

Evidence for Better Lives

Impact Activities

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Evidence for Better Lives: A multi-country cohort study

Ending violence against children (VAC), attending to its consequences and reducing children's exposure to threats require a better understanding of the factors that foster child development and well-being. The identification of risk factors that need to be addressed most urgently should be elucidated for different societies and cultures. The Evidence for Better Lives Study (EBLS) has been designed not only to identify the salience of risk and protective factors for different groups and contexts, but also to alert decision- and policymakers about the short- and long-term consequences of violence. Ultimately, EBLS aims to produce essential knowledge for future actions.

During 2018 and 2019, the Consortium implemented a pilot version of EBLS in eight low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) – Ghana, Jamaica, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The pilot's data included 1,208 pregnant women who were assessed during the third trimester of their pregnancy and when their child was around three months old. The questionnaire for participating women was translated into nine languages. Measures obtained from mothers included, among others, mental and physical health, attitudes to corporal punishment, adverse childhood experiences, pre-natal intimate partner violence (p-IPV), substance use and social/community support. Hair and dry blood spot (DBS) samples were collected from the pregnant women to measure stress markers. To explore research participation among fathers, EBLS recruited 300 fathers in the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The present report outlines a selection of the outcomes of the project's impact strategy during its implementation. Activities involve local meetings, international events, publications, two films and capacity-building activities.

Partnership with local and international stakeholders

Our impact strategy aims to ensure that the knowledge generated by our research can be widely disseminated and influence national and international violence reduction policies and practices.

In each study site, the research partners have worked with local and national policy makers, NGOs and international organisations. The goal is to develop research-based violence prevention plans that set objectives about how evidence-based services will be equitably delivered to families with young children. High-level engagement with decision-makers in local governments has been essential.

Our recommendations are informed by the WHO INSPIRE framework, which currently reflects the best available evidence for preventing VAC in LMIC countries. It includes multi-layered strategies for amending and implementing laws, changing norms, supporting caregivers, economic strengthening, creating safe environments and improving public services.



Valenzuela City is a highly urbanised city that has received numerous awards for innovative practices that uplift the health, education and well-being of its constituents. It was recognised as the second safest city in Southeast Asia in 2018 and is the **EBLS local study site in the Philippines**. In 2015, the Philippines became one of the 26 Pathfinding Countries under the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children. As a Pathfinding City, the local government of Valenzuela City has committed to implement evidence-based and INSPIRE-aligned strategies to reduce VAC. Valenzuela has the potential to be the pioneer model of a community of practice, where the local city government, supported by NGOs, multi-sectoral committees and the academe, collaborates to pilot evidence-based programmes, document best practices and establish monitoring and evaluation systems anchored on the SDG indicators. The Philippines' EBLS team has been key in this effort.

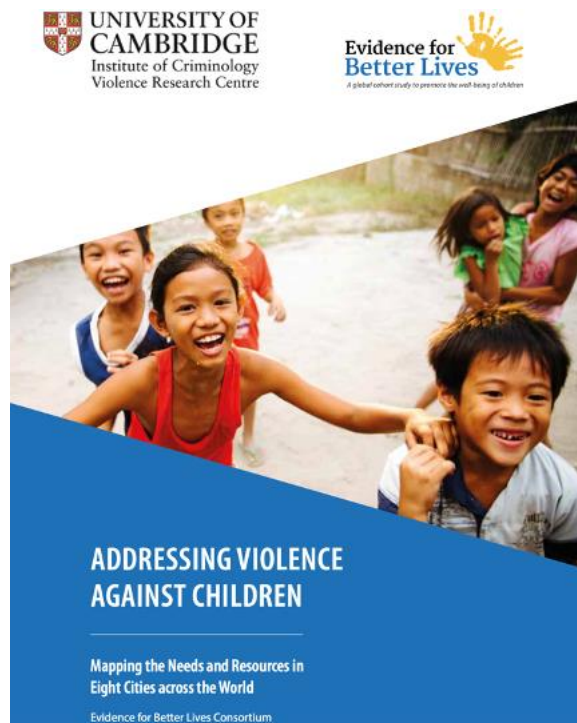
As part of the Pathfinding initiative and in line with the recommendations of the **EBLS Needs and Resources Assessment**, Valenzuela City has organised the Pathfinding Data & Evidence Group (PDG), composed of sectors and organisations involved in collecting, monitoring, and utilising data from children. The PDG shall help the local government and Pathfinding partners to manage, share and use data and evidence collected from the citywide prevention approach to inform policy decisions and enhance practice and responses to VAC. A Pathfinding City Council (PCC) was created to help the local government and its Pathfinding partners to achieve their aims of utilising research findings to improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people.

Methodology for mapping needs and resources

One of the key principles of EBLS is generating evidence in context. Based on that principle, the development of our Needs and Resources Assessment (NaRA) was planned as a process for assembling information to describe the local community’s needs and provisions related to child healthy development and the prevention of violence.

The local expert input in NaRA was based on a desk review and 56 interviews with city stakeholders. The results summarise, for each city, the strengths and resources, key challenges and gaps, and policy recommendations made by the experts.

Our approach offers a rapid and relatively low-cost qualitative method that has been adopted for the Global Partnership to End of Violence Against Children. It will help different countries around the world to create a baseline of a shared understanding of what is required to effectively implement different strategies and ensure that the end goal of reducing violence is feasible.



<https://www.end-violence.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/download/INSPIRE%20Mapping%20Fact%20Sheet%20april%202020.pdf>

The EBLS Stakeholders Summit was held in conjunction with the Ako Para sa Bata International Conference in Manila at the SMX Convention Center in the Philippines. The Ako Para sa Bata Conference is an annual convention organised by the Child Protection Network Foundation Inc., which provides individuals taking care of abused children and at-risk children with continuing medical and psychosocial care, child safety, and legal protection training opportunities. It is attended by almost 2,000 multidisciplinary professionals and stakeholders involved in women and child protection. The joint conference gathered the EBLS



researchers, senior policy representatives across the sites and international collaborators with the aim of strengthening the integration of EBLS into the INSPIRE and SGD agendas. The two-day event featured plenary lectures from the EBLS Consortium: an introduction to EBLS by Professor Manuel Eisner; Safe Environments by Mayor Rexlon T. Gatchalian (Valenzuela City, Philippines); the Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children by Dr. Bernadette Madrid (University of the Philippines Manila) and Reach Up, an early childhood intervention programme by Professor Susan Walker (The University of the West Indies in Jamaica). The EBLS Co-investigators also presented the results and recommendations based of the Needs and Resources Assessments (NaRA) done in each site. The EBLS delegates visited facilities showcasing the best practices and programmes in Valenzuela City, including the Child Protection Center, a safe haven providing free multi-disciplinary services for children needing special protection; 3S Centers, satellite city halls that serve as EBLS local data collection sites; Bahay Pag-Asa, an institution for children in conflict with the law and Bahay Kalinga, a temporary shelter for street wanderers, founding children and those recovering from any form of abuse.

With the support of the Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation, a Researchers and Policymakers Dialogue was held on 20 November 2018 at the Conrad Manila. The policy representatives from each site gave their feedback to the results and recommendations of the NaRA reports and their perspectives on EBLS.

More details: <http://iccchr-hue.org.vn/rejected-by-urlscan?/m/vn/news/the-conference-of-para-sa-bota-in-manila-philippines?key=1379>



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Health

Stakeholders calls for more attention on pregnant women and children

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At the beginning of the project, the EBLS Consortium planned the development of local events that would i) introduce the study and plan the implementation, ii) disseminate the results of the study, iii) discuss the lessons learnt and iv) plan for the future (alliances with local authorities, hospitals, or any other stakeholders).

During the EBLS pilot, multiple meetings and local impact events have been held in the EBLS sites. In Romania, the Philippines and Sri Lanka some of the events have been suspended because of the COVID-19 emergency. We are currently planning to develop webinars to communicate the results of the pilot study in those sites.

IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Local dissemination events (cont.)

| Brief description of local events | Date |
|--|------------|
| Seminar: Gender-based violence. A challenge that transcends culture, class and continents (Ghana) | 28/11/2018 |
| Stakeholders' seminar: Ghana site impact programme. Participants: staff of the Social Welfare, mothers (who participated in the study), midwives, traditional leaders, religious leaders, NGOs, doctors, members of the media. | 12/03/2020 |
| Kick off meeting with People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue province. | 22/02/2018 |
| Workshop on implementation of EBLs in Hue city (Vietnam). This workshop introduced the research project and helped to discuss the plan to implement this study in eight wards located in Hue city. Participants: Department of Labor - Invalids and Social Affairs of Thua Thien Hue province; representatives of the People's Committee and ward health centers of Tay Loc, Phu Binh, Phuoc Vinh, Thuy Bieu, Huong Long, Phu Hoi ward, Phu Hiep and An Tay ward; EBLs research team in Hue. | 11/01/2019 |
| Impact event: The findings of EBLs in Hue city, Vietnam. Participants: Hue University of Medicine and Pharmacy Rector, Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, Thua Thien Hue Department of Health, Thua Thien Hue Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, Thua Thien Hue Provincial Women's Union, Hue City Health Center, Hue City Women's Union, Ward People's Committees of research wards including Tay Loc, Phu Binh, Phuoc Vinh, Thuy Bieu, Huong Long, Phu Hoi, Phu Hiep, An Tay, study ward Health Centers, Executive Committees of Ward Women's Union of study wards, Hue UMP and EBLs research team. | 13/11/2019 |
| Jamaica Policy impact event. The forum was held in collaboration with the Violence Prevention Alliance under the theme "Pathways to the Prevention of Violence: Examining the Evidence". Stakeholders in attendance included experts interviewed for the NaRa report, as well as representatives from government and non-governmental organisations. Results from the EBLs foundational study was shared to inform stakeholders of the work that has been done in the pilot phase of EBLs and to identify key components that should be included in the larger study. | 22/01/2020 |
| South Africa Policy impact meeting. Local government staff and policy makers, antenatal healthcare professionals and local stakeholders were invited to attend the policy impact meeting. The meeting focused on the findings of the NaRa report, the methods and results of the pilot study and challenges experienced during the project. | 20/02/2020 |
| 10th Annual Public Health Scientific Conference (Pakistan). EBLs was presented in the 10 th Annual Public Health Scientific Conference on 2 December 2019 at the Health Services Academy, Islamabad, Pakistan. The background and role of EBLs were shared in the session along with the preliminary findings of the baseline and follow-up surveys. Light was shed on the Needs and Resources Assessment and its methodology; recommendations were also discussed with the audience. The session was attended by scholars, international researchers and students. | 12/02/2020 |
| EBLs Policy Impact Meeting (Pakistan). The complete background of EBLs, its sites and consortium were presented during this meeting. Stakeholders from public and private sectors were invited as participants to share their expertise on child development and violence against women. They gave their input/recommendations on EBLs and its future main study. Participants included were government officials from the Federal Ministry of National Health Services, Ministry of Human Rights - Pakistan, child rights activists, representatives from UNICEF, WHO and registered NGOs working for child rights. A high amount of interest for EBLs was shown by donors and the representatives from all organisations as EBLs moves forward. | 17/02/2020 |

IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Scientific publications

The production of scientific publications is essential for the dissemination of findings among academic communities and external stakeholders. In the context of EBLIS, we have produced systematic reviews of literature, a protocol paper explaining the characteristics of our multi-country study, as well as empirical papers based on the EBLIS findings. To organise the scientific production, the Publications Committee, a sub-committee of EBLIS investigators, has taken responsibility for managing applications for publication and associated data access requests. Country partners have had preferential access to their own country data and have been encouraged to take the lead on their country-specific papers. This does not exclude cross-country partners working with data from a single country or country partners working with cross-country data.

Local Scientific Publications

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Depression and its associated factors among pregnant women in central Vietnam. Bao-Yen Luong-Thanh, Lan Hoang Nguyen, Linda Murray, Manuel Eisner, Sara Valdebenito, Tuyen Dinh Hoang, Huyen Phuc Do, Thang Van Vo. | Submitted |
| Psychometric properties of PHQ-9, PSS and WHO-5 for screening suicide risk and antenatal depression: Findings from a birth cohort study in Vietnam. Huyen Phuc Do, Philip RA Baker ¹ , Thang Van Vo, Bao-Yen Luong-Thanh, Lan Hoang Nguyen, Dinh Tuyen Hoang, Sara Valdebenito, Manuel Eisner, Bach Xuan Tran, Michael P. Dunne. | In progress |
| Effect of Intimate Partner Violence during pregnancy on Maternal Mental Health: A cohort study in central Vietnam. Thi Anh Thu Dang, Vo Van Thang, Michael P. Dunne, Manuel Eisner, Luong Thanh Bao Yen, Hoang Dinh Tuyen, Nguyen Hoang Lan. | In progress |
| Applying the WHO INSPIRE framework to ending violence against pregnant women and unborn children: A case study in Vietnam. Huyen Phuc Do, Michael P. Dunne, Lan Hoang Nguyen, Bao Yen Luong Thanh, Dinh Tuyen Hoang, Sara Valdebenito, Philip RA Baker. Bach Xuan Tran, Manuel Eisner, Thang Van Vo. | In progress |
| Stock Taking: Needs and Resources Assessment for Violence Against Children in Pakistan. Yasmeen Anwer, Fahad Abassi, Siham Sikander, Assad Haffez. | Submitted |
| Feasibility of a Birth Cohort in Pakistan: Evidence for Better Lives Study. Fahad Abassi, Yasmeen Anwer, Siham Sikander, Assad Haffez. | In progress |
| Attitude towards physical punishment among pregnant women in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Patricia Akweongo, Bismark Sarfo, Joseph Osafo. | In progress |
| Applying the WHO INSPIRE framework to ending violence against pregnant women and unborn children: A case study in Vietnam. Huyen Phuc Do, Michael P. Dunne, Thang Van Voc, Lan Hoang Nguyen, Bao Yen Luong Thanh, Dinh Tuyen Hoang, Sara Valdebenito, Philip RA Baker, Bach Xuan Tran, Manuel Eisner. | In progress |
| Paternal involvement in maternal and child well-being in Sri Lanka. Asvini Fernando, A. Pathmeswaran, Shobhavi Randeny, Deshani Chathurika. | In progress |
| Potential Mediators of Prenatal Inter-Partner Violence in Vietnam: A path analysis of birth cohort study. Huyen Phuc Do, Thang Van Vo, Philip RA Baker, Sara Valdebenito, Manuel Eisner, Bach Xuan Tran, Michael P. Dunne. | In progress |

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| <p>The Intergenerational Effects of Intimate Partner Violence in Pregnancy: Mediating Pathways and Implications for Prevention. Aja L. Murray, Daniela Kaiser, Sara Valdebenito, Claire Hughes, Adriana Baban, Asvini D. Fernando, Bernadette Madrid, Catherine L. Ward, Joseph Osafo, Michael Dunne, Siham Sikander, Susan Walker, Vo Van Thang, Mark Tomlinson, Manuel Eisner. (2018) Trauma violence abuse, 2018;1524838018813563. doi:10.1177/1524838018813563</p> | <p>Published (Free Access)</p> |
| <p>Addressing Violence against Children: Mapping the Needs and Resources in Eight Cities across the World. Cambridge: Institute of Criminology. Evidence for Better Lives Consortium, November 2019 https://www.vrc.crim.cam.ac.uk/files/nara_report_low_res_for_internet_use.pdf</p> | <p>Published</p> |
| <p>Evidence for Better Lives Study: A comparative birth-cohort study on child exposure to violence and other adversities in eight low- and middle-income countries – Foundational Research. Sara Valdebenito, Aja L. Murray, Claire Hughes, Adriana Baban, Asvini D. Fernando, Bernadette Madrid, Catherine L. Ward, Joseph Osafo, Michael P. Dunne, Siham Sikander, Susan Walker, Vo Van Thang, Mark Tomlinson, Pasco Fearon, Yulia Shenderovich, Marguerite Marlow, Deshanie Chathurika, Diana Taut, Manuel Eisner. Submitted BMJ Open, April 2020</p> | <p>Submitted, under revision</p> |
| <p>What Research Questions Should the Next Generation of Birth Cohort Studies Address? An International Delphi Study of Experts. Ruth Harriet Brown, Manuel Eisner, Sara Valdebenito, Susan Walker, Mark Tomlinson, Claire Hughes, Catherine L. Ward, Joseph Osafo, Siham Sikander, Pasco Fearon, Michael P. Dunne, Bernadette Madrid, Adriana Baban, Vo Van Thang, Asvini D. Fernando, Aja L Murray. <i>Acad Pediatr.</i> 2020;S1876-2859(20)30131-5. doi:10.1016/j.acap.2020.03.011</p> | <p>Published</p> |
| <p>Do maternal adverse childhood experiences have a positive effect on foetal attachment? Preliminary evidence from expectant mothers across eight low-middle income countries. Ruth Harriet Brown, Manuel Eisner, Sara Valdebenito, Susan Walker, Mark Tomlinson, Claire Hughes, Catherine L. Ward, Joseph Osafo, Siham Sikander, Pasco Fearon, Michael P. Dunne, Bernadette Madrid, Adriana Baban, Vo Van Thang, Asvini D. Fernando, Aja L. Murray.</p> | <p>Under internal revision</p> |
| <p>The relationship between exposure of parents to early adverse childhood experiences and their later parenting stress and attitudes to corporal punishment. Sara Valdebenito, Carene Lindsay, Shobavi Randeny, Deshanie Chathurika, the EBLs Consortium.</p> | <p>In progress</p> |
| <p>Prenatal Attachment in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: An Assessment of Measurement Invariance. Claire Hughes, the EBLs consortium.</p> | <p>In progress</p> |
| <p>Intimate Partner Violence in Pregnancy: An Assessment of Measurement Invariance Across Cultures and Birth Parity Claire Hughes, the EBLs consortium.</p> | <p>In progress</p> |
| <p>Do systemic inflammation and HPA axis activation mediate the effects of P-IPV on childbirth outcomes? Aja L Murray, the EBLs consortium.</p> | <p>Planned</p> |
| <p>Do systemic inflammation and HPA axis activation mediate P-IPV and post-natal mental illness relations? Aja L Murray, the EBLs consortium.</p> | <p>Planned</p> |
| <p>What are the protective factors that moderate the relation between P-IPV and biomarkers of inflammation and stress? Aja L Murray, the EBLs consortium.</p> | <p>Planned</p> |

IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Building capacity in the EBLs sites

EBLS has a long-term vision to support synchronised birth cohort studies over many years. Central to the success of our work will be the task of fostering a new generation of researchers to carry the work forward and ensure sustainable impact. The **EBLS Early Career Network** connects a diverse group of people in the early stages of their careers. It includes research staff, postdoctoral fellows, PhD and postgraduate Students and early-career professional collaborators in each site. At present, 35 fieldworkers have received training, 21 early-career researchers have been involved in data collection, analysis and writing and 7 have used EBLs data for their own research projects.

More information: <https://www.vrc.crim.cam.ac.uk/system/files/documents/ebls-research-network18.pdf>



2. Vietnam



Do Phuc Haven, MPH, MPH, graduated as Master of Public Health at QUT in 2012 and is currently a PhD student at QUT. She worked in public health research and advocacy roles for the past seven years in Hanoi, Vietnam. She has visited the ICHR and her main data collection will be in the Hue's EBLs site. Email: phucaven@gmail.com



Dr Luong Thanh Bao Yen, MD, MPH is a medical doctor and gained a Master of Public Health at Khon Kaen University in Thailand. She is a Lecturer in biostatistics and a researcher at the Institute for Community Health Research in Hue. Yen is assisting with organising the Hue group's EBLs meetings and she will be responsible for coordinating data collection in Hue. Email: thayen@huamc.edu.vn

3. Pakistan



Dr Fahad Abbasi is a medical doctor and emerging public health professional. He completed his Master's degree in Public Health from the Health Services Academy, Islamabad. Dr Abbasi has been an intern at the Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination, and worked under its Prime Minister's National Health Program. He has been involved in various scientific annual conferences so organising team member. He has worked in the media industry, including radio and television for over a decade, promoting and disseminating information on social and health issues. His area of research includes ECD, maternal and child health. Email: afahadabbasi@gmail.com



Dr Kiran Saqib is a medical doctor with a Master's degree in Public Health. Over her career, she has provided Health Services in rural and urban settings in Pakistan. She was a member of a pioneer team at the Department of Public Health at Aishya Trust Eye Hospital and has been actively involved in teaching and research activities. She has worked as Project Coordinator on RCT, focusing on Perinatal Depression, based in rural settings, funded by NIH, USA. Her areas of research includes women's and child's mental health. Email: saqib.kiran@gmail.com

IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Audio visuals

With the support of the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account fund, we developed two promotional videos that describe the aims and potential impact of EBLIS. We use images and data representative from the eight sites involved in EBLIS. In line with our current ethical rules, we have made sure that data involved in the promotional videos comply with local and international regulations, for instance, data protection laws (GDPR), intellectual property and copyright regulations. Interviewees were asked to sign informed consents after reading an information sheet specifying the use of the interviews, pictures or any other information included in the videos.

The first video gives an overview of the project and its links to the global violence prevention agenda, while the second is aimed at policy makers and institutional audiences. Contents have been translated into local languages whenever possible.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tOrggr_pXg&feature=emb_logo



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woWLc4Bcspw&feature=emb_logo

IN SUMMARY

After 18 months, Evidence for Better Lives has developed a valuable set of impact activities which have achieved the following:

- Contribute knowledge toward the promotion of Valenzuela as a Pathfinder city in the prevention of violence. As such, Valenzuela has the potential to be a pioneer model where the local city government and stakeholders collaborate to pilot evidence-based programmes, document best practices and establish monitoring and evaluation systems anchored in the SDG indicators.
- Develop a rapid and relatively low-cost qualitative method that helps different countries around the world create a baseline of a shared understanding of what is required to effectively and feasibly implement different strategies of reducing violence.
- Develop 10 international and local events that have allowed the Consortium to establish virtuous collaborations with the civil society, local community and international stakeholders.
- Develop 21 scientific publications, 3 of which are already published, with 3 under revision and 15 in progress.
- Establish an Early Career Network that will help to ensure the long-term impact of EBLS.
- Overall, 35 fieldworkers have received training, 21 early-career researchers have been involved in data collection, analysis and writing, and 7 have used EBLS data for their own research projects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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