



# Ugandan Parenting for Respectability Implementation Science Evaluation:

Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial of a Parenting Programme to Reduce Violence against Children and Gender Based Violence in Uganda

## Background:

- > Intimate partner violence and violence against children are interlinked, and are major social, development, and public health concerns in Uganda and globally.
- > Violence against children has severe and long lasting impacts on physical and mental health with knock-on effects at the economic and societal level.
- > Children who experience or witness violence are more likely to perpetrate or be a victim of intimate partner violence and perpetrate violence against children in adulthood.
- > The *Parenting for Respectability* programme, a 16-session group-based parenting programme, was developed in Uganda with families to address these issues on a community and national level. The programme emphasises recruitment of fathers as much as it does to mothers.

## Method:

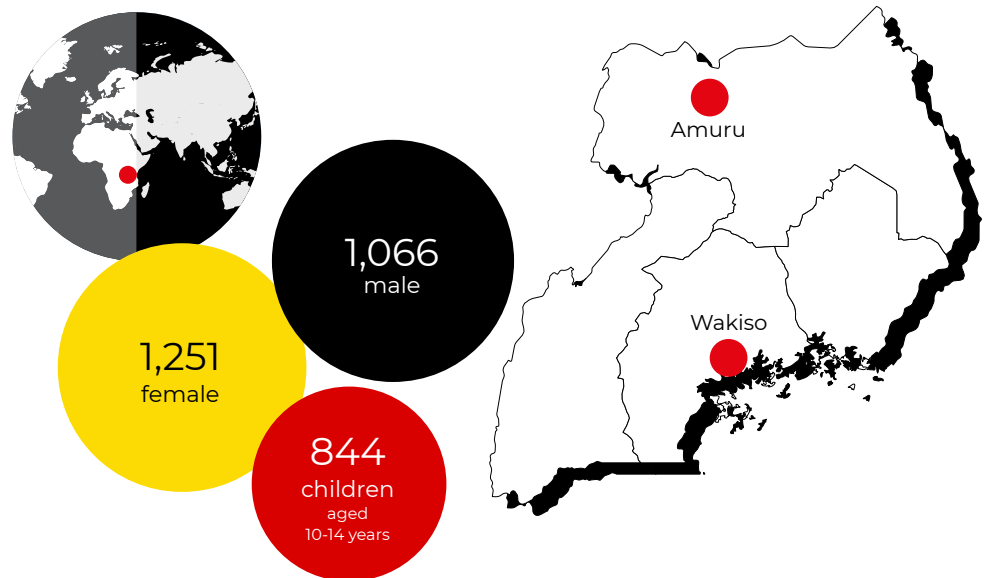
Hybrid Type II Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial.



## Research Question:

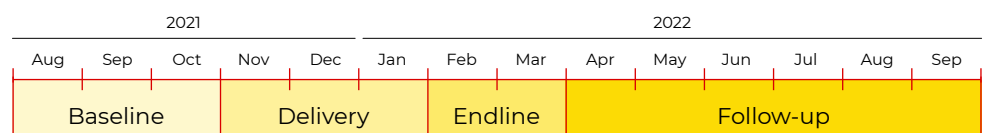
**Is Parenting for Respectability more effective at preventing violence against children and intimate partner violence in comparison to a brief two-hour lecture?**

## Study participants:



From 54 villages in rural and peri-urban communities in Wakiso and Amuru Districts, Uganda.

## Timeline:





Since starting the training, my mother talks to me politely most especially when have done something wrong. I also relate well with my father because I also tell him things and he gives me advice.

(Girl in PfR)



### Study Design:

We conducted a cluster randomised controlled trial in Northern and Central Uganda to test the effectiveness of *Parenting for Respectability* in comparison to a brief two-hour lecture on parenting and partner relationships. 54 villages were randomised to either *Parenting for Respectability* or a brief two-hour lecture on parenting and partner relationships. Parents and randomly selected children were interviewed at baseline, immediately after the programme was delivered, and six months later. Data were analysed to compare the effects of the two groups on child maltreatment, intimate partner violence perpetration and victimisation, and other factors associated with increased risk of violence and poor parenting.



As I talk now, there is great change in my house. I used to have a lot of authority and was very rude. However, when we started the session, I am taking the responsibility as the head of the family, respect members of my family and others in the community. Because of that, I have become the assistant secretary of the local council.

(Man in PfR)

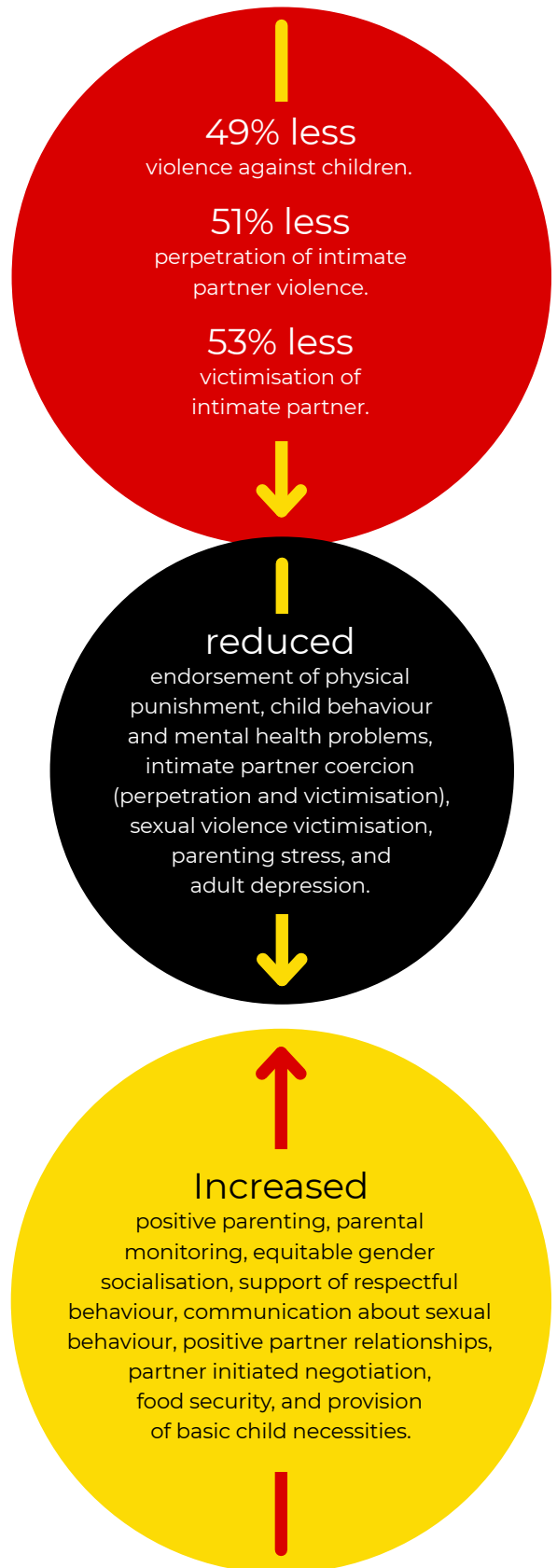


### Programme delivery:

*Parenting for Respectability* is a 16-session gender transformative parenting programme delivered to equal groups of female and male caregivers. It includes 9 single-sex group sessions followed by 7 mixed-sex group sessions with a focus on parents' desire for good child behaviour and family respectability. Parents attended 66.3% of the programme (11 out of 16 sessions). Community facilitators from SOS Children's Village delivered the programme to a high degree of quality and competence, based on a facilitator assessment tool used during live observation of sessions.

### Research Findings:

Six months after the programme, parents who participated in *Parenting for Respectability* reported (in comparison to those who attended the lecture):



These results were supported by assessments of child respondents aged 10-14 years who did not participate in either programme at 6-months follow-up.



Before the programme, I used a lot of verbal abuse on the family and never spoke well. However, with the changes in the way I communicate with the children, they now respond well and we live in a respectful relationship. My husband had a lot of the power and all activities were done according to his wishes, but we now collaborate and consult each other better after attending the sessions in the programme. (Woman in Pfr)



### Lessons Learned:

- > **Impact:** A community-based parenting programme delivered largely by peer facilitators to families with children ages 0 to 17 years can reduce violence against children and intimate partner violence as well as several outcomes associated with increased risk of violence.
- > **Equity:** Effects of the programme were by and large equal for male and female caregivers, with deliberate inclusion and engagement of male caregivers to promoting healthy spousal relationships through reflection on social norms and communication.
- > **Sustainability:** Increased programme effectiveness at 6-months including child-reported effects suggests that a) families continued to improve their behaviours after the programme ended, b) it may take time for skills learned during the programme to have a measurable impact on behaviours and family dynamics, and/or c) initial effects of the lecture group were brief with families returning back to normative behaviours before the intervention.
- > **Scalability:** Based on the cost analysis study, investment in the scale up of the *Parenting for Respectability* programme would be feasible and beneficial for Uganda and other countries, especially if embedded within government service delivery. The roll-out would not vary much across different geographical locations in Uganda.

### Recommendations:

- > Policymakers, NGOs, development partners, funders, practitioners, and researchers should all work together to reduce violence against children and intimate partner violence at scale in Uganda.
- > Alternative delivery mechanisms including multimedia, digital, and remote modalities combined with in-person support and a rigorous referral system may be necessary to increase scalability and reach while maintaining programme effectiveness within existing resource limitations.
- > Now is an opportune time to scale-up *Parenting for Respectability* Programme given the increasing policy interest to optimise the role of parenting and strengthen the family institution, and given the government emphasis on evidence-based programmes

**Lead researchers:** Child Health and Development Centre, University of Makerere



**Implementers:** SOS Children's Village Uganda



**Partners:** Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development

**Researcher partners:** University of Glasgow, University of Oxford, Global Parenting Initiative



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The LEGO Foundation