Tvisha Nevatia from Raising Voices. It included an input presentation and a group exercise to test participants' knowledge on practice-based learning.

Practice based-learning is a cumulative journey of intentional learning over-time, informed by insights gained from direct experiences, observations, stories, informal reflections, monitoring processes and more. Examples of how Raising Voices used practice-based learning to adjust their programs are;

- SASA which was initially for shifting gender roles is currently piloted in Kampala to focus on core relationship values, such as mutual respect, care, and feeling valued, rather than redistributing household roles.
- Raising Voices learnt that GST had many modules (64 modules) thus it was difficult for implementers to systematically train the target group on all modules. Currently GST Agile is under development with fewer modules that include key themes of the program which respond to challenges raised by schools.

Failure is seen as the opposite of success and can be devastating, but should be embraced. Being open about failure can inspire creativity and innovations because failure is always a step towards success.

In a plenary discussion about learning from failure and practice-based learning, participants raised the following questions

Question	Response
What are some of the challenges that come along with practice-based learning?	<p><i>There are challenges just like any other research and learning but what is important is to be aware of the biases or shortcomings which will help to add value to the research. Creating an organisational culture alone to accept failure is a practice-based learning process. Failure helps to actually contribute to refinement of processes/programs.</i></p> <p><i>There are issues like lack of resources, the whole process of building evidence (data) is not an easy process, research alone is a political stance. Those are some of the challenges that come along with Practice-based learning</i></p>
How do you quantify what is enough to make a shift in practice-based learning?	<p><i>One could use observations, interviews & surveys, social network analysis, experimental studies or contextual factors to know when to make a shift.</i></p> <p><i>Practice-based learning is a continuous process that needs to keep on being improved alongside using the listed traditional methodologies.</i></p>

Group Exercise: Participants split into small groups and answered the following questions;

- i. **What are the examples you can share of how your practice-based learning has guided your work?**
 - Using already experienced people like headmasters, teachers to act as the first informants to solve VAC.
 - The whole school intervention in Kenya required use of a lot of graphics to help learners understand the communicated VAC messages.
 - Re-engaging children about experiences of new interventions to see what works and didn't.
 - Engaging all teams involved in decision making e.g., senior management before making major decisions like system changes.
- ii. **To what extent have you documented, shared and applied practice-based learning in your work? What are some practical steps your team could take to document, share and apply practice-based learning?**
 - Care International Uganda: Convenes actors and also holds signature conferences; shares information; documents; conduct webinars to continuously build capacity; and the research team come up with a workbook to record the experiences.
 - Africhild Centre: Conducts trainings with key lessons to develop curriculum.
 - Bantwana Initiative: Documents case studies that are guided by learning questions; experiences learnt are documented; holds weekly reflection meetings and invites specialists who facilitate internal learning sessions.

iii. **What risks did you take in your programming that didn't work out as you hoped? What did you learn from this experience?**

- Delivering mosquito nets in a community that does fishing as an economic activity. The community used the nets for fishing. The team reconvened and found better ways to help this community instead providing mosquito nets.
- Not involving men (husbands) right from the start of the intervention that majorly encouraged young women (wives) to go back to school. Men were very bitter since no one sought their permission to involve their wives. This showed the need to involve all stakeholders when building systems.

Key takeaways: The practical steps that teams could take to document may include;

- i. Identify key learning questions that need to be explored.
- ii. Implement the solution.
- iii. Document what is working and what is not.
- iv. Continuously share documents in meetings.
- v. Don't stop learning.
- vi. Have the right tools.
- vii. Have an individual note book/journal and there after use debriefs to share.
- viii. Be guided by a logical framework.

11. SELF CARE

This sub-session was requested by partners in the Learning cohort on preventing VAC to help them to learn how to take care of themselves. An input presentation was made by Ms Yvonne Laruni from Raising Voices and later participants did some practical fitness exercises.

Self-care is taking care of one's physical and emotional needs, mind and spirit. It is about being about to listen to your body and know what you can take or not. Self-care is remembering you are human. The **signs** that may show that a person needs self-care are; restlessness at night/waking up tired; losing connection to your work; and projection of personal emotions onto others.



Self-care could **include**; Reading; Taking breaks; Learning new things; Adventure; Mediation; Rewarding yourself; and Forgiving yourself.

Away from self-care, caring for others is important and in organisations this can be done by;

- Holding each other accountable for our wellbeing.
- Seeing well-being as a shared responsibility.
- Reciprocity of care.
- Creating or nurturing a healing organisation.

Key take away from the self-care session

- 1. Promote a Culture of Care:** Establish a culture within our organizations that fosters caring for one another's well-being. This involves creating an environment where individuals look out for and support each other's mental and emotional health.
- 2. Open Dialogue with Staff:** Initiate open conversations with staff members to understand their challenges and concerns regarding burnout. By engaging in these discussions, we can collaboratively address issues that contribute to burnout and find effective solutions.
- 3. Prioritize Personal Well-being:** Elevate the significance of self-care by placing it as a priority on an organizational level. This entails recognizing the value of individuals' physical, mental, and emotional well-being, and integrating self-care practices into the workplace culture.

Creating an atmosphere of care, engaging in meaningful conversations, and emphasizing self-care not only enhance the overall well-being of staff but also contribute to a healthier and more productive work environment.

12. ACTIONS FOR USING LEARNING TO IMPROVE VAC PROGRAMMING

Participants wrote the following actions of how to use learning to improve VAC programming.

- Norm Shift: Focus on shifting social and gender norms as a priority.
- Foster Mindset Change: Cultivate mindset change to tackle entrenched norms in communities.
- Practice-based approach: Integrate practice-based learning for practical impact.
- Reach vulnerable areas: Utilize field visits to support hard-to-reach communities.
- Promote positive norms: Embed positive norms and self-care in program activities.
- Address hidden challenges: Actively identify and address hidden challenges.
- Encourage cooperation: Promote kindness and cooperation over competition.
- Empower schools: Strengthen the role of schools in promoting norm change.
- Multilayered strategies: Employ a layered approach for effective norm shifting.
- Link systems and norms: Connect systemic change with norm transformation.
- Collaborate Across Stakeholders: Build collaborations for comprehensive VAC prevention.

- Learn from setbacks: Utilize failures and risks for program improvement.
- Systemic sustainability: Implement systemic approaches for lasting norm change.
- Document Progress and Lessons: Record milestones and failures for informed improvements.
- Unify for change: Integrate efforts into a unified movement against VAC.
- Strengthen system strategies: Fortify systems contributing to positive norm shifts.
- Collaborative elimination: Collaborate with partners to eliminate violence against children.
- Advocate for System Change: Drive systemic changes for reinforced norm transformation.
- Measure Change Progress: Utilize monitoring tools to track norm shift progress.
- Commit to Collective Efforts: Recognize that norm change requires collective commitment.
- Embrace Learning from Failure: Embrace failure as a learning step toward success.
- Engage Government Partnerships: Partner with government for sustained change.
- Effective Complexity Communication: Convey norm change complexity clearly to stakeholders.
- Leverage Support Structures: Utilize existing support structures within schools.
- Target Specific Norms: Purposefully shift specific norms through intentional efforts.

13. CLOSING REMARKS

The closing remarks were made by **Mrs. Catherine Mugabo from CivSource Africa**, who encapsulated the essence of the event:

“Amidst the moments of both laughter and struggle, I encourage everyone to extend their learning beyond these walls. We should recognize that leaders are everyday heroes, including community figures, governments, and parents, all invested in positive change within schools”.

She stressed that as we reflect on where our interests lie, we should seek ways to ignite and catalyze them. The core lies in solutions—how to drive impact, how to measure it, how to practice it, and how to wield influence through learning. Collaboration is key; we must use language as the code to communicate and support one another.

Effective documentation is crucial; it needs to be more than present—it must be functional and validated. Social norms are intertwined with socio-ecological approaches. Tackling complex systems requires collective efforts. Just as we endure the challenges, we also celebrate the fruits of collective labor.

Two pivotal questions stand before us: How can we practically and meaningfully engage as a united community of practice? Moreover, how can we expand our horizons to integrate proven methods and discover new opportunities and resources for scaling our efforts throughout Africa?

Let's venture forth unafraid of failures, allowing our radiance to shine through. May our faith remain steadfast, and our courage never waver. As we depart, let us carry with us the spirit of collaboration, innovation, and determination."

She thanked all participants for the shared conversations and even those conversations like unpaid care work where they didn't agree. She encouraged participants to continue learning even after this convening. She then summarised her key highlights of the Learning convening in an Acronym "LIDS" which meant;

Leadership (e.g. teachers, parents, government officials struggling to plan with constrained resources)– how do we create a leader's interest to create solutions?

Impact – learn to work as a collective for more impact. Reach out to each other to continue learning.

Documentation – need to generate evidence and share it.

Social norms – there's need for measurement and clarity of indicators of behavioural change to deal with issues of PVAC.

She concluded her remarks by thanking all participants for their presence and full participation and welcomed the new participating organisations to the cohort.

The concluding remarks were made by **Mr. Moses Komagum from IIDC** who thanked all participants for the active participation especially the new partners. In a special way, he thanked all government officials especially the Minister of Primary Education for joining in the 7th learning convening of PVAC. He thanked Raising Voices and IIDC teams for the dedication to see to the success of the convening. He hoped that as participants return back, they would use the learning acquired to have more meaningful work in preventing VAC. He concluded by wishing everyone a safe journey back home.

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK ON THE 7TH ANNUAL LEARNING CONVENING ON PREVENTING VAC IN EAST AFRICA

IIDC - the learning partner collected feedback from the participants of the 7th learning convening to help in future improvement during planning for similar convenings. A structured digital data collection tool was developed and administered on Kobo collect. A total of 52 (50%) respondents out of 104 participants participated in the workshop evaluation. In terms of gender representation (Male 26: Female 26) respectively.

Respondents' feedback

Q.1 Has the content of the learning convening led to achievement of the workshop objectives?	49 (94%) Yes	3 (6%) Somewhat
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Q1. b) Please explain briefly the details of your choice scoring in question 1 above.

Led to achievement of workshop objective (Yes).

- The convening had great discussions on the practical ways of dismantling social norms and also provided a chance to learn from others. The discussions were rich and fruitful.
- Provided practical ways of how to shift the norm affecting children and women in different context.
- Knowledge and experiences sharing on systems change and norms.
- The convening reminded us of the importance of designing our interventions to address systems change for collective outcome harvesting.
- Learnt from each other about the strengths and gaps in our VAC prevention interventions. We have learnt about embracing and celebrating our failures as points of great learning to improve our interventions.
- The field visit created a learning opportunity that will support in improving VAC programming back to our organizations.
- Provided information on VAC prevention and response approaches that can be used to change systems to shift social norms.
- Learnings from practice-based learning presented by Raising Voices had a lot of take a way for us as an organisation.
- Content linked well with the theme of the Convening. There has been good connection to demonstrate the theme.
- Gained learning from whole school approach and structure, social norms checklist and systems change as a transformation approach.
- The facilitators prepared well and allowed participants to contribute.
- Provided an opportunity to interact with other likeminded stakeholders who are implementing work in ending VAC in schools and communities.
- Provided networking opportunities with allies and experiencing the field experiences from teachers, learners and the parents.
- There was learning from the field visits, presentations from different organisations about norms that drive certain behaviours and how they are using a holistic approach to address them.
- Provided techniques of how-to measuring norms change.
- There was ample time for in-depth discussion and diverse presentations that made the learning objectives achievable.

Led to achievement of workshop objectives (Somewhat).

- To a larger extent except one online presentation by was not clear and kept breaking. A lot of information could not be delivered.
- The case studies were not very related to the subject of shifting social and gender norms.

Q2. How do you feel about the methods of facilitation/delivery of the contents in meeting the objectives and facilitating your participation and learning?	43(83%) Appropriate	9(17%) Somewhat Appropriate
Q3. To what extent has the content met your expectations?	44(85%) Very much	8(15%) Somewhat

Q4. What are your specific gains from participating in this meeting as a person and as also for your organisation?

At Personal level:

- Learned on how to conduct a social norm check list while programming for social change.
- Provided opportunity for professional networking.
- Provided strategies and approaches to consider during designing and implementing a social norm change intervention.
- Acquired new more skills on social norms change programming especially application of holistic and multi sectoral approach.
- Importance of integrating self care in organization planned activities for staff well-being.
- Appreciation of practice-based learning and its contribution to actionable research and desired change.
- Designing Social Change through System Thinking.
- Acquired knowledge on the Whole school Approach from the field visits.
- Acquired knowledge on the social ecological theory model of change model shared
- Complexity and systematic approaches and strategies of addressing social norms.
- Addressing the VAC issues and norm change is a process. when solving any issues to do with VAC and norms change look at the system change.
- How to capture learnings in a program was very crucial since this has been a gap in relation to my skills and organization.
- There was significant useful feedback on GST for Raising Voices to integrate into our own practice-based learning.

At Organizational level:

- It is possible to shift a norm within a short time frame. Research and Practice Based learning should complement one another.
- I learnt that there are efforts by different organizations but we need to adapt from others to strengthen our own.
- Understanding of the systematic change and learning practices including learning from failures and the importance of documentation.
- Need to amplify the power of practice- based learning to improve our interventions Vs waiting for mid-term or end of project evaluations!
- Took note of areas to improve during GST implementation.

- Invest in learning and focus on root causes of the problem.
- Rethinking on the ways we are working in changing social norms, using multispectral approaches.
- There is a need to come up with a self-care plan or strategy.
- Connection with other organisations in the region for better learning.

Learning is an ongoing process and learning should be part of everyone in the organization and not only the M&E people.

<p>Q5. To what extent does this Learning Convening on Preventing VAC in EA workshop bolster your interest to take learning as part of your organization and program implementation</p>	<p>42(89%) Very Much</p>	<p>5(11%) Somewhat</p>
<p>Q.6. Which content/sessions were most useful to you and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session on learning from Bantwana and session on social norms change by Bantwana Initiative. • Raising Voices on Learning from Failure, the GST school visit was particularly good in conceptualizing things. • Designing our interventions to address systems. • Learning from practice • Approaches that can be used to change the system in shifting social norms • Social norms systems change • Concept of practise based learning. • Coalition for Good School and Conceptualization of Social Norms in a System Change • Gender and social norms measurement. <p>These were most useful sessions because they spoke directly to what we do. They connected us a lot on our projects back in our organizations and knowledge acquired will be useful for future programming ang improvement in design of new projects.</p> <p>Q.7 Which content/sessions were least useful to you and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning visit to school become took long time to reach. Safeguarding measures were not considered. • Virtual sessions were a bit challenging to follow due to technology issues and virtual presentation. 		
<p>Q.8 a) What is your rating of the food and breakfast.</p>	<p>27 (52%) Very good</p>	<p>17 (33%) Excellent</p>
	<p>7 (13%) Good</p>	<p>1 (2%) Fair</p>

8 b) What is your rating of the accommodation	22(42%)	18(32) %
	Very good	Excellent
	8 (15%)	4 (8) %
	Good	Fair
8 C) What is your rating of the meeting venue.	23 (44%)	19 (37) %
	Very good	Excellent
	9 (17%)	1 (2) %
	Good	Fair
8d) What is your rating of the session moderators.	26 (50%)	21 (40) %
	Excellent	Very good
	4(8%)	1 (2) %
	Good	Fair

8e. Explain briefly about the choice of your ratings on question 8 above.

Breakfast and food

- Sometime breakfast orders we're taking long to get delivered. However, food was good

Accommodation

- Some accommodation rooms were not so clean. Sometimes, you could find dust in the room. However, they have good rooms and beds.

Venue

- The choice of the venue was good. It was big enough and this impacted positively on active participation through breakout rooms and group discussions.

Moderators

- Moderators were engaging and allowed us a chance to contribute.
- They were well informed on the topics of discussion.
- Majority of moderators engaged participants through different ways including providing energizers and guided group work.
- Being able to keep the team participating and reflecting on the key aspects of the sessions looked fantastic.
- All moderators were well organised and focused on engaging participants.
- The moderators were very engaging and fun. They did not take things too much seriously.
- Broad understanding on the specific thematic areas.
- Prepared well and connected well with the audience

However, time management in workshop has always been a challenge, we need to explore ways to improve the issues around time management.

Ideas for improving future learning convenings

- Improve field visits timing to make it possible for exposure learning to happen.
- IIDC should consider doing more branding around the room. E.g. Print banners, positioning of the learning banner, consider getting a banner with a stand. Or do Corex boards.
- Bring in moderators from different countries and work spaces/programs.
- The day of school visits should be exempted from any other prior activity.
- Minimize power points and venture into some creative ways of presenting our ideas.
- Maintain participants' collective care activities during the convening. Zumba sessions, swimming, aerobics, touring yoga etc, based on what budget can accommodate.
- The day 3 sitting arrangement was ergonomic hazard. It should be improved next time.
- Sharing presentations after the sessions for further learning and exploring knowledge.
- Observe time as allocated in the program.
- Participants to be engaged in travel bookings and be allowed to advice on time and travel rout if possible, as for air tickets. Airport transfer was not well arranged. If its a big group its good to hire a bus rather than depending on small cars that are taxis.
- For the venue they kept switching of the Internet this was very disappointing.
- Lastly field visit was awesome but very stressful and tiresome. This should be improved.

AGENDA

Time	Activity or Topic
Monday 17 th July 2023	Arrival and check-in at the hotel
DAY ONE: Tuesday, 18th July 2023	
08:00 – 08:30	Arrival and registration of participants
SESSION 1: Official opening	
08:30 – 09:00	Introductions and presentation of objectives by the moderator Welcoming remarks by Impact and Innovations Development Centre (IIDC) Remarks from Raising Voices
09:00 – 10:00	Official opening of the 7 th Annual Learning Convening on Preventing VAC in East Africa, by Hon. Moriku Kaducu, Minister of State for Primary Education Uganda Raising Voices: Highlights about the GST as a social norm change program and debriefing on the school visit
10:00 – 10:30	GROUP PHOTO AND HEALTH BREAK
SESSION 2: GST program school experience on changing social norms in schools	
	School visit to Kamuli and Bugiri
	10:30 – 12:30: Travel from Hotel to Kamuli and Bugiri
10:30 – 16:30	12:30 – 14:00: Lunch in Kamuli and Bugiri 14:30 – 16:30: Visit to 3 schools - interaction with the target group i.e. students and teachers
16:30 – 19:30	Travel back from Kamuli and Bugiri to the hotel
20:00	Dinner at the hotel
DAY TWO: Wednesday, 19th July 2023	
08:00 – 08:30	Participant arrive at the convening hall
SESSION 3: Contextualizing learning from implementation of the Good School Program	
08:30 – 10:30	Contextualizing learning from implementation of the Good School Program: Presentation and discussion of GST field observations Session moderator: Hassan Muluusi
11:00 – 11:30	HEALTH BREAK

Time	Activity or Topic
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SESSION 4: The theory, design, practice and measurement of social norms interventions

11:30 – 13:00 Learning and discussion on the theory and measurement of social norms change by East African Social Norms Learning Collaborative. An input presentation by Prof. Rebecka Lundgren and Care Uganda

13:00 – 14:30 LUNCH

SESSION 5: Evidence and solutions for transforming social norms in VAC prevention.

Reflection on how different organisations stay gender responsive and support the different needs of girls and boys

Market place / Break away rooms

14:30 – 16:30	<p>Break away room 1:</p> <p>Moderator: Anslem Wandega</p>	Who decides what the right (positive) and wrong (negative) social and gender norms are? What is your experience of the ideal and real situation regarding shifting gender norms. An input presentation by Western Uganda Bantwana Program
	<p>Break away room 2:</p> <p>Facilitator: Natalie Kimbugwe</p>	Gender and social norms around unpaid care work. An input presentation by CARE Uganda
	<p>Break away room 3:</p> <p>Facilitator: Nsibambi Douglas</p>	How do you identify norms and strategies for shifting the norms? What are signs of norms change or shift? An input presentation by FHI360

16:30 – 17:00 **Plenary discussion:** Key highlights from the market place

19:00 DINNER AND LEISURE

DAY THREE: Thursday, 20th July 2023

08:00 – 09:00 Participant arrive and recap of day two

SESSION 6: Applying systems thinking to social and gender norms change interventions

09:00 – 10:30 Conceptualization of social norms using a systems’ change lens. An input presentation by Ramadhan B. Kirunda

10:30 – 11:00 HEALTH BREAK

Time	Activity or Topic
SESSION 7: Learning as a pre-requisite for scaling up social norm transformation programs	
11:00 – 12:30	<u>Learning from practice – and from failure!</u> Facilitator: Raising Voices
12:30 – 13:00	Coalition for Good Schools as a system approach to shifting social norms
13:00 – 14:30	LUNCH BREAK
SESSION 8: Self-care	
14:30 – 16:30	Self-care: An input presentation led by Raising Voices followed by sports
19:00	Closing dinner
END OF DAY THREE	
DAY FOUR: Friday, 21st July 2023	
07:30 – 10:30	Breakfast and departure: Travel back to original destinations

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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