

Violence in adolescents' lives: Reflections on measuring norms and practices and intervening with boys to prevent violence

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Context

- Unequal gender norms widespread; attitudes justifying partner violence are strongly held by both women and men: 54% and 51%¹
- Gender based violence widespread, mostly within marriage: 29% of women aged 15-49 have experienced spousal violence²
- Sexual abuse of children and adolescents are also widespread: 53% of children have experienced one form of sexual abuse³
- While urgent need to change social norms about gender roles and violence and to prevent VAWG, limited evidence on what works to do so

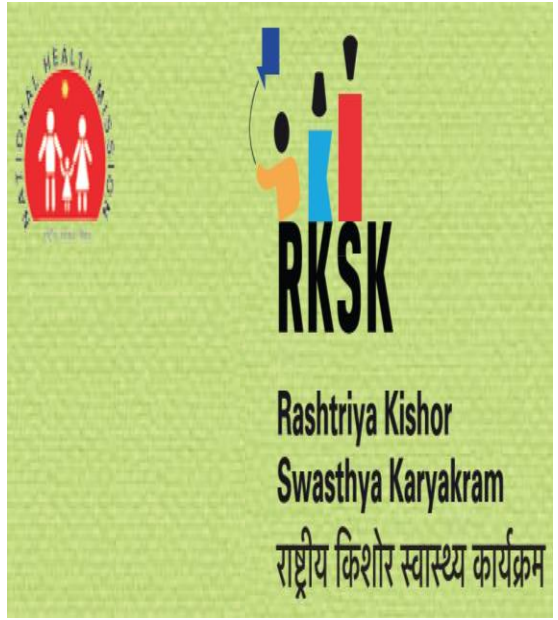
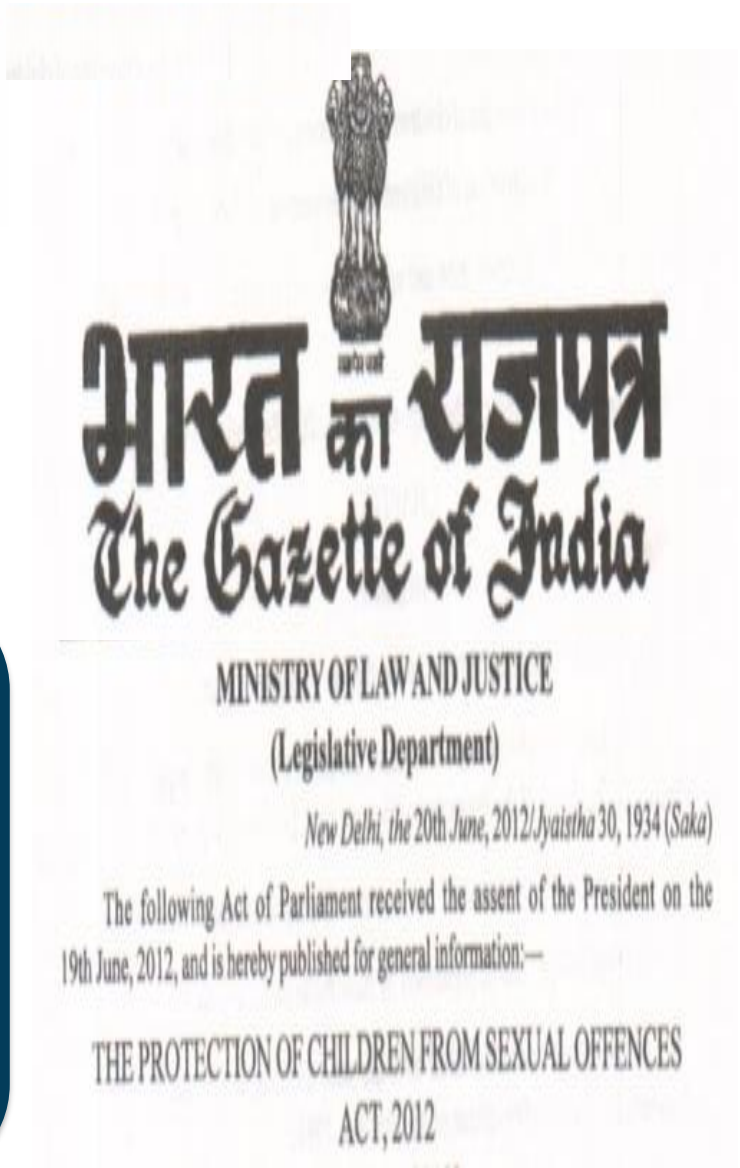
India's commitments



5 GENDER EQUALITY



SDG 5.2
Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation



Preventing Violence
(Including Gender-Based Violence)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY
To promote favourable attitudes against violence, including GBV among adolescents

Objectives

Drawing on insights from a number of studies, this presentation seeks to shed light on

- Multiple forms of violence experienced and perpetrated by adolescent girls and boys, with a special focus on sexual violence
- Adolescent boys' attitudes and perspectives on peer and community norms about violence against women and girls
- Lessons learned from an intervention that sought to engage adolescent boys to change attitudes and norms about violence against women and girls

Data

Findings presented draw on a number of studies

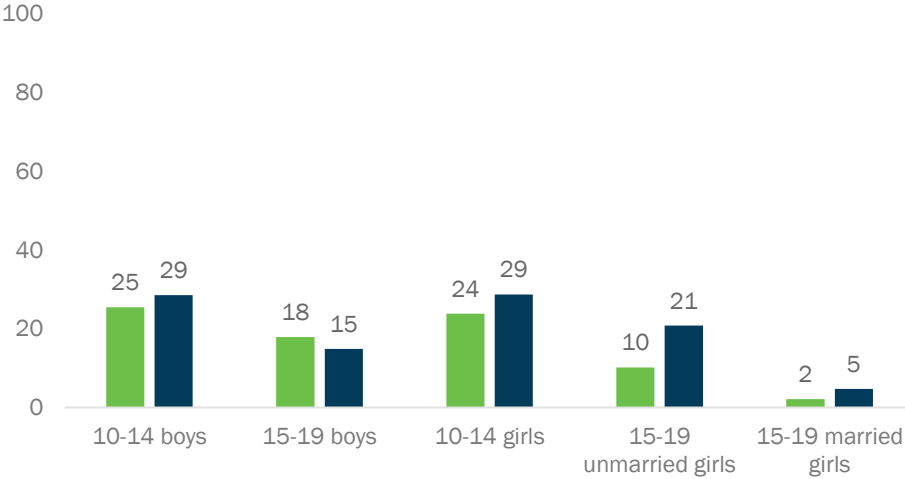
- Understanding the lives of Adolescents and Young Adults (UDAYA) 2015-20: a cross-sectional state-representative survey of 20,594 adolescents in ages 10-19 in the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh*
- **Do-Kadam Barabari Ki Ore (Two Steps towards Equality)**: A suite of intervention projects, including a **cluster randomized trial with adolescent boys and young men (13-21)** to build the evidence base on what may work to prevent, address violence against women and girls in Bihar.

* UDAYA uses both cross-sectional and longitudinal designs; the findings are presented from the first round of cross-sectional surveys

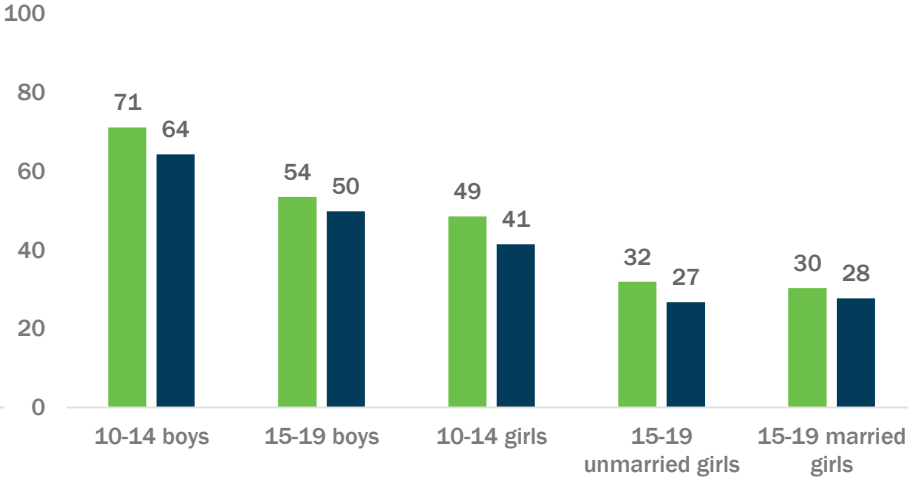
Violence in adolescents' lives

Physical violence experienced and perpetrated in adolescence

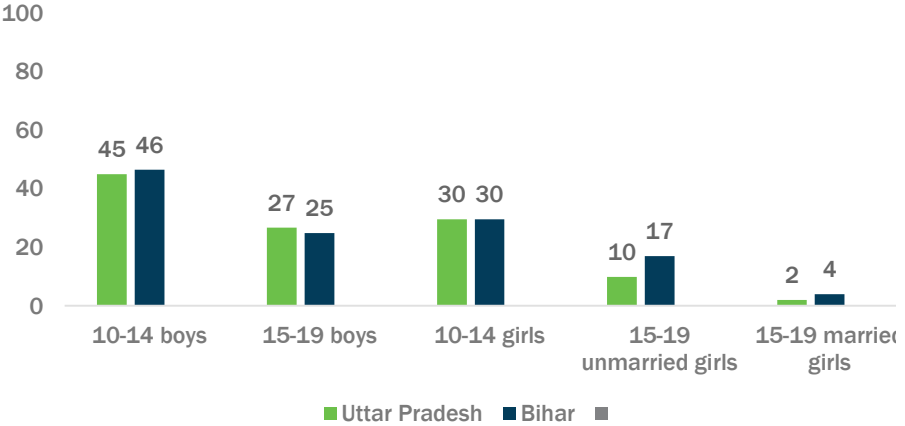
Bullied someone in the last 12 months



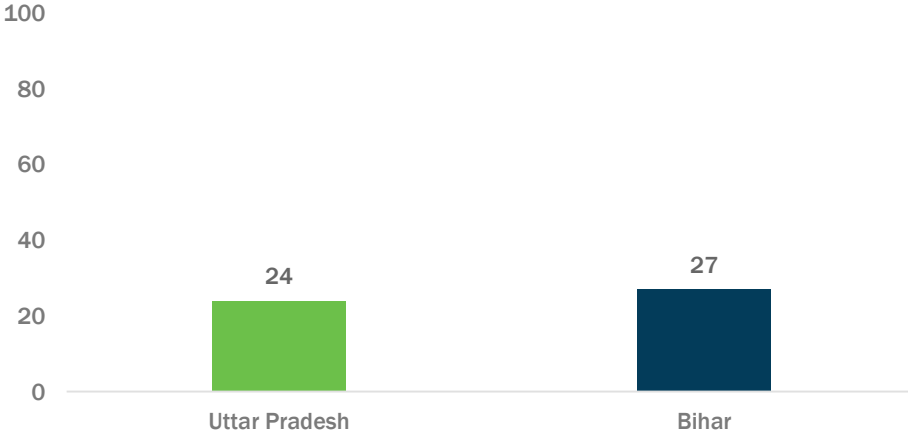
Physically abused by a parent since age 10



Involved in a physical fight with a boy/girl in the last 12 months



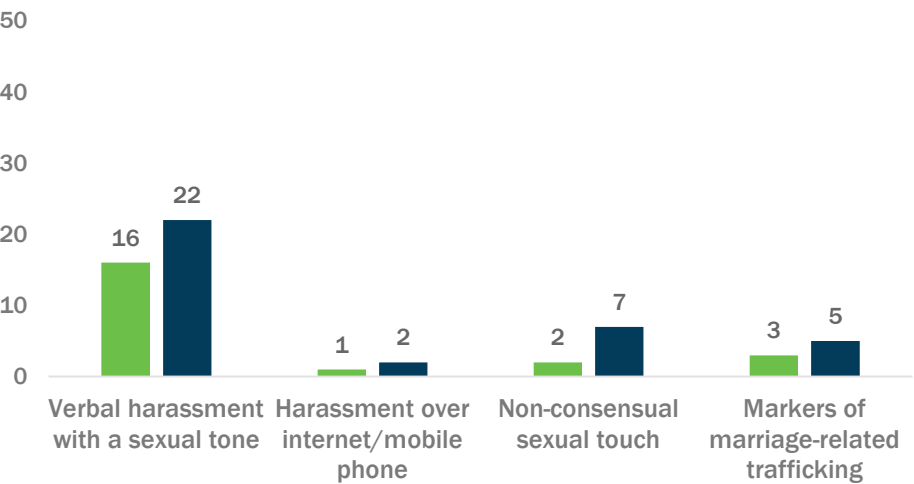
Physical violence within marriage experienced by girls (15-19)



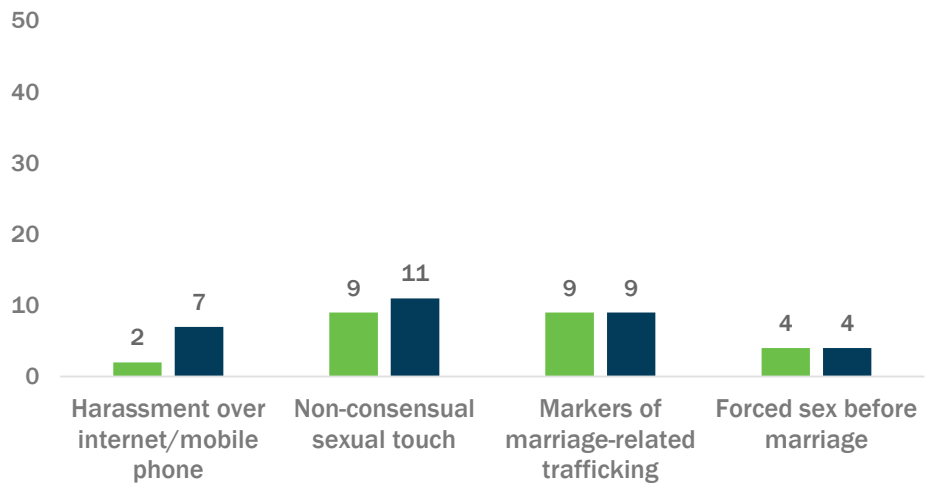
Source: Santhya et al., 2017

Sexual violence experienced by girls in adolescence

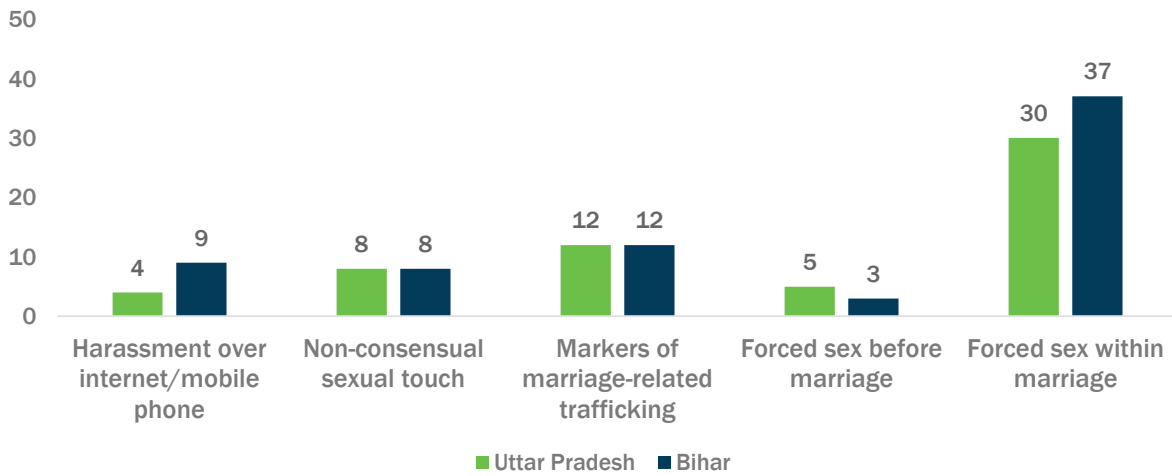
Girls (10-14)



Unmarried girls (15-19)



Married girls (15-19)



Transactional sex
None to 0.1%

■ Uttar Pradesh ■ Bihar

Source: Santhya et al., 2017

Sexual violence perpetrated in adolescence

Boys (10-14)

Verbal harassment with a sexual tone

Uttar Pradesh **3%**

Bihar **3%**

Non-consensual sexual touch

Uttar Pradesh **1%**

Bihar **1%**

Boys (15-19)

Verbal harassment with a sexual tone

Uttar Pradesh **20%**

Bihar **19%**

Non-consensual sexual touch

Uttar Pradesh **2%**

Bihar **3%**

Forced sex

Uttar Pradesh **5%**

Bihar **5%**

Adolescent boys' attitudes and perceptions about peer and community norms about violence against women and girls

Measuring attitudes about violence against women & girls

17 statements (options - agree, disagree or not sure)

- Girls like to be teased
- It is a girl's fault if she gets sexually harassed
- Rape against girls is perpetrated only by persons unrelated to her
- A woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together
- If a girl says no it actually means yes
- There are times when a boy needs to beat his girl friend
- There are times when a wife deserves to be beaten by her husband
- A girl deserves to be beaten if she
 - Talks to a boy, goes out to play, stays out late, does not help in housework, does not obey elders, has an affair with a boys
- It is all right for a husband to beat his wife if
 - He suspects her of being unfaithful, she goes out without telling him, she disobeys him, she makes a mistake

Measuring peer norms about violence against women & girls

5 statements (options – most friends, some friends, few friends/none or not sure)

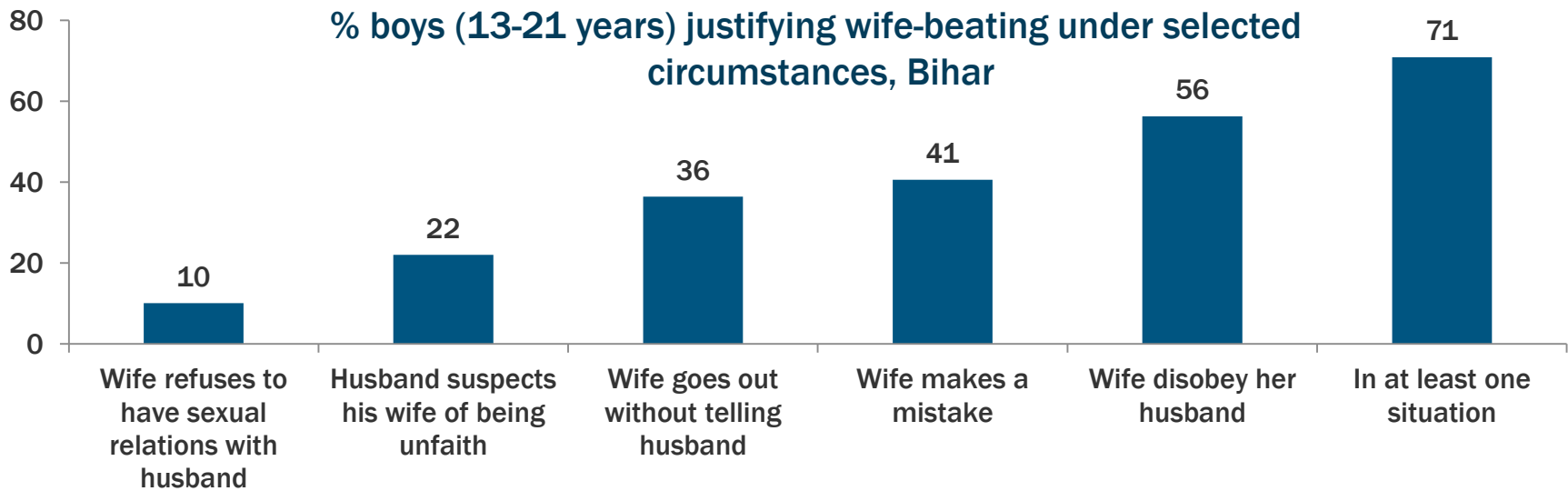
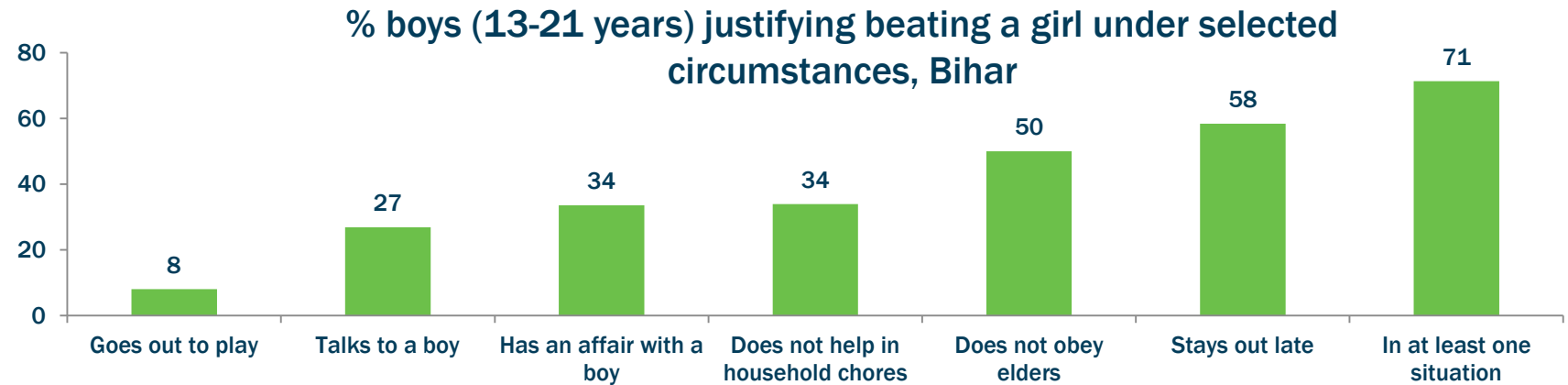
- Boys like to tease or harass girls
- Friends would make fun of boys who refuse to join them in teasing or harassing girls
- Friends think it is acceptable to pressurize a girl to have sex even if she refuses
- Friends would approve of boys who physically force a girl to have sex
- Friends believe that girls who are raped generally did something wrong to provoke it

Measuring community norms about violence against women & girls

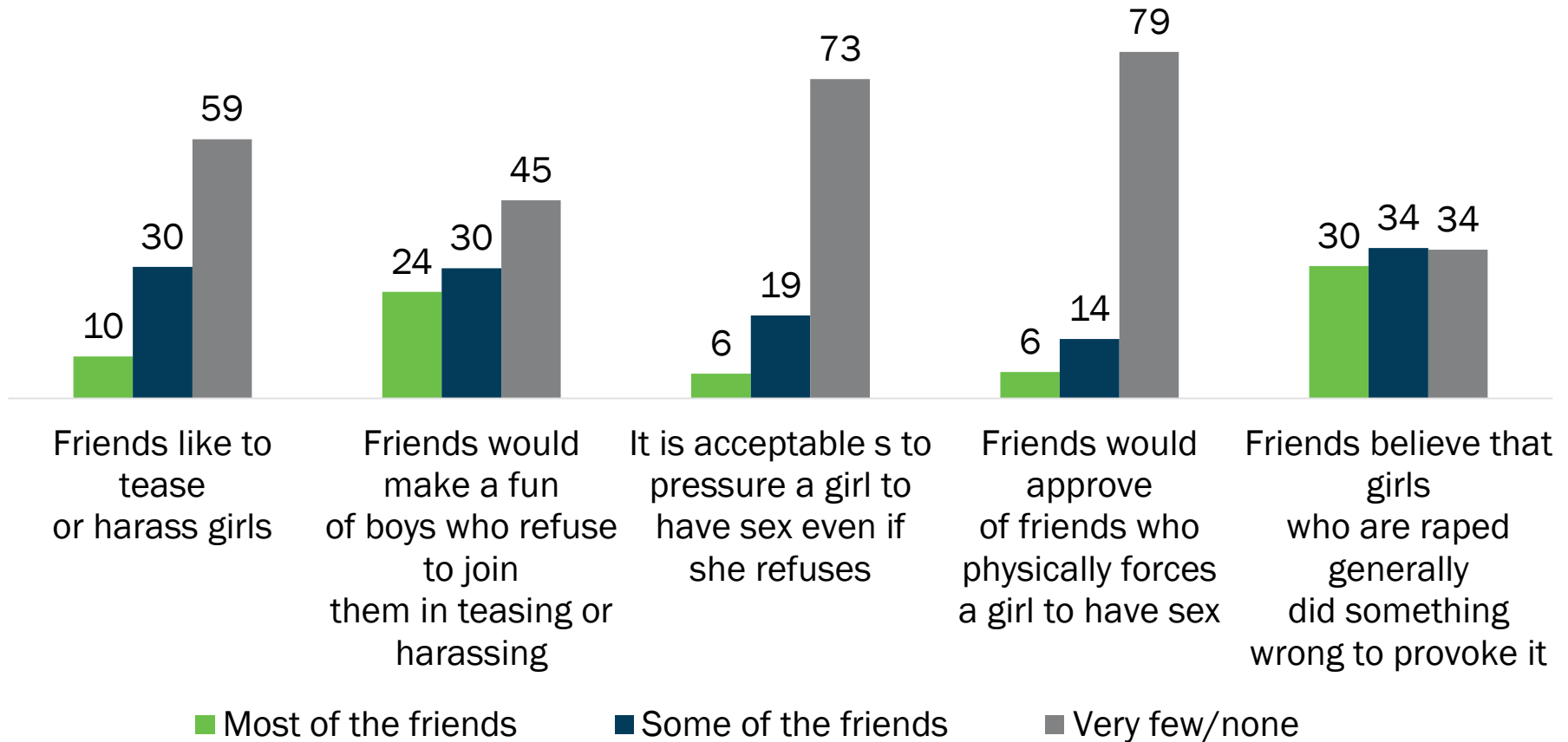
3 statements each posed in respect of men and women separately (options – most men/women, some men/women, few men/women/none or not sure)

- Wives should respect their husband's authority
- It is acceptable for men to beat their wife if they disobey them
- It is acceptable for men to beat their wife if they go out without telling them

Attitude towards beating wife/ girl



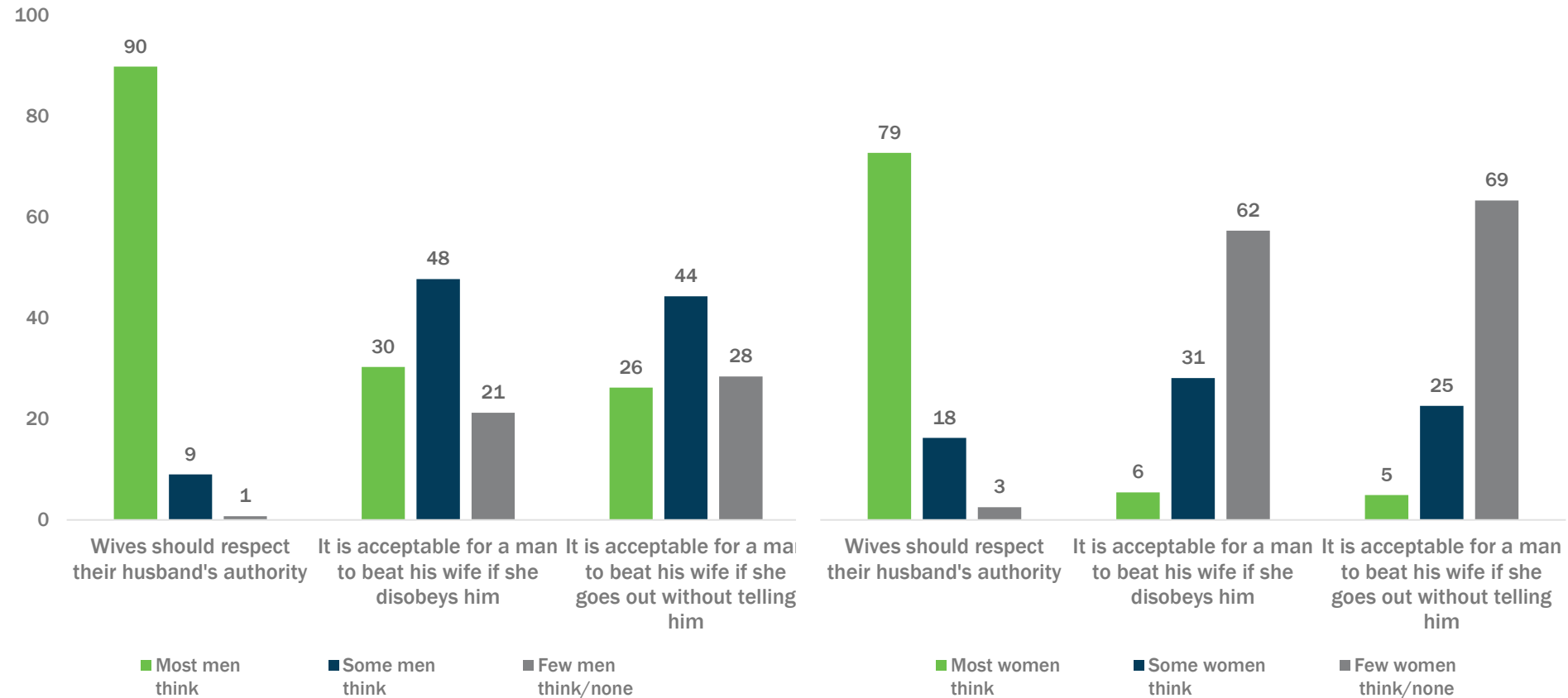
Peer norms about violence against women & girls



Community norms about violence against women & girls

What adult men think

What adult women think





Changing attitudes and practices of boys (ages 13-21) through sports and life skills education



Intervention (15 youth clubs in 15 villages)

<u>Targeted beneficiaries</u>	Club members aged 13-21
Capacity building of peer mentors	2 peer mentors selected from each club underwent 4 rounds of training (2-3 days each) in building understanding of VAW issues, conducting sessions and conducting cricket sessions
Gender transformative life skills education	Weekly one hour sessions (total 42 sessions), delivered by peer mentors supported by C3 field animators using modules specifically prepared for the programme
Cricket coaching/practice sessions	Weekly one hour sessions (total 35 sessions), delivered by peer mentors supported by cricket coach, C3 field animators
Community events (slow cycling, poster making, etc), and cricket matches	Organised by intervention clubs to build awareness about gender issues and VAWG

Attendance and perceptions about quality

Reported attendance:

- Group sessions: 79% boys; 64% had attended more than half
- Cricket sessions: 74%; 57% had attended more than half
- Community events: 49% (20 events organised)

Perceptions about programme quality

- Looked forward to attending the programme: 89%
- Peer mentor always explained clearly: 80%



Boys' recommendations for upscaling

Some may have found what you tried to teach them cheap and controversial, so if it is taught to students as a subject in school, then there will definitely be a transformation. We all know that there are examinations for topics printed in books so then students and guardians take it seriously because they will be examined in it. Like you know, we were taught about traffic signals in our childhood days and we still remember them. In the same way, if we learn about teasing or domestic violence in class, if we have classes on how to behave with girls, then students will pay attention to it and the situation will improve. (Age 18, completed Class 12)

Did the project succeed in transforming attitudes?

It succeeded in transforming attitudes:

- Gender role attitudes became more egalitarian and notions of masculinity became more positive
- Peers became more respectful of boys acting in gender equitable ways
- More boys rejected notions of the right of men and boys to exercise control over the females in their life
- More boys found violence against women and girls unjustifiable

Did it affect willingness to intervene to stop cases of violence that they observed and their own perpetration of violence?

- Exposure to our intervention was associated with an increase in action taken by boys to stop incidents of violence against women and girls
- Reduction in boys' perpetration of certain non-contact forms of violence but not other forms of violence

Reflections on measuring
practices and norms around
sexual violence in adolescents
and intervening to prevent it

Some reflections

- Sexual violence measures
 - Underestimated?
- Peer and community norms
 - Did our question capture these norms?
 - Differences in boys' perception of men's and women's views?
- Challenges in working with boys
 - Implementation through existing platforms that are expected to, but do not prioritise gender issues and violence prevention
 - Overcoming the lack of leadership skills of those delivering the intervention
 - Sustaining regular participation
 - Reaching communities at large
 - Maintaining the fidelity of the intervention activities
 - Deciding the ideal length of intervention