

Reducing Violence Against Children in Low-Income Settings Through Economic Strengthening and Caregiver Support

BACKGROUND

Children in extreme poverty are at higher risk of violence, deprivation, and stress, which can negatively impact children's well-being and development. Conditions of extreme poverty also undermine caregivers' ability to mitigate risk factors, while also contributing to tensions that can lead to abuse within households.

In a pilot study in Burkina Faso, 44% of children in extremely poor households reported experiencing physical abuse and 58% experienced emotional abuse at home.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

A combination of **household economic strengthening and caregiver support** consisting of sensitization and coaching on child well-being led to a number of **positive outcomes for children** in extremely poor households, such as less risk of physical or emotional violence, and improved parental attitudes. The economic intervention served to create an enabling environment, including improved women's empowerment and financial well-being. However, impacts on children were greater when combined with the caregiver support and sensitization component.



VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

With the combined intervention, children were less likely to be abused while working or performing household chores and had **58% less risk of physical or emotional violence at home.**



CAREGIVER DISCIPLINE AND ATTITUDES

In households that received the sensitization and coaching, combined with the economic intervention, **caregivers reported improvements in parental attitudes**, reduction in the use of harsh discipline practices, and improvement in relationships with their children.



CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

With the combined intervention, children reported **lower symptoms of depression and trauma and improved self-esteem.**

INSPIRE STRATEGIES:

Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children (click to read more)



Income and economic strengthening



Parent and caregiver support

ISSUES ADDRESSED

Violence against Children (VAC)
Violence against Women (VAW)
Mental Health (MH)
Extreme Poverty (EP)

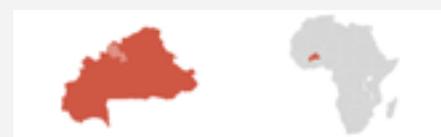
PROJECT TIMELINE

October 2014 – November 2017



LOCATION

Yatenga province, **Burkina Faso**



COST

The approximate per-household direct cost of economic strengthening intervention: **USD \$208** per 2-year program. With the addition of the caregiver sensitization component: **USD \$228.**

METHODOLOGY

A **three-arm cluster-randomized controlled trial** with 360 households. Data collected at baseline, 12 months, and 24 months.

BENEFICIARIES

Households with women living in extreme poverty with children aged 10–15.

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Read more about this project and its findings at theevaluationfund.org

KEY LESSONS



Income and economic strengthening are important to **provide the conditions to address risk factors faced by children in extremely poor households**. With a specific focus on child well-being, many benefits do also trickle down to children.



The **addition of a sensitization component** for households significantly improved outcomes for children, and can be integrated into the economic strengthening intervention for a low cost.



It is important to **engage all household members** in sensitization activities and **form solidarity groups** for dissemination of information and mutual support among women.



Though gender-specific content was included in the curriculum, violence reduction was strongest among boys and young children, suggesting **more focus should be placed on girls** and interventions should start early.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Income and economic strengthening were based on the “graduation” approach, which combines integration into savings groups, training and livelihood planning, provision of a grant of approximately US\$100 to jumpstart livelihood activities, and monthly coaching for 2 years.

Parent and caregiver support consisted of culturally tailored, family-focused sensitization and coaching on child well-being and children’s rights for 5 months. This component was designed to address normative beliefs related to protection of children from violence and exploitation and to raise the awareness about context-specific child protection risks. The curriculum was developed by the Burkina Faso ministry of social action.

“ *The results are a source of inspiration for those involved in promoting and protecting children’s rights.* ”

Yvette Dembélé – State Secretary of Burkina Faso for Social Affairs, Disability and Inclusion, Representing the Minister for Women, National Solidarity and the Family.

PARTNERS

Role	Organization
Local Coordinator	Trickle Up - West Africa
Implementing partner	Aide aux Enfants et aux Familles Demunies, Burkina Faso
Researchers	University of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration, USA
Researchers	The University of California, Los Angeles Luskin School of Public Affairs, USA
Strategic advisor	Scientific Committee of Burkina Faso Program Learning Group on Child Protection
Technical advisor	Women’s Refugee Commission

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

Ismayilova L, Gaveras E, Blum A, Tô-Camier A, Nanema R (2016) **Maltreatment and Mental Health Outcomes among Ultra-Poor Children in Burkina Faso: A Latent Class Analysis**. PLoS ONE 11(10): e0164790.

Karimli L, Rost L, Ismayilova L. (2018). **Integrating economic strengthening and family coaching to reduce work-related health hazards among children of poor households: Burkina Faso**. Journal of Adolescent Health, Special Issue, Global Perspectives on Economic Strengthening, 62(1):S6–S14.

Ismayilova L., Karimli L., Gaveras E., Sanson J., Chaffin J., Tô A. (2017). **An integrated approach to increasing women’s status and reducing family violence in a West African country: Results of a cluster-randomized controlled trial**. Psychology of Violence.

Ismayilova, L., Karimli, L., Sanson, J., Gaveras, E., Nanema, R., Tô-Camier, A., & Chaffin, J. (2018). **Improving mental health among ultra-poor children: Two-year outcomes of a cluster-randomized trial in Burkina Faso**. Social Science & Medicine.

Ismayilova, L., Karimli, L., (in press). **Harsh Parenting and Violence against Children: A Trial with Ultra-Poor Families in Francophone West Africa**. Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (JCCAP).

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The Evaluation Fund
Reducing Violence Against Children