SOCIAL NORMS AND GIRLS' WELL-BEING

Linking Theory and Practice

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SUMMARY

Girls around the world strive to realize their aspirations in the face of discrimination, lack of educational opportunity and access to health services, and the threat of violence. Recent scholarship and advocacy has highlighted a particularly powerful and long understudied force shaping girls' well-being: social norms—rules of behavior rooted in culture. Focusing on social norms expands the typical conversation around social change, placing human relationships within communities at the center of the narrative. A complex range of emotions—love, amity, respect, distrust, fear—demand analytical attention alongside the more commonly studied motivations of economic interest and political power. Norms both engender these emotions and are changed by, or persist because of, them.

The state of social norms theory and practice is strong. There is an emerging consensus on how to describe the phenomena central to social norms: group identity, expectations about typical and appropriate behavior, economic constraints, and personal capacities. Governments and civil society practitioners across the globe strive to implement policies and projects to change norms

and catalyze improvements in girls' lives. The linkage of theory and practice is, however, still in its nascent stages.

Exploring these connections is the primary objective of this report. We first review the landscape of theory around social norms ("Theory"). We then investigate in detail two projects that have facilitated change around norms and practices of female genital cutting (FGC) and child marriage: Tostan's Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in West Africa and Population Council's *Abriendo Oportunidades* ("Opening Opportunities"; AO) project in Latin America ("Practice"). We conclude by discussing the implications of both theory and practice for the future of social norms change ("The Way Forward").

Our study suggests that improving girls' well-being requires providing information about the consequences of harmful norms while creating safe spaces for community members to together question existing norms, expand personal capacities and aspirations, and reimagine existing relationships. Successful projects do not only work with girls, but also include boys, women, and men in their families and the community at large. Interventions that fail to include the entire social network might increase girls' capacity to resist social expectations, but would not achieve durable change in those social expectations—possibly increasing, rather than reducing, harm and violence. Successful interventions have an integrated approach; that is, they address the factors other than social norms that result in gender inequality, including the economic and legal circumstances that contribute to sustaining harmful practices and behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

Girls around the world strive to realize their aspirations in the face of discrimination, lack of educational opportunity and access to health services, and the threat of violence. Overcoming these obstacles is not just a question of good public policy and prosperous markets, but also depends on understanding the role of culture. Social norms—behavioral rules arising from beliefs about typical and appropriate ways of acting—influence the decisions we make, and by doing so either foreclose possibilities or open roads to a healthier, more prosperous life.[1] Any rigorous approach to bettering the welfare of girls must thus analyze norms.

The good news is that the state of both theory and practice is promising. Social psychologists, economists, anthropologists, legal scholars, and political scientists have developed elegant and convincing theories about how norms are created, why they persist, and what drives change. Many governments and civil society organizations across the globe operate projects that seek to change norms to catalyze improvements in girls' lives. There is, however, much work to be done. In too many places, norms continue to promote harmful traditional practices, damage health, and limit the autonomy of girls.

Strengthening the linkage between theory and practice is the primary goal of this report. We believe that more communication between social norms theoreticians, practitioners, and communities is the key to accelerating norms change in ways that improve the lives of girls. In the first section, "Theory," we review the rich existing body of social norms theory. In the second section, "Practice," we analyze in depth two particularly impressive instances of norms change, the first dealing with female genital cutting (FGC) and the second with child marriage. In the third section, "The Way Forward," we discuss what the deductive insights of theory and the inductive lessons of the case studies, considered together, tell us about how to approach the future study and practice of norms change.

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THEORY

Nearly every social scientific discipline, including economics, political science, sociology, and law, contains a body of social norms theory (see Appendix A for a review of the relevant literature across fields). The ideas within and across disciplines are diverse, but most descriptions of social norms agree that:

1) norms influence behavior by shaping what people believe is typical or appropriate;
2) norms are meaningful in the context of group identity; and
3) whether an individual complies with a norm depends on his/her personal capacities, the strength of the norm, the types of reward and punishment at play, and economic circumstances.

Fundamentally, social norms arise from expectations about what other people *do* (that is, what is "typical" behavior) and what one *should do* ("appropriate" behavior).[2] The distinction is important. We may consider a behavior typical but not appropriate; we are outraged but unsurprised by news of dishonest politicians, for instance. Conversely, some behaviors can be appropriate but not typical, as in the stories of people who put their lives at risk to help others. Focusing on both kinds of expectations is important. For example, projects trying to end child marriage provide information to families about the health benefits of delaying pregnancy. Such a strategy may, however, have little impact if perceptions of when other girls *are* getting married (what is typical) or when other community members feel a girl *should* get married (what is appropriate) remain unchanged. The sequencing matters as well. For old norms to fade, usually beliefs about what is typical behavior must shift before judgments around appropriateness do. When new norms arise, the order is reversed: ideas about

moral appropriateness generally change before notions about what is typical.[3]

Different groups, defined by nationality, ethnicity, religion, or other cultural markers, hold different norms. When one believes that a group's expectations are legitimate—or, even if illegitimate, believes that violating norms will result in social punishment, and following them will bring social rewards—behavior conforms to these expectations.[4] Highlighting group identity leads to difficult, important questions. Which forces—economic, political, familial—reinforce the sense that group beliefs are legitimate, and which forces weaken that assurance? If violating a norm leads to benefits for girls—for example, foregoing early marriage to attend school—can they resist in a manner that minimizes punishment, or can they forgo membership in the group altogether? How many and which individuals of a group must challenge beliefs about what is typical and appropriate before group norms change?

For a variety of reasons, individuals behave differently even when faced with similar group expectations, punishments, and rewards.[5] Economic circumstances clearly influence how people respond to norms. For example, the choice between early marriage and attending school depends in part on whether educated girls will be able to find jobs after graduation.[6] Less well-studied, but extremely important, is the role of personal capacities: the reservoirs of knowledge and self-confidence that help people negotiate adverse circumstances.[7] Most successful projects invest significant resources in encouraging girls to critically examine what they believe about their own abilities, not least their ability to creatively resist norms with which they do not agree.

We do not yet know exactly why social norms persist or fade, or how new norms arise—critical information if we are to design projects that

hasten the process of change and build new norms. The classical hypothesis is that norms coordinate expectations about other people's actions; they help society function more smoothly by creating a sense of predictability and order. Collective behavior—political organization, secure markets, management of common pool natural resources, and many other phenomena—would be impossible without a way to focus expectations.[8] A great

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deal of what the human species has achieved is due to our almost unique success at cooperation.

But we know that social norms, some of which have survived for centuries, can also be tremendously harmful.[9] This leads to one of the central

puzzles in the scientific study of social change: if rules are mechanisms to improve the working of society, why are they not discarded when they begin to harm individuals? Broadly, there are two ways to answer the question: the "power" and "history" explanations.

The power explanation suggests that some people in groups do in fact benefit from norms that harm others. Norms of polygamy, for example, allow some men to increase the size of their household. Those harmed by these practices may even find it in their self-interest to follow the norm because the punishment and reward power of those who benefit is great. One might intuit that, given the information one has, the personal suffering likely to result from challenging the norm—or the suffering of people that one cares about—is not worth the possible benefits of successful resistance.

The history explanation, meanwhile, argues that some norms might indeed have outlived their original function, but survive because of social inertia: a process to destroy and replace the harmful norms has not been catalyzed.[10] For example, female genital cutting may have arisen in polygynous societies as a means for men to assure paternity by preventing wives from seeking sexual relationships with others. Even where polygyny is no longer the norm, FGC continues to be practiced because of the persistent social value given to circumcised women in the marriage market; the FGC norm is stuck in an obsolete "equilibrium" state. Social expectations change only when a critical mass of individuals within a group make public changes in their beliefs and behaviors, thus disrupting the existing equilibrium and establishing a new one.[11] Empirical research on FGC in Sierra Leone and Senegal/Gambia generally confirms these hypotheses, as does our case study work on the same topic in the following section.[12]

The challenge for both research and practice, then, is to distinguish between norms that persist because they confer benefits to some members of a group (and those who are harmed cannot effectively resist), and norms that—given a coordinated change in expectations—could be altered without reducing net benefits to anyone in the group.[13] Changing the former type of norm may require a conscious effort to redistribute power, while change in the latter type may only require providing information and a forum to discuss mutual expectations.

Another set of important questions deals with the stability of norms. If a norm is relatively stable, then the coordinated action of many individuals in a group is necessary for the norm to change. Many projects, including the two that we discuss in the case studies of the "Practice" section, operate on this assumption, designing projects that bring groups together for intensive training and deliberation sessions with the goal of simultaneously changing the expectations of many people. The norm is changed by first questioning, and often redefining, what the community considers typical and appropriate; revised expectations alter the perceived costs and benefits of behaviors, and behavior then changes to reflect these redefinitions. Such a deliberative, coordinated process is especially impactful in situations wherein history-based norms are functioning. In power-based situations, however, strong actors may not have adequate incentive to change their own expectations, and may instead actively resist change. In situations like these, even a few powerful actors can undermine projects. In this case, the project must directly engage power-holders, as we note in the Tostan study further below.

The behavioral choices made in any given interaction reflect the norms at play–the beliefs that individuals hold of what is typical and appropriate. Yet norms are also constantly being assessed

and revised through interactions.[14] Each interaction has the potential to change, usually subtly but sometimes more profoundly, these beliefs; that is, individuals update their understanding of the norm, and of the costs and benefits of following or resisting the norm, through each meeting. Mapping networks of information exchange in a group can thus help understand why norms change by describing the strength of relationships, identifying who has the most influence, and tracking how changes in beliefs diffuse through the group.[15]

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PRACTICE

The projects most successful at changing social norms and improving girls' well-being are those that have, either through conscious design or experiential adaptation, applied the lessons of theory. In addition to providing information about the consequences of harmful norms for girls, these projects create safe spaces for community members to create new groups or reimagine existing relationships, question assumptions about what is typical and appropriate behavior, and engage in reflection about personal capacities and aspirations. They include not only girls but also family members and others members of the community in deliberations about the costs and benefits of following or contravening norms. They lead conversations about the historical justification for norms and the inequalities that prevent the full realization of girls' potential. In some cases, they work to address the economic circumstances that constrain choice.

In the pages that follow, we look at change in two socially sanctioned practices harmful to girls: female genital cutting (FGC) and child marriage. Despite the widespread existence of international and national laws prohibiting FGC, over 200 million women and girls alive today, across sub-Saharan Africa and in parts of Asia, the Middle East, and South America, have been subjected to the practice.[16] The age at which FGC is performed can vary from birth to mid-adolescence, though generally the rite occurs in early childhood, around age five. Cultural justifications for the practice range widely; most frequently mentioned are control over female sexuality (that is, the promotion of chastity and fidelity), norms around marriage and inheritance requirements, rites of passage into womanhood, incorrect beliefs about hygiene, and religious edicts.

International law defines child marriage as a union involving at least one person below the age of 18.[17] An estimated 15 million girls worldwide are married as children, most between the ages of 12 and 17. Extensive evidence notes the distressing consequences of child marriage, including increased morbidity and mortality,[18] school truancy and dropouts,[19] and intimate partner violence.[20] Knowledge about the design of interventions to mitigate these effects is improving,[21] but major research gaps remain,[22] including about what works to change prevailing norms so completely that child marriage is eliminated altogether.

In this section, we detail two projects that have successfully, and measurably, improved girls' well-being by changing norms around FGC and early marriage: Tostan's Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in sub-Saharan Africa and Population Council's *Abriendo Oportunidades* ("Opening Opportunities;" AO) project in Latin America. Tostan is a non-governmental

organization (NGO) focused on non-formal education that has been working in remote rural villages of West Africa for several decades. Population Council is an international NGO concentrating on projects around family planning, HIV prevention, and girls' empowerment and education; the AO program helps Mayan girls make healthy transitions into adulthood. Appendix B briefly describes other highly noteworthy programs that challenge social norms to improve girls' well-being, gleaned from a literature review and key informant interviews. For example, CARE has used social norms theory to develop measurement tools and project approaches to end intimate partner violence and mitigate the effects of child marriage in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Sri Lanka. The SASA! program of Raising Voices in Uganda is also a well-known community approach to ending violence against women and reducing HIV/AIDS by changing social norms.

The case study of Tostan's CEP is based largely on recent research, including 270 semi-structured interviews, six focus group discussions, and analysis of 24 taped classroom sessions, conducted over the last five years in three rural Senegalese communities.[23] The case study of Population Council's AO—the only intervention that, to our knowledge, addresses child marriage in Latin America—draws on fieldwork conducted specifically for this report in rural communities outside of Chisec, a small city in Guatemala. In addition to interviews with child marriage experts, the fieldwork consisted of conversations with 58 women and girls in three focus groups (female mentors, adolescent girls who participated in AO, and adolescent girls who had not participated in AO), as well as 28 individual interviews with adolescent girls, male and female family members, and local leaders. Because the two projects differ in important ways—Tostan's CEP is long-established and has a more explicit focus on social norms than does AO—we take a slightly different approach to presenting each case study. We focus on strategies used by the CEP to drive social norms change in Tostan communities, while exploring trends in child marriage in Chisec more broadly, focusing not only on the AO intervention but other important factors.

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Female genital cutting and child marriage in Senegal

Tostan's Community Education Program (CEP) is one of the most well-known examples of intervention-driven change in social norms anywhere in the world. The CEP does not solely target female genital cutting and child marriage; its objective is to support communities in achieving self-identified goals. Its effect on FGC and child marriage, though, is stunning: between 1997 and 2015, over 7,200 rural communities in Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, and Somalia publicly declared abandonment of FGC and child marriage following Tostan's implementation of the CEP. An evaluation conducted eight to ten years after these public declarations found that 77% of Tostan communities had indeed permanently ended the practice of FGC.[24] Overall, over one hundred thousand people across sub-Saharan Africa have participated in the CEP. The program has been cited as an exemplar by UN agencies, governments, and civil society organizations, not only in terms of eliminating FGC, but also with respect to community development more generally, including reducing child marriage and promoting women's empowerment and health. Evaluations indicate improved conflict resolution within families and communities, increased participation of women in

local politics, growth in community-based civil society organizations, and better access to health services and credit.[25]

At the core of the CEP is a 30-month process of deliberation and dialogue. Social norms are powerful because of their invisibility: they are part of the warp and weave of everyday behavior, questioned only in the breach and rarely noticed in observance, even when that observance results in physical and mental harm. The CEP seeks to bring empirical and normative expectations around issues like FGC into active awareness through "community sessions"—group meetings in which adolescents and adults of both sexes participate in exercises and games that draw heavily on local cultural knowledge, especially proverbs, songs, and dances.[26] The meetings, led largely by women graduates of past CEPs, focus on individual values and social norms as they relate to shared visions of health, well-being, and peace. This forum for open, non-threatening discourse has had a profound effect on motivating the revision of harmful practices like FGC and child marriage.

In recent years, following the recommendation of community members and Tostan's own pedagogical experts, the CEP has come to be centered around local notions of human rights, especially the right to be free from all forms of discrimination.[27] The idea of equality as the core human right proves critical in catalyzing change, for two reasons. First, women and girls who had not formerly participated in decisions about harmful practices begin to assert their right to equal voice. Second, ending discrimination implies equality of opportunity for girls, including the right to be free from FGC and child marriage. In sum, human rights dialogue destabilizes norms that exist to benefit those who wield power in the community.

These discussions of human rights are presented critically using concepts already present in daily language and experience. Participants are invited to question the compatibility of specific rights with their values and aspirations. Importantly, this critical analysis is done in the context of group conversation, not simply individual reflection, about life in the village. Ideally, conversation leads to the identification of aspirations common to all participants, as well as the strategies necessary to attain these goals. In the villages studied in this research, CEP participants linked traditional gender norms to the objectives of peace and security: though prevailing expectations restrict the freedom of girls and women, they are also thought to reduce conflict. As the CEP sessions continued, community members developed new means of conflict resolution that served to

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ensure peace and security without compromising gender equality. Importantly, men and boys are also included in these conversations; the work of not only Tostan, but also Promundo, Sonke, Raising Voices, and other organizations have shown that changing gender norms demands genuine engagement with men and boys.[28]

Tostan refined the CEP process over the years to meet expressed local needs. The community sessions are split into two phases. The first year-long phase is called Kobi, a Mandinka word meaning "to prepare the field for planting." Kobi introduces participants to rights and responsibilities, democratic norms, and problem solving techniques, as well as transmitting more technical knowledge about hygiene and health. Skits are critical pedagogical tools in these sessions, especially to illustrate situations in which human rights were violated or protected. Participants are usually familiar with these situations—for example, a family decision-making process about FGC or a daughter's marriage—but the group sessions offer an opportunity to deliberate upon the causes and consequences of decisions. The second phase of the group sessions is called Aawde, a Fulani word meaning "to plant the seed." Aawde deepens the curriculum by discussing community project management, especially regarding economic initiatives, and also provides individuals with literacy and numeracy instruction. Thus, in both phases, the conversations about social norms and rights occur in concert with the easing of economic constraints and the gaining of individual capacities.

"I was surprised to see a performance [in the community session] about someone marrying a young girl. The father agreed to the marriage but the mother did not. There was lots of arguing but people got together and they talked about it until they came to an understanding…"

—Male participant, CEP[29]

The group sessions are complemented by other activities, the most important of which are the formation of community management committees (CMCs) and an organized process of knowledge diffusion. CMCs, comprised of 17 elected members, of whom at least nine are women, are responsible for transforming the participants' vision for the community's future into an actionable project. CMCs have managed voter registration drives, organized village clean-ups, lobbied policymakers for community priorities, worked with health systems on vaccination campaigns, and led a host of other projects. Tostan also helps CMCs obtain funding for more capital-intensive activities, including micro-enterprises such as grain mills and communal gardens, as well as public works projects like school and latrine construction. Diffusion of the knowledge gained in the group meetings starts by facilitators requiring each participant to share their learnings with one "adopted learner," usually a family member or friend. Tostan also helps organize additional meetings, marches and campaigns, and radio programs around human rights topics in the community and neighboring villages.

This research found that the success of the CEP is based on three key features.[30] The first is an affirmation of the importance of focusing interventions on social networks, not simply individuals or families. Any change in personal values, no matter how genuine or profound, will struggle to be sustained in the face of constant social pressure; particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, these networks extend well beyond the borders of a

village to include kin in other communities, religious leaders, and other influential individuals.[31] Theorists have suggested that certain types of networks, including human relationship networks, are particularly resistant to change from external pressure due to "redundant wiring;"[32] though a single individual may rebel, many other interactions in the social network constantly reinforce the norm. A norm thus will not collapse unless a critical number of individuals change their beliefs in a coordinated and publicly visible manner. This is exactly what the CEP community sessions and public declarations offer: a visible process through which individuals can commit to a coordinated change in expectations around FGC, child marriage, and the prevention of gender-based violence.

"If ten people dig and ten others fill in, there's lots of dust but no hole."

—Local proverb referenced in a group conversation about collaborative action

The second lesson gleaned through Tostan's work is that ending harmful practices might require creation, not just abandonment, of norms.[33] For example, CEP participants may conclude that girls have the right to a life as filled with opportunity as the lives of their brothers. To make this right a reality, community members must encourage girls to continue studying. The norm that "girls should go to school" begins to be adopted, and directly challenges the existing norm of early marriage. Similarly, as health becomes viewed as a human right, an analogous process undermines FGC. The newly adopted norms slowly become perceived as what people typically do and eventually as morally appropriate.

Finally, Tostan's work teaches us about the link between social norms, beliefs about personal capacities, and individual aspirations. The values and expectations of others mold what girls believe they deserve and can expect to achieve in their lives. The community meetings offer girls an opportunity to question the source of existing aspirations and imagine new ones. Rehearsing and enacting new roles—learner, teacher, organizer of collective action, public speaker—exposes the habitual, unquestioned nature of traditional roles, and can change a girl's understanding of herself. She may learn to think and act more autonomously, see herself doing so, and—crucially—be seen by others doing so. Individual goals are eventually linked to the collective aspirations of social networks and communities, and this connection catalyzes changes in social norms.[34]

Tostan's successes were not originally informed by social norms theory; program design evolved over the years in response to priorities expressed by communities. The flexibility of this inductive approach, though it complicates the process of replication, is important; local cultural nuances can make or break development interventions, and Tostan's way of working demands careful attention to these particularities. In addition, the careful focus on context notwithstanding, the CEP has been a rich source of knowledge for theorists seeking to understand the dynamics of social norms, especially as they relate to networks of relationships and individual aspirations.[35]

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Child marriage in Guatemala

Our second in-depth study of social norms change focuses on the declining trend of child marriage in Guatemala, and specifically the impact of Population Council's Abriendo Oportunidades (AO) program in the context of important legislative and political changes. Latin America is the only region in the world where child marriage is not declining, and Guatemala has particularly high rates of girls married between the ages of 15 and 18,[36] especially among indigenous populations.[37] Adolescent pregnancies account for 35% of all births in Guatemala, and three-fifths of these adolescent mothers are indigenous.[38]

AO was launched in 2004 with the overall objective of supporting Mayan girls' successful transition to adulthood, including the delaying of marriage. The core of the program is a series of workshops on leadership, professional skills, public speaking, gender relations, sexual and reproductive health, violence prevention, and other topics to promote girls' empowerment, all conducted in safe spaces established by the program.[39] Training of female mentors (mentoras) to lead these sessions is a crucial part of project design. AO began in Guatemala and has since expanded to Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

This case study focuses on the rural communities around Chisec, a municipality of about 69,000 people in the department of Alta Verapaz in

Guatemala. The AO program was implemented officially in Chisec from 2013-2015; since then, mentoras in Chisec have continued to carry out activities on a voluntary basis. We focus in this research on the decline of child marriage practices in Chisec in the last few years, especially in the context of local residents' descriptions of longer-term trends. The agency of girls within marriage decisions—an understudied topic[40]—emerged as the most critical theme in our work. Although some marriages are indeed the result of familial or community pressure, in many other cases girls are not passive actors in the face of strong social norms, but rather make decisions about resistance and conformity that then influence the nature and pace of cultural change. Understanding the incentives and constraints to girls resisting marriage is thus central in analyzing the role of interventions like AO and other factors in influencing norms.

This case study contains two main messages about social norms change and girls' well-being. First, although child marriage has indeed declined in Chisec in the last half-decade—a trend confirmed by both Population Council data and local government records—the picture with respect to the multiple social norms that encourage child marriage is more complex. Some norms have changed significantly, others have relaxed somewhat, and others remain strongly entrenched. Second, understanding how social norms are changing requires analysis not only of AO, but also of actors and processes at various other levels: girls themselves, families, communities, and municipal and national governments. In some cases, these processes were closely linked; for example, the mayor

"Having already had sexual relations [with a boyfriend]…would be an embarrassment for the parents of the girl… The family is obligated to accept the boy to not sully the image of the family."

—Uncle of a married girl

publicly stated his personal support for ending child marriage, and was then held accountable by the strong advocacy of the AO program mentors. The impact of interventions thus depends on a design process that determines which norms will be most critical in catalyzing change within a specific context and also considers the network of interactions—familial, social, governmental—that influence individual behavior.

Two kinds of expectations have clearly changed in recent years in Chisec: beliefs about the "normal" time for girls to marry and the appropriateness of girls' involvement in the decision-making process. Focus group discussions and interviews affirmed that many different groups now consider marriage above age 18 as typical and appropriate behavior, a dramatic change from the previous generation.[41] The case study shows that marriage at a young age is becoming an exception and not a rule. In addition, until recent years nearly all marriages were decided by the girl's family accepting or refusing a proposal from the male suitor's family without any input from the girl (and sometimes without input from the suitor). Some marriages still take place with a formal proposal, but girls are now much more likely to express their views at some point during the proposal process. In other cases—especially when parents refuse to give permission for a marriage that a girl desires or in situations of premarital pregnancy—girls make their own choice by running away to enter informal unions.

Other norms are changing more slowly, for example the ability of girls (and others) to have conversations about relationships and sex.

Although such topics are still taboo, interviewees recalled several instances in which girls sought advice from parents, friends, and mentoras. As in the Tostan CEP, AO's workshops have served to open dialogue around such topics, leading to a questioning of the expectations that ultimately lead to child marriage. Our fieldwork also suggests, however, that empowered discourse is a necessary but not sufficient condition to end child marriage; other, even more powerful social norms, especially those that prohibit premarital sex and pregnancy, can hold sway. For example, the parents of one girl in Chisec initially agreed that she should work instead of marrying at a young age. When she became pregnant by her boyfriend, however, she was pushed to enter a union.

Another norm that is shifting, but not without resistance, relates to girls' education. Both girls and parent interviewees see marriage as an obstacle to girls progressing beyond elementary school, and education for girls seems to be increasingly valued. However, many men and family members still prefer their wives to prioritize the traditional role of caregiver and wife over the pursuit of personal aspirations, including education. Allowing wives to continue to study (or work) outside the home is also seen as risking infidelity, or at least risking the perception of infidelity by other men.

Other norms appear to be firmly entrenched. For example, having a boyfriend has rigid implications of commitment, marriage, and pregnancy. Girls' sexuality and mobility is constrained by social perceptions: the fear of promiscuity and pregnancy leads to restrictions around appearing in public spaces. In addition, even when marriage is delayed until adulthood, wives often have little decision-making power in the household, as mentioned above with regards to education and work outside the home. Many of the interviewees commented on the disillusionment that girls often feel in married life. Divorce also remains unacceptable, not only to family members but to girls themselves; girls and women thus have little choice except to bear whatever comes with their marriage, be it disillusionment or even abuse.

In sum, we found that improvements in girls' well-being, even with respect to a single phenomenon like child marriage, are influenced by a range of interconnected social norms. The fieldwork highlighted the fact that progress in one set of beliefs, no matter how fundamental, does not necessarily imply resolution of the wider set of forces that constrain the freedom and endanger the health of girls.

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Social norm change is occurring at several intersecting levels in Chisec. Though girls are increasingly involved in decision-making around marriage, their choices must contend with the preferences of their families and community, governmental policies and legal norms, and educational and employment opportunities. Other recent research in the region has found similar

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issues around the constraints to girls' choices and agency.[42]

As in the Tostan case study, we found that girls' increased access to information—especially through open conversations with peers and mentoras who are young women several years older than participants—is the most powerful driver of change in their marriage preferences. The AO program provided the primary means for such dialogue to take place, and schools, health services, and other NGOs were also important sources of information. Our interviews and additional project evaluation data suggested that participation in AO led girls to expand their

perception of life pathways beyond marriage and motherhood.

Parents are the most influential individuals in a girl's social network, both because of the amount of time girls spend with their families and the considerable reward and punishment power parents can exercise. At their worst, punishments can be extremely severe: interviewees told us of physical abuse, forced work in the household and fields, death threats, and other forms of ill treatment that followed refusal to marry according to their parents' wishes. Parental behavior, however, is also usually motivated by a genuine desire to act in the best interests of the child. Parents and other family members interviewed in this study strongly asserted their wish to be involved in the marriage decision-making process, not only to retain control but also because they believed that doing so would allow them to help resolve potential problems that might arise later in the union.

Overall, our study found that girls experience better life outcomes when parents are involved in decision-making around marriage. Girls making choices independently tend to feel more isolated and consequently take greater risks; for example, as mentioned above, social sanctions against premarital sex and pregnancy are still strong enough to overpower the changes in expectations around child marriage. However, families are also increasingly finding novel means to challenge even the

most persistent social norms. Upon discovery of a premarital relationship, for example, one parent told of negotiating an alteration of the traditional proposal process that allowed both families to remain involved, thus saving face, but allowing the couple the freedom to make the final decision. We observe also that such creative solutions are driven strongly by parental fears that girls will do what they wish anyway, and failing to support the daughter in her decisions will result in the family being isolated from the girl's future life; that is, parents also fear sanctions enacted by their children. In this way, though girls' agency is not always accepted in all domains of behavior, it is increasingly expected. The facts on the ground about autonomous decision-making are changing, and social norms are not only dictating these facts—sometimes the facts force change in the norms.

At the community level, AO is the single most powerful factor promoting new norms to replace those that support early marriage. AO focuses on direct interaction with adolescent girls through the workshop model, providing spaces in which girls can examine choices and consequences with peers and mentors, but also prepares the ground for the program by gaining support from the larger community. AO mentoras first seek permission from local elected leaders to begin the program, and reaffirm this support regularly to sustain program activities. The mentoras have also been proactive in seeking signed and videotaped commitments from candidates for public office, including the current mayor, to end child marriage. Radio programs also help spread the word about AO's workshops.

"[They have learned] that nobody can force them to marry…and that they have rights and this can serve as their argument to say no."

—Community health worker

In the case of Chisec, AO's efforts to end child marriage were greatly facilitated by timely legislative and political changes. A new mayor supportive of girls' rights entered office during the project cycle and strongly voiced his opposition to child marriage while supporting the AO program with a small grant from municipal funds. A new national law raising the age of girls' marriage from 14 to 18 was passed in 2015, giving the mayor strong powers to legally enforce a ban on child marriage. Knowledge of the law has spread widely; most of the people we interviewed mentioned it without prompting. In addition, political representation of women at the community and municipal levels has increased since 2008, in part driven by mentoras' advocacy and engagement in community meetings as well as the establishment of an Office of Women's Affairs in the mayor's office.

Taken together, the case studies of CEP and AO yield several broad lessons. First, the most successful projects incorporate the core concepts of social norms theory, especially group identity, expectations about what is typical and appropriate, and personal capacities. A participatory design and careful pilot testing is necessary to ensure that these concepts are translated effectively into the local cultural context. Second, safe, inclusive spaces are needed to allow the kinds of deliberative discussions that lead to reimagining of norms. Well-facilitated group classes not only permit frank conversations about personal preferences and capacities, but also provide the opportunity for socialization and information exchange with peers, which can then generate new networks of identity and association. Third, local participants must envision experiences, rights, and needs

according to their own contexts, language, and meanings. Both CEP and AO prioritize facilitators with similar experiences as the participants. This strategy is also vital to program sustainability after the formal project activities end. Fourth, many norms are relevant even when considering a single outcome of interest. Project design must also keep in mind that FGC and child marriage are not seen as isolated issues by communities; often girls' equality and opportunity is the central goal, and addressing harmful norms is an important means to this end. From the project perspective, the overall objective is to enable girls to have greater control over their own sexuality—and with it their mobility, reproduction, and aspirations—and any norm that relates to this goal must be addressed. The ultimate hope is that communities engage in a process by which they equate improvements in girls' well-being and rights with a better life for the entire community.

Scholars have amassed an impressive amount of theoretical knowledge about norms change, and practitioners have shown that well-designed projects can hasten the pace of change. Both the theoretical review and the case studies, however, reveal gaps in our understanding about how and why social norms change. In the final section below, we outline general considerations for future research on how and why social norms change, and how these changes affect the welfare of girls.

Population Council

THE WAY FORWARD

Theory and practice suggest that, at the community level, research on social norms change and girls' well-being must be designed to capture certain key processes: the modification of groups of identity and association, including the creation of new relationships and changes in existing relationships; the importance of deliberative discussion in undermining and recasting expectations about what is typical and appropriate; the exchange of information between members of a group; and the coexistence of multiple norms relevant to a single well-being outcome.

This set of considerations can be succinctly represented in a network schematic; Figure 1 illustrates the context of the AO project, but similar frameworks can be created for other situations. First, Panel A shows an individual girl, represented by a node, that holds a set of beliefs about what is typical and appropriate behavior. Accurately describing these beliefs is a challenge for research; in part because norms often proscribe what not to do, actually observed behavior may not reflect the diverse set of underlying motivations. We need to ask about these beliefs directly, but answering questions about personal response to counterfactual situations—for example, "what would you do if you wouldn't be punished for refusing marriage?"—is often difficult. One innovative means of overcoming this problem is by using vignettes: asking girls to evaluate whether the behavior of characters in stories fashioned after real-world scenarios in the community is typical and appropriate, and what might happen if they resist a norm.[43]

A girl's expectations come from her intrinsic qualities—her personality and capacities—as well as from information, rewards, and punishments originating in the social network within which she is embedded. Panel B of Figure 1 illustrates the influence of others in the girl's group of identity and association, as well as from external factors like media, government action, and other potential sources of information and power. The arrowheads depict the direction in which information, rewards, and punishment flow, and the weights of the arrows the strength of those flows. These influences are responsible in part for how a girl updates her beliefs about what is typical and appropriate.[44] Panel C illustrates the broader network—not only the direct influences on a girl's beliefs, but also the pathways through which the beliefs of her parents and others are updated. Overall, the size and complexity of the network will differ by geography; for example, urban areas are more likely to have many non-local pathways of influence, while rural locations might be characterized by denser, smaller networks.[45] Again, the network is also not a closed system; the gray node in Panels B and C shows an external media source, but in reality there are likely to be many influences from the larger social and political

context that influence girls' opportunities and aspirations.

Finally, Panel D shows how interventions like CEP and AO affect this network of influence, and thus a girl's expectations. Delivery of the programs through group education sessions, community meetings, discussions with peers, and other forums for deliberative conversation create new relationships through which novel information, including information about what is typical and appropriate behavior, is transmitted. Existing relationships are also affected. For example, girls may gain the capacity to transmit information to others outside the AO discussion but in the larger network, implying change in directionality of influence. Simultaneously, other program components may work to alter the reward and punishment power of individuals (and thus the strength of influence) in the network, and so on.

The network representation serves to highlight the process by which social norms change, a process with relationships at its center. In the theory section, we discussed that harmful norms persist either because of history or power: that is, either because social inertia has trapped current behavior in a stable state that benefits no one, or because certain individuals benefit from norms that hurt others. The network diagram helps think about important questions about how to resolve either scenario. If social inertia is the cause, and collectively coordinated change in beliefs the solution, what is the most efficient

Figure 1. A network model of change in expectations, based on AO structure.

A) An individual girl holds a set of expectations about what is typical and appropriate.

B) In addition to the girl's intrinsic qualities, her expectations are determined by the influence of other individuals with whom she interacts, as well as other sources of information.

C) The larger network of influence, showing how a girl's expectations can be affected by individuals with whom she may not directly interact.

D) A program intervention seeks to create new relationships (i.e., bidirectional pathways of influence and information transmission) and alter existing relationships.
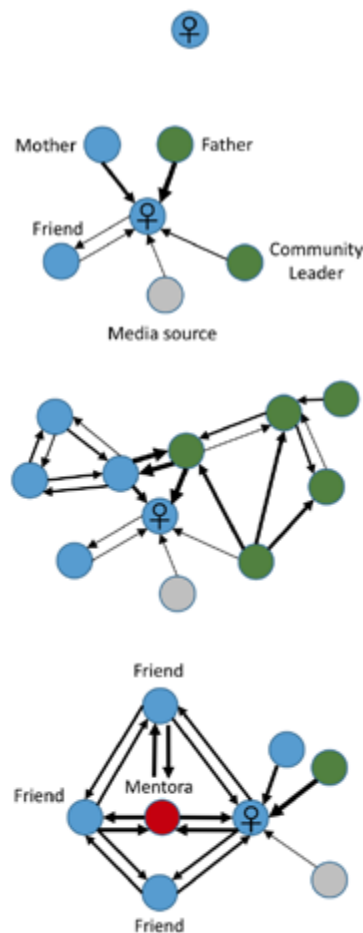
pathway for information to flow within the network, and what does that imply for program targeting? Which people, and how many people, must update their beliefs before a given individual does the same? Who are the trendsetters in a network that first challenge old norms and advance new ones, and how strong is their influence?[46] If power is the cause, then who comprises minimum set of actors that need to be engaged for the norm to be questioned? Who exerts influence over these powerful people?

The study of human behavior in international development has traditionally been dominated by two broad categories of scholarship, and engaging with social norms challenges and expands both. The first category is economic: the derivation of generalities about individual responses to background conditions created by the market and the state—price changes, available technologies, livelihood opportunities, and so on. The social norms conversation, in contrast, puts the focus not on how people respond to impersonal phenomena, but rather to each other. Human relationships occupy the analytical center. The second dominant category is indeed about a certain kind of relationship, political interaction: the contestation of power within and between households, communities, and nations. But there are other types of interactions of equal importance, and complex sets of emotions and motivations structuring these relationships—love, amity, respect, distrust, fear. Norms both engender these emotions and are changed by, or persist because of, them. One cannot analyze the dynamics of social norms without considering the complexity of motivations that drive behavior.

Focusing on norms also brings new, much-needed pressure to include communities in research and practice. Development actors have long sought, with varying degrees of success, to involve "beneficiaries"—a better word might be "clients"—in program design and implementation, either to improve the efficacy of interventions or as an end in itself.[47] With respect to women and girls, for example, in the early 2000s researchers and policymakers began to call for community-based approaches to address gender-based violence.[48] These initiatives have had varying degrees of success.

The study of norms, however, demands a deeper and more authentic participation, for both ethical and practical reasons. Social norms change is part of a broader process of cultural change, though this latter phrase is rarely used within academia or the international development community— the shadows of colonialism and paternalistic development loom large, as well they should. Yet the acknowledgement that policies and programs have as their goal cultural change brings with it a certain power of transparency. All parties must admit the sensitivity of the exercise and act in ways that are respectful and collaborative, placing ethical discourse and trust-building, not merely technical issues of design, at the core of project implementation.

More practically, the study of norms requires massive amounts of information on preferences, strategies, and behaviors. The strategy outlined in the preceding "Research" section hints at these demands, but as the theoretical models grow more complex—as they should and will—the amount of information needed will increase immensely. Such an exercise requires genuine engagement by communities; advancing knowledge about human behavior depends on the participation of thousands of willing citizen scientists.

The body of social norms theory is impressively constructed, the result of decades of work by scholars from a wide range of disciplines. Equally dedicated practitioners have designed projects that, through inspiring the questioning and reimagining of norms, seek to improve the lives of millions of girls around the world. The next step, integrating theory and practice in a way that yields a systematic research strategy embedded within real-world projects, lies ahead.

Elizabeth Whelan

Appendix A: social norms and girls' welfare literature review

Social norms affect our actions daily and "produce outcomes which are frequently inequitable, and dynamics that are often risky for women and girls."[49] They have been studied extensively in every discipline of the social sciences, from anthropology to economics to psychology, yet they are often implicit and unspoken, making their mechanisms hard to define and harder to measure. Recent work has built a rigorous theoretical structure around the relationship of beliefs, expectations, and observed behaviors to the concept of social norms, and given rise to hypotheses about how social norms originate, change, and fade.[50] This appendix reviews current literature on social norms theory and its applications. We begin by reviewing some of the most prominent theoretical conceptualizations, noting where they converge in terms of the fundamental features that constitute social norms. We then take up the question of social norms change, with a discussion of theories of change and with illustrative examples. Next we discuss how and why norms influence behavior, providing more detail about reference groups and the mechanisms of social influence. Finally, we address the question of measurement, looking at how different studies have addressed norms, though often without explicit engagement with theory.

Defining Norms

As mentioned in Part I of this report, current theorizations of social norms converge on the broad view that norms are beliefs about which behaviors are appropriate within a given group. More specifically, norms arise from:

- beliefs about which behaviors are *typical* in a group and/or from expectations about what others in the group think one *ought* to do,[51]
- defined in relation to a group of relevant others called a *reference group*, and
- held in place by *social influence*, either through direct mechanisms of discipline called *sanctions*, or more indirectly, through belief in the legitimacy of the expectations of others or one's own desire for membership in a particular reference group

This definition draws attention to two additional characteristics of social norms: first, although behaviors can provide clues about norms, the term "social norm" refers to the behavioral *rule* rather than the behavior. Second, it is important to stress that the influence of our *beliefs* about our reference group

functions regardless of the accuracy with which our beliefs reflect reality. The following table summarizes some key terms that help clarify what social norms are and how they function.

Table 1 summarizes some of the key terms used in discussing norms:

Term(s)	Meaning
Empirical expectations / Descriptive norms	Expectations one has about the behaviors of others: beliefs about which behaviors are typical in the group
Normative expectations / Injunctive norms	Expectations about what others think one ought to do: beliefs about which behaviors are considered desirable in the group (including the belief that deviations may incur sanctions)
Reference group	The group of people whose behaviors and opinions matter in defining one's empirical and normative expectations around a given norm
Social influence	Mechanisms through which norms come to act on an individual's behavior — can be internal (desire to be part of a group) or external (sanctions imposed by others)
Sanctions	Social punishment or rewards that serve to control behavior directly
Non-social norms	Shared behavioral rules that are not determined by the behaviors and opinions of others, for example religious (moral) norms or legal norms
Behavioral preferences	Affected by a complex of factors, including social norms but also personality, moral norms, factual beliefs, structural constraints, and more
Factual beliefs	Beliefs about the non-social consequences of an action or choice (such as that getting more education will lead to a higher-paying job)
Pluralistic ignorance	Inconsistency between objective and perceived community standards (descriptive and/or injunctive)

The theoretical distinctions outlined in the table above can seem alternately intuitive and overly precise. However, they help generate predictions about the potential impact of interventions seeking to improve girls' welfare. For example, a program that tries to alter factual beliefs around early marriage (say, by disseminating information to families about the health benefits of delaying pregnancy) would be ineffective at changing behavior that arises instead from empirical expectations about when other girls in the reference group get married (or normative expectations about the age that the reference group feels a girl *should* get married).

Philosopher Cristina Bicchieri (2006) defines social norms as behavioral rules which people prefer to follow under the condition that they believe most people in their network (a) also conform to the rule (empirical expectations) and

(b) expect them to follow the rule (normative expectations).[52] Her theory stresses that social norms create *conditional* behavioral preferences, which would change if one's beliefs about others were to change.

Scholars from the field of social psychology have similarly defined social norms as socially shared definitions of the way people do or should behave,[53] and have made an analogous distinction between descriptive norms (which correspond to Bicchieri's empirical expectations) and injunctive norms (which correspond to Bicchieri's normative expectations).[54] Cialdini et al. (1991) and others add that norms do not direct actions in a static way: rather, they must be salient to a given situation (they must be making a decision to which the norm is relevant and the reference group must matter to the individual in that context) and they are re-defined constantly through social interactions.[55]

Gerry Mackie (1996), an early theorist who studied what he called *conventions*, argued that "concordant mutual expectations" create a tacit agreement that allows a group of people to coordinate their behavior in a way that is most mutually beneficial.[56] This coordination becomes fixed in a "convention," which may outlive its original function but survive as an equilibrium state because of the persistent social expectations associated with it.[57] Contrary to Cialdini's assertion that norms are in a constant process of re-interpretation and are therefore not static, Mackie argued that social expectations change only when a critical mass of individuals within a reference group make a public pledge to alter beliefs and behaviors, thus disrupting the existing equilibrium and establishing a new one. The size of this critical mass depends on the influence of the particular individuals in the dissenting fraction. Empirical research on FGC in Sierra Leone and Senegal/Gambia generally confirms these hypotheses, as discussed in the "Practice" section of this report.[58]

The table below summarizes these and a few additional approaches discussed in this appendix, which tend to be less explicit in their treatment of the elements of norms but which elaborate on other important aspects of norms.[59]

Table 2 outlines some key approaches to social norms discussed in this appendix.

Field	Theorists	Summary
Philosophy, Game Theory	Bicchieri	A behavioral rule that people conform to based upon their beliefs that others (a) also conform to the rule, and (b) expect them to conform to it, and may be willing to sanction deviations
Social Psychology	Cialdini et al.; Cooper and Fletcher; Paluck and Shepherd	Socially shared definitions of the ways people do or should behave, which are not static but rather influence behavior differently depending on the context and are constantly elaborated as interactions (re)define perceptions of community standards
Social Convention Theory	Mackie	Conventions as solutions to coordination problems (game theoretic), based on concordant mutual expectations that create a tacit agreement about a particular choice/behavior

Field	Theorists	Summary
Self-Categorization Theory	Turner; Hogg, et al.; Tajfel	Defines norms as cognitive representations of what behavior is appropriate within a particular group, followed by individuals in order to validate their social identity as a member of the group in question
Social constructionist approach	Pulerwitz and Barker	Defining norms as "social expectations for appropriate behaviors," the authors apply a social constructionist perspective to norms, focusing on the process through which they are defined and either change or persist. Pulerwitz and Barker describe the development and validation of the Gender Equitable Man (GEM) scale, which focuses on the construction of masculinities
Social Network Analysis	Mackie and Moneti; Alexander-Scott et al.; Shakya et al.; Paluck and Shepherd; and others	Beginning from the assumption that norms are continuously inferred through social interactions, some social norms theorists use SNA to map influence within a network: who makes up a reference group, how change diffuses, which individuals are especially influential
Reasoned Action Approach, Integrated Behavioral Model, etc	Fishbein; Ajzen; Bandura	A series of theories that attempt to account for the divergence between attitudes and actual behaviors; the most recent iteration, the Reasoned Action Approach, identifies three determinants that lead to an intention – personal attitudes, perceived norms, and perceived behavioral control – and the additional factor of actual behavioral control (outside constraints on behavior) that determines whether the intention translates into behavior

How Norms Change

The majority of conceptualizations of norms agree that they are based upon our beliefs about a relevant reference group, and so it follows that they also tend to agree that change comes from "altering perceptions of community patterns or standards."[60] However, there is diversity in how theorists believe these alterations can come about.

Studies in social psychology contend that norms are constantly adjusted as individuals within a reference group interact. Paluck and Shepherd (2012) state that the perceptions that create normative and empirical expectations, and therefore the norms themselves, are inferred through social interactions, and "are not static but constantly reshaped and reproduced through these interactions."[61] This view locates the potential for changing norms in everyday actions and interactions. We will discuss Paluck and Shepherd's work assessing the effects of different kinds of everyday

interactions in more detail in the section below on social network analysis.

The social constructionist approach similarly theorizes the evolving nature of norms through social reproduction. Beginning from a definition of social norms as "social expectations for appropriate behaviors,"[62] this approach asserts that norms are passed down by communities and social institutions through ongoing interactions and power relations. It further elucidates the mechanism of potential change: each interaction provides versions of appropriate behaviors that are interpreted by individuals as they assemble their understanding of a norm and then pass along their version of the norm through subsequent interactions. As Pulerwitz and Barker (2008) put it in their study of gender norms among young men in Brazil, "individuals also 'reconstruct' these norms, in essence putting their own 'subjective spin' on the gender norms around them (Barker 2001), and as members of society these individuals also influence the broader norms."[63]

As mentioned above, Mackie's (1996) Social Convention Theory made a very different argument: that a practice will remain stubbornly immovable until a critical mass all at once shifts the equilibrium in a coordinated abandonment of a given practice. In a later paper, he and Francesca Monetti (2014) explore the potential of using social network analysis to better understand how influence functions within a given network. In contrast to Social Convention Theory's argument that a norm must be changed all at once, social network analysis begins from the same assumption of the social constructionist approach, that individuals continually infer social norms through social interactions. It can be used to understand who makes up a reference group, how social ties are structured within a group, which individuals have the most influence, and how change diffuses through a group.[64]

Paluck and Shepherd (2012), mentioned above, also use social network analysis to study the effect of highly connected individuals on norms around bullying, finding that public behaviors were able to change students' perceptions of norms and the subsequent behaviors those norms influence. Specifically, the authors found that certain social referents, those who had an especially broad social network or those who were seen as "leaders" among their smaller network, were able to influence the behaviors of students with direct connections to them and were also able to "change perceptions of what was typical and desirable for the whole community."[65] The authors note that the behavioral shift they measured was not accompanied by changes in personal beliefs about harassment, a finding consistent with other literature that underscores the need to focus on beliefs about group standards rather than personal values; this dynamic is explored further in the following section. Paluck and Shepherd contend that certain individuals are "chronically salient", because they are either highly connected or especially influential within a smaller group, so their actions serve as cues about collective norms and thus diffuse change more rapidly.[66]

Furthermore, successful social norms change efforts must consider how to broaden the acceptance of a new norm, so that the old norm doesn't regain salience as peoples' reference groups change. Garcia Moreno et al. (2014) suggest that a social diffusion approach can be successful on this front:[67] for example, an evaluation of Tostan in Senegal found that within villages where the program had been implemented, even women who were not direct participants in the program also changed their views of FGM/C (Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting).[68]

In addition to these questions about the process through which norms evolve (or don't), there are a few other considerations to take into account.

Some interventions aiming to change outcomes that result from social norms have found that establishing a new norm can be more effective than challenging an existing one, as people are less likely to feel their values are being threatened and thus may be less resistant to the resultant changes.[69] Additionally, dismantling one existing norm can sometimes help effect change to other associated norms. This can be true of any norm, but it can be especially fruitful to target norms that have multiple negative consequences. For example, breaking down the norm of violence as a form of discipline could help challenge both corporal punishment and intimate partner violence. [70]

On the other hand, just as certain norms may influence multiple behaviors, certain behaviors may be influenced by multiple "interlocking" norms.[71] While interventions have often found that not addressing norms can undermine other efforts, it can also be true that changing or replacing one norm may still be insufficient to change a practice. In their study of a set of interventions against child marriage in Ethiopia, Chow and Vivalt (2016) found that although the interventions were successful at reducing instances of early marriage, the norms changes were somewhat ambiguous, highlighting how complex the relationships between outcomes and norms are.[72] For example, there was a decrease in the number of people who believed that their religion supported early marriage, but at the same time there was a slight increase in reported levels of community support for early marriage. The authors attribute this to increased factionalism around early marriage, with fewer people feeling neutral about it.

Just as norms can constrain the efficacy of other interventions, such as those that attempt to increase girls' agency to resist expectations but do not actually work to transform the expectations themselves, other factors can also constrain or aid efforts to change norms. In their research in Nepal, Ghimire and Samuels (2014) provide one of the most comprehensive looks at social norms change and marriage, identifying four broad factors that mediate social norms change: "the broader cultural and ideational (including religious) context from which social norms governing gendered behaviour derive; the strength with which norms are held in any particular reference group; individual views (which do not necessarily accord with social norms); and socioeconomic factors that facilitate or limit individuals' and households' room for manoeuvre."[73]

Miller, Monin and Prentice (2000) highlight a peculiarity of social norms: that there can be "widespread public conformity to social norms in the absence of widespread private support."[74] Since social norms are based upon our beliefs about the actions and preferences of others they will influence us regardless of the accuracy of our perceptions, allowing for situations of "pluralistic ignorance."[75] Despite appearing to be a discouraging state of affairs, this type of situation may provide an opportunity to change a norm simply by making individuals' true beliefs and preferences known.

Finally, Cislaghi and Heise (2017) recently developed a model to understand different ways in which norms can influence practice. They argue that normative influence can vary on a spectrum (strongest, stronger, weaker, weakest). According to their theory, the strength of a norm depends on four characteristics of the practice under normative influence. These four characteristics are: 1) whether the practice is more or less detectable by others; 2) whether the practice is under stronger or weaker sanctions; 3) whether the practice is more interdependent or independent; and 4) whether the practice is sustained directly by a corresponding norm, or indirectly by a system of norms. According to where they fall on the spectrum,

different practices would require different interventions, varying from facilitating community dialogue that help people find healthful ways to achieve the goal currently achieved by a harmful practice, to media campaign that strengthen people's confidence to stand up and speak against a harmful practice when they witness it.[76]

How and Why Norms Influence Behavior

Reference Groups

A reference group is the group of people whose attitudes and actions influence ours – as the name suggests, the people to whom we refer as we infer a norm. Overall it is a simple concept, but there are a few details about reference groups that are worth mentioning before getting into the question of social influence. First, for a given individual, different norms may be influenced by different reference groups. For example, for one person norms around fashion may be influenced primarily by expectations of their peers, while norms around schooling may be influenced by their teachers and parents. Second, in their conceptual framework for examining the role of social norms in child marriage, Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans (2014) state that it is rare that there will be complete homogeneity of behavior and attitude within a reference group. Rather, we can understand norms as "being based on expectations about at least the majority."[77] As mentioned above, certain individuals may hold more sway in defining the existence of a norm, but one must *expect* a majority of the members of a given group to behave and/or to want one to behave in a certain way.

Social Influence

As noted in the introduction to this appendix, an individual's preferences about behavior are driven by a complex of factors ranging from personal, non-social norms to factual beliefs and structural limitations on action. Yet we know that often norms seem to trump other influences when it comes to actually choosing a behavior. We can attribute this effect to *social influence*, a term which encompasses both external and internal factors. The most direct and obvious external mechanisms are sanctions – social punishment or reward in reaction to a behavior. In the next few paragraphs we will discuss theories of other, more internal, mechanisms that motivate us to follow norms.

One approach to understanding why social norms can trump our personal beliefs attributes this effect to social identity. Henri Tajfel (1981) theorizes that when an individual's self-concept is defined by their membership in a particular group, their motives will change to align with the interests of the group and to embody what they believe is typical or approved behavior within that group.[78] He attributes this to a change in definition of the self that results from categorizing one's self as part of a group rather than distinct.

Self categorization theory (SCT), posited by Turner et al. (1987), specifies that when we perceive ourselves primarily as a member of a relevant group our sense of individuality diminishes and we self-stereotype to conform to group

attributes.[79] Norms are defined within this framework as "collective (as opposed to personal) beliefs about what actions are appropriate in a group-membership context."[80] This understanding of social norms does not diverge significantly from the definitions previously discussed, but by this account the motivation to conform lies in an individual's desire to "validate their identity as group members."[81] For example, Shell-Duncan et al. (2011) propose a "peer convention" theory, in which "limited, variable resources render individuals reliant on extensive networks for support… [and] young women use circumcision to signal a willingness to participate in the hierarchy of power."[82] Thus following the norm helps young women gain entry into a peer network made up of women (or allows them to avoid sanctions against deviation), as opposed to securing access to the marriage market, as Mackie argued in his social convention theory.

Scholars have used self categorization theory in studies that attempt to understand behavioral motivations and have also included it in studies of the predictive power of various theoretical approaches. Page, Shute, and McLachlan (2015) use SCT in their investigation of sexual bullying. One interesting finding of this work is that the strength of adolescent social norms is sensitive to environmental factors like how important ("salient") gender is a given context compared to other markers of identity.[83] Fekadu and Kraft (2002) test the predictive power of SCT and other approaches in a study of contraceptive use in Ethiopia; this study is reviewed in the section on the Reasoned Action Approach below.[84]

Despite its wide usage, SCT faces some important critiques. Although Turner et al. recognize that there may or may not be tangible benefits to belonging to a given group, SCT does not explain the motivation behind the desire for a group identity when it does not accrue substantial benefits to members. Another critique of SCT is that social dilemma experiments have shown that "cooperative outcomes can be explained without making use of the social identity concept,"[85] implying that norms can function outside the pathway of self-categorization. Finally, this conceptualization does not account for the fact that most individuals do not define their identity with relation to just one group. This approach only works to predict behavior in the context of very simple groupings and does not allow us to model choices that involve multiple identities and conflicting in-group behaviors. Despite these critiques, SCT can be useful in evaluating the power that an individual's identification with a reference group confers on the norms of that reference group.

Social psychologists have elaborated on the question of salience, which begins to address the questions of conflicting norms and distinct reference groups. Firstly, they argue that a norm does not direct an individual's behavior in the same way in every context – rather, it must be made salient to the individual and the situation in order to have influence.[86] This salience occurs in two ways: the norm must be defined with respect to a relevant community which the individual prefers to conform to (as discussed in SCT as well), and it must be relevant to the particular choices and actions at hand.[87] For example, a girl might be aware that there is a norm in her community that girls ought to help with household chores instead of studying, but in her family she might be encouraged to study rather than do chores. Thus when she is at home, the broader community reference group becomes less salient and she may act in opposition to the norm that girls should do chores. Similarly, when she must make a choice about what clothing to wear, norms around doing household chores or about studying will be irrelevant and thus will not be salient in activating a one particular choice over another.

In addition, salience can influence within more complex and subtle dynamics: as Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno (1991) state, in cases of two directly conflicting norms, "the one that will produce congruent action is the one that is temporarily prominent in consciousness."[88] This dynamic is especially important because we all experience pressure from a variety of norms, which can compete with each other as well as with other preferences we might have. The idea of salience can help explain why an individual may act in accordance with a norm in one situation but not another, or why one individual may challenge a given norm more than another individual.

Another influential conceptualization that attempts to explain how behavioral choices interact with norms is the Reasoned Action Approach, developed primarily by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010). These two scholars have been collaborating, along with other social psychologists, for the past forty years to develop a model of social behavior that accounts not only for norms but also for the other myriad factors that influence our actions. Beginning with the Theory of Reasoned Action, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) attempted to explain the gap between individually held attitudes and chosen behaviors, arguing that behaviors are the result of intentions, which in turn stem from personal attitudes and subjective norms (defined in this first iteration only as what we have called *descriptive* norms) about the behavior.[89] Although this theory was found to have some predictive power, Albert Bandura's concept of self-efficacy led to Ajzen's first revision, the 1985 theory of planned behavior, which added the idea of perceived behavioral control as an additional factor determining intentions.[90] Behavioral control can be thought of as the combination of skills, resources, barriers, and opportunities that affect whether one manages to turn their intention into an action, and *perceived*

behavioral control is one's belief in their ability to carry out a behavior, which can affect behavior by changing the intention itself.

Fekadu and Kraft (2002) test the predictions of several theoretical frameworks—among them the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and self categorization theory (discussed above)—with respect to contraceptive use among adolescent girls in urban Ethiopia. They find that there are indeed normative influences on the behavior, as social considerations, including social pressures ("injunctive norms") and 'copycat' behaviors ("descriptive norms"), were more important than personal attitudes.[91] They also consider the interactions of these drivers with other forces, including level of group identification and position on a collective- vs. self-prioritization scale. Most of these variables were measured by directly aggregating scores given to ordinal questions about attitudes and beliefs, or, in the case of the collective-self variable, using factor analysis to reduce component items into a smaller amount of variables and then taking the mean score of these reduced dimensions. Most of the component questions of these variables are theoretically robust; many previous studies have used some set of similar questions to characterize attitudes, beliefs, and intentions. The results are, however, quite sensitive to potentially arbitrary choices made during the aggregation process about the number of items considered and weight applied to each item.

In 1991, Fishbein and Bandura collaborated on an Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM, also referred to as the Integrative Model of Behavioral Prediction), which adds additional factors to the last stage of the model: intentions are still defined as they are in the TPB, but this approach accounts for the effect of an individual's capacity and environmental constraints (including other peoples' power over one's choices and behaviors)

as an intention translates (or does not) to behavior.[92] Teitelman et al. (2013) employ the IBM to study the cause of intimate partner violence among adolescent girls, operationalizing the framework by asking adolescent girl interviewees about their intentions, beliefs, experience of pressure from norms, and so on, and code responses to identify patterns in the group.[93]

In 2010, Fishbein and Ajzen published their Reasoned Action Approach, which specifies both a descriptive and an injunctive element within the category of "subjective norms."[94] It does not differ greatly from the IBM, except in shifting its focus back to the level of the individual and in locating potential for changing behaviors mainly in changing the behavioral, normative, and control *beliefs* that affect intentions, rather than looking to the skills, abilities and environmental factors that affect the transition from intention to completed behavior.

Measuring Norms

The literature that addresses measurement of social norms ranges from studies whose design deliberately engages with a particular theory of norms to studies that focus on cultural values or individual attitudes. While the theories outlined above make clear that cultural values and individual preferences cannot be taken as appropriate proxies for social norms, it is nevertheless informative to review such studies.[95] Additionally, we reviewed a significant body of studies that focus on the (usually negative) consequences of pressure from social norms on adolescent girls' welfare, rather than on diagnosing or measuring the norms themselves. The most comprehensive and reader-friendly compendium of measures to date is in Mackie et al. (2015). Their work includes a variety of perspectives and approaches to norms and to their measurement.

In *A Social Norms Perspective on Child Marriage*, Bicchieri, Jiang and Lindemans (2014) propose a model that can account for any number of factors, normative or otherwise.[96] The authors review the many explanations put forth in previous work on child marriage, both social norms and other factors. The norms included in this list include that girls should be chaste, that girls' roles should be as mothers and wives, and that most girls get married young. Interestingly, the injunctive social norms mentioned in both of these studies are related only indirectly to marriage, and the only norm related directly is a descriptive norm based on the belief that child marriage is normal.

Noting that any one of the reasons listed is only one among many influences that lead to child marriages, their model explains behaviors as being chosen based upon (1) preferences, (2) the options available, and (3) beliefs about one's options. The authors propose two steps in diagnosing whether a collective practice (a behavior that can be commonly observed among a given group) is a norm. First, we must determine whether a choice is conditional or unconditional. If a preference is unconditional, it may be a moral rule or a rational response. If a preference is conditional, it is then important to determine whether it is conditional upon empirical expectations (what we believe is normal) or normative expectations (what we believe is expected of us); these are descriptive and injunctive norms. Diagnosing collective practices in this way can help both with developing interventions and measuring change by identifying potential sites of transformation.

The authors point out that although preferences cannot be false, beliefs about options (which are available, which are commonly chosen, and how they are regarded) may be, presenting additional opportunities to effect change. They further note that while parents generally want the best for their children, they may face competing preferences, or the options available may disallow them to satisfy all their preferences at once.

More recent approaches to the measurement of social norms can be found in the Cislaghi and Heise (2017) report mentioned above. The report compiles practical, field-tested strategies developed by a number of practitioners and scholars gathered together by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).[97] The LSHTM group convened to identify concrete ways for practitioners and researchers to operationalize theory on the measurement of social norms without adopting cumbersome tools and strategies. The light touch approaches can be integrated within monitoring and evaluation practices, and include asking participants how their peers and families would react if the participant were to engage in a behavior being discussed.

The LSHTM report identified four phases of norms capture and measurement: 1) Explore potential normative influence; 2) Investigate dynamics of normative influence in a given context; 3) Measure social norms; 4) Analyze social norms data and plan an intervention. Among the many lessons learned by this group in their measurement work, the report recommends avoiding aggregating data at a national level. National data hides important differences in local norms, differences that "would change both the interpretation of the data and how practitioners would use the data to design an intervention."[98]

Accounting for local differences is also important in developing tools for social norms measurement. Deardorff, Tschann, and Flores (2008), for example, conducted qualitative interviews and focus groups to inform culturally based sexual values measures for Latino youth in the U.S. Three of the measures addressed "gender role norms" (sexual talk as disrespectful, satisfaction of sexual needs as important, female virginity as important) and three addressed "comfort regarding sexuality" (comfort with sexual communication, sexual comfort, and sexual self-acceptance). Without processes of piloting, validation, adaptation or re-creating measures, existing measures risk being ineffective in measuring the relevant attitudes, norms, or values.[99]

Individual Attitudes and Preferences

Pulerwitz, Barker, and colleagues operationalized the social constructionist perspective in the Gender Equitable Men (GEM) scale, a tool used in evaluations and research (namely, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey, IMAGES) to measure gender-equitable and inequitable attitudes and behaviors. The scale includes items on intimate partner relationships, sexual and reproductive health, caregiving, violence, and HIV/STI prevention.[100] Results from measurement and research using the GEM scale shed light on gendered similarities and differences in attitudes, behaviors, and norms. For example, Scott et al. (2014) use the GEM scale in South Sudan, finding that the majority of sampled men and women agree with unequal household roles but do not support inequitable practices like forced marriage.[101]

The "Compendium of Gender Scales", put together by the USAID-funded project Communication for Change (C-Change), outlines several additional scales designed to measure aspects of gender norms and empowerment and the success of interventions aiming to change norms.[102] Among the scales discussed are the Gender Beliefs Scale, which uses a series of eight questions to measure progressive or traditional beliefs about gender roles;[103] the Gender Norm Attitudes Scale developed by Waszak et al. (2001), which measures how egalitarian individuals' beliefs about gender norms are, using a subscale about maintaining the rights and privileges of men and another subscale about belief in and promotion of equity for girls and women;[104] and the Gender Roles and Attitudes Towards Women's Empowerment scales created by Jaffer and Afifi (2005), which are adaptations of the GEM scale and use Likert-type questions on observed/expected gender roles and decision-making to produce an unweighted aggregate score.[105] In all of these scales, the constituent questions are theoretically defensible, but the (lack of) weighting procedure implies that each item is of equal importance and that the set is comprehensive, both difficult to defend assumptions.

Cultural Values

The literature on measurement of general cultural values is richer than the body of work about measurement of specific norms. These general values presumably give rise to more specific norms: the norms are in a sense the expression of general values in the current economic and political context (although these economic and political pressures, acting through history, presumably cause the values themselves to change over time). One of the more widely used schemata of values is Schwartz et al.'s (2001) list of ten first-order cultural values, which can be further grouped into four second-order categories (given in brackets; note that hedonism falls into two categories):

- security, conformity, and tradition [conservation]
- achievement, power, and hedonism [self-enhancement]
- stimulation, self-direction, and hedonism again [openness to change]
- universalism and benevolence [self-transcendence]

The conservation and self-enhancement poles are at odds with openness to change and self-transcendence. These values are measured within a given population by a 40-question survey (or a 21-question reduced version) called the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). Each question presents a description of a person's behavior or attitude, and asks respondents to rate their affinity for that person on a Likert-type scale. Bubeck and Bilsky modify Schwartz's categorization for children and adolescents, de-emphasizing universalism, power, and stimulation.[106] Other authors, however, find that Schwartz's original scheme consistently identifies cultural differences in adolescents.[107]

Some studies use PVQ-type items to describe individual traits. Tamm and Tulviste (2014) use PVQ items to profile the values of adolescents in Estonia, and then examine whether these values predict how they react to a situation of bullying.[108] The Likert-type responses suggest that girls and boys tend give to different responses—with girls suggesting more varied strategies—although it is unclear whether these differences are intrinsic or norm-driven. From a game theoretic perspective,

the study is interesting in its exploration of a situation in which individuals obtain few immediate benefits in "cooperating" (intervening in a bullying scenario), beyond potential reputational gains. PVQ items and the values they represent appear to have some ability to predict variation in cooperation across individuals. Shlafer et al. (2013) look not at the traits of girls themselves, but rather of those around them.[109] They find that family and peer group "prosocial" values, quantified through indices constructed by aggregating five (unweighted) questions about attitudes among their family and peers, reduce girls' risk of both perpetrating and being victimized by violence.

Svanemyr et al. (2015) set forth an "ecological framework" for creating an enabling environment for sexual and reproductive health, which posits that influences exist at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy levels.[110] The authors suggest that interventions focus on behaviors and outcomes, identifying factors at each level that are most influential and prioritizing interventions that address factors at multiple levels; some interventions, like keeping girls in school, can be both an end in themselves and also a means to other ends. Finally, measurement work that examines values around sex and sexuality like that conducted by Deardorff, Tschann, and Flores (2008) also holds implications for measuring cultural values in the context of girls' well-being.[111]

Consequences

A significant body of literature deals with the concrete ways that social norms impact girls' lives, although often this work does not engage explicitly with social norms theory. White (2015) reviews literature on adolescent marriage in Bangladesh, noting that it is encouraged by a social context in which women who marry later face punitive measures through physical and social harassment, men's reluctance to marry an older bride, and vulnerability in the marital family.[112] Desai and Andrist (2010) measure the effects of various dimensions of the gendered context within which decisions about marriage are made in India, comparing the effects of gender performance (such as observation of purdah and male-female separation in the household), economic factors (for example, wage employment and dowry expectations), and familial empowerment (such as women's ability to make household decisions).[113] Hierarchical linear models show that gender performance is the most important factor, suggesting the weight of symbolic dimensions of gender in social institutions.

Barnett et al. (2011) combine scripting theory and a theorization of the social uses and meaning of money (developed by Zelizer (1997)) to understand sexual exchange as both potentially contributing to girls' agency and potentially coercive[114] Sexual scripting theory, posited by Simon and Gagnon (1986), defines sexual activity as a social transaction negotiated between three levels of meaning: cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic.[115] Scripts are "composed of shared meanings and norms among a group of people."[116] They allow actors to influence each other and are the "social terrain on which agency is expressed," combining personal desires and moralities with both interpersonal negotiations and expectations built by the broader socio-cultural context.[117] Zelizer's distinctions between monetary compensations, entitlements, and gifts further allow Barnett et al. to understand the particular and varied contexts of adolescents' sexual negotiations and actions: the adolescents in the study differentiated between the compensation that sex workers receive and the "gifts" that many young

women exchange for sex, despite the recognition that those with alternative resources did not need to use sexual exchange.

Dodoo and Frost's (2008) exploration of patterns of fertility and reproductive health in sub-Saharan Africa argues that marriage practices like payment of bridewealth constitute a "cultural-legal contract" that reinforces inequity within marriages, especially limiting women's control over reproductive choices.[118] They further contend that changing this contract is fundamental to enable women to negotiate improved control over sexual and reproductive outcomes. Varol et al. (2014) look at factors contributing to the continuation of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), noting that although the practice varies by context it is perpetuated by social obligations, and social measures penalize those who defy it, despite declining support for the practice. [119]

Luke (2003) reviews the literature on the causes and effects of transactional sex between adolescent girls and older partners in sub-Saharan Africa, a practice sanctioned by social norms across the region.[120] Serpa (2010), through interviews with patients in Northeast Brazil, notes how norms internalized by mothers lead to the acceptance and excusing of violence committed against their daughters.[121] Namuggala (2015) uses interviews with adolescent domestic workers to profile a situation wherein social norms sanction economic participation of girls in spheres where they have little power to prevent negative outcomes, including sexual assault and other forms of physical violence by employers.[122] Updegraff et al. (1996) explore how a more egalitarian division of labor between fathers and mothers promotes girls' scholastic achievement; this study is notable

for exploiting household-level variation in social norms to look at girls' welfare outcomes.[123]

In some studies, the assumption is that norms, while not explicitly measured or described, are clearly visible in beliefs and behaviors. Shepherd and Paluck (2015) construct a network experiment to test how important the sex of the messenger is in transmitting anti-harassment information in a high school.[124] They conclude that the greater influence of male messengers reflects in part the influence of social norms. One study conducted by the Commission on Gender Equality noted that 40% of South African women surveyed believed that they were responsible for rape if they drank alcohol before the assault—a belief that must arise from social norms, in interaction with personality and experience.[125] McCleary-Sills et al. (2013) note that social norms protect the acceptability of males making aggressive sexual advances, and even assaulting girls, in rural Tanzania.[126] Muhanguzi (2011) describes the constraints against girls asserting sexual autonomy in Uganda, either in terms of expressing desire or rejecting the desires of others.[127] As noted above, most works investigating the links between social norms and girls' welfare focus on negative effects; an exception is Denner and Dunbar (2004), who profile the resistance of Mexican American girls to traditional expectations.[128] Social norms, though by definition deeply embedded, do not prevent all individuals from exercising agency, and the implication is that enough individuals do resist, the norm itself begins to change. Burbank (1995) argues that premarital pregnancy among Australian Aboriginal girls can itself be a way of expressing agency, in this case by resisting adults' expectations of who girls must marry and asserting independence.[129]

Appendix B: successful program examples

The two case studies featured in this report allow for an in-depth analysis of distinct experiences of social change. This appendix briefly describes other noteworthy programs that challenge social norms in order to improve girls' well-being. For example, CARE has deliberately integrated social norms theory into tools and approaches in programs to end intimate partner violence and mitigate the effects of child marriage in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Sri Lanka.

Table 3 presents examples of successful program initiatives globally that seek to challenge social norms and improve girls' well-being. The list is not exhaustive, but is gleaned from a literature review and key tinformant interviews in which we sought to identify such programs and understand how they approach social norms change. Criteria for selection include programs that have at least one component addressing community level norms change toward adolescent girls' well-being, and programs that have undergone evaluation. Programming that solely targets girls or that targets changing social norms for other objectives such as the environment or alcohol use, for example, hold relevant lessons but are not included in the scope of this report.

Only recently have program planners more explicitly articulated what they mean by addressing social norms in comparison to rather related concepts, i.e., attitude and behavior change. Similarly, a small handful of programs have an explicitly integrated social norms theory with conceptual clarity throughout their design, research, and measurement, including a theory of change for achieving well-being for girls. This table also seeks to capture diversity in strategies and depth of social norms approaches with family and others in girls' communities.

Table 3. Programs that aim to change social norms to improve girls' well-being

Program, years active	Organization, location	Description
SASA! 1999-present	Raising Voices, Uganda	SASA! is an intervention – implemented and adapted in over 20 countries – that has had one of the first and only cluster randomized trials globally to assess the community-wide impact of an intervention to prevent IPV against women, and HIV prevention.[130] Lessons learned from SASA! include intensive, repeated engagement with multiple groups in the community across the ecological model; leadership by well-trained community activists; a structured process of change that goes beyond awareness-raising; and strategic approaches around aspirations and power, i.e., unpacking power and promoting an approach that encourages participants to examine the benefits of equitable relationships.
Towards Economic and Sexual/ Reproductive Health for Adolescent Girls (TESFA); Abdiboru 2014-present	CARE, Ethiopia	CARE has been using approaches to address community norms for many years, including participatory theater and Social Analysis and Action (SAA) groups. Building off these approaches, in 2014 CARE began applying social norms theory on a small scale and developed tools, including vignettes, to measure social norms based on theories from Bicchieri and others. In Ethiopia, the TESFA program in Amhara region (2014-2017) and the Abdiboru project (2015-2020) in Oromia region promote sexual and reproductive health and economic empowerment among adolescent girls. They also simultaneously engage key norms holders in girls' families and communities. Approaches include SAA community groups and peer-education girls' groups.
Indashyikirwa and Redefining Norms to Empower Women (ReNEW) 2014-present	CARE, Rwanda and Sri Lanka	Two interventions targeting IPV among adults also take a social norms focus. In partnership with the What Works Consortium, Indashyikirwa is an IPV prevention project (2014-2018) that includes measures of social perceptions; it offers a curriculum for couples followed by community activism. The ReNEW pilot project in Sri Lanka targeted tea plantation communities over two years (2014-2016). It aimed to explore how social norms that underpin IPV could be addressed and measured using an approach based on social norms theory.

Program, years active	Organization, location	Description
Prachar **2001-2012**	Pathfinder, India	Pachar offered group-based reproductive health training within a comprehensive behavior change program for adolescents and young couples. It included broader community education and mobilization component that have led to changes in social norms. An evaluation sought to understand whether norms had changed in intervention communities to the extent that they would remain 4 to 8 years after the intervention; program effects around contraception were indeed found to be long-lasting.[131]
Program **H/M/D** **2002-present**	Promundo, Brazil and 24 other countries	Program H (for homens/hombres, or "men" in Portuguese and Spanish) promotes questioning and critical reflection of gender socialization and harmful gendered norms. It is one of the first programs globally to take a relational notion of gender, recognizing that men and boys must be engaged if norms are to shift toward non-violence, better health outcomes, and gender equality for both sexes. After the main curriculum is offered in a participatory group education setting, participants act upon their own learning to design and carry out local campaigns. Program M (for mulher/mujer – "women" in Portuguese and Spanish) has been evaluated once, and Program H in eight different adaptations; these evaluations show changes in norms, attitudes and self-reported behaviors.
Cultura **Ciudadana** **mid-1990s** **- present**	Government of Colombia and Corpovisionarios NGO, Colombia	Whereas most program examples are based in NGOs, this example shows how governments can also integrate social norms perspectives. Culture is understood as a social construction that includes norms, beliefs, traditions, shared experiences and expectations. Copovisionarios - led by former Mayor of Bogota, Antanas Mockus – also carries out educational work to challenges norms in citizen culture as well as cultures of organizations, educational institutions, and to promote a culture of peace/ reducing violence.

Program, years active	Organization, location	Description
Gender Roles, Equality and Transformation (GREAT) Project 2010-2015	Institute for Reproductive Health (Georgetown University); Save the Children; and Pathfinder International, Uganda	GREAT aimed to promote gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors among adolescents (ages 10-19) and their communities with the goal of reducing gender-based violence and improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes in post-conflict communities in northern Uganda. Formative research examined how gender norms are learned, internalized, and passed on, and individuals' motivation to change harmful norms. In doing so, GREAT then addressed community norms through a several interventions: a serial radio drama to stimulate discussion and reflection at scale, a toolkit to promote dialogue and reflection, Community Action Cycle (CAC) carried out with community leaders to strengthen their capacity to promote change, training of and activities to recognize and celebrate individuals who demonstrate commitment to gender-equitable behaviors.

NOTES

1   Kågesten et al. 2016; Alexander-Scott, Bell, and Holden 2016; Marcus and Harper 2014; Marcus et al. 2015

2   Cooper and Fletcher 2013; Paluck 2009; Miller, Monin, and Prentice 2000; Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

3   Bicchieri 2017

4   Turner et al. 1987; Bicchieri and Chavez 2013; Muldoon and Bicchieri 2011; Tajfel 1981

5   Chung and Rimal 2016; Cooper and Fletcher 2013; Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

6   For examples see Alston et al. (2014) and Drèze (1999)

7   Fishbein and Ajzen 2010; Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Mackie et al. 2014; Yzer 2012

8   Olson 1965; North 1990; Voss 2001

9   Hecter and Opp 2001

10   Mackie 1996

11   Mackie 2000

12   Sagna 2014; Shell-Duncan et al. 2011

13   In economic parlance, the power explanation assumes that the current state is Pareto-optimal: no one's welfare can be improved without decreasing someone else's welfare (in this case, that of the powerful person). The history explanation assumes the current state is not Pareto-optimal: somebody's welfare (in this case, the welfare of many girls) can be improved without making anyone else worse off.

14   Pulerwitz and Barker 2008

15   Mackie et al. 2014

16   UNFPA 2015

17   This term is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) definition of a child as a person below the age of 18. Internationally, the terms "early" and "forced" marriage have been used as well. Some experts argue that use of the term "early" takes attention away from the especially problematic practice of child marriage. Part of the challenge in addressing child marriage is in reaching consensus between international, national, and local definitions of "child," "adolescent," and "adult."

18   Raj and Boehmer 2013; Nove et al. 2014

19   Murphy-Graham and Leal 2015; CARE International 2015

20   Jain and Kurz 2007; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2007; Raj et al. 2010

21   Lee-Rife et al. 2012

22   Greene 2014

23   See Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016a

24   United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2008

25   Diop et al. 2004; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2008; Diop and Askew 2009

26   Kuenzi 2005

27   Gillespie and Melching 2010

28   Peacock and Barker 2014

29   Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016

30   Bajaj, Cislaghi, and Mackie 2016; Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016a

31   Tostan 2009

32   Albert, Jeong, and Barabasi 2000

33   Bicchieri and Mercier 2014; Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016b

34   Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016b; Cislaghi, Gillespie, and Mackie 2016a; Appadurai 2004

35   Mackie 1996; Mackie and LeJeune 2009

36   United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2014a; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2014b

37   As in other studies conducted in other parts of Latin America, we use child marriage to encompass both formal marriages and informal unions, in which the couple cohabitates, often with the husband's family, and refer to each other as spouses.

38   From the Observatorio de Salud Sexual y Reproductiva (OSAR), cited in (Chew 2015)

39   Amin 2011; Amato et al. 2014; Population Council 2014; Chew 2015

40   Murphy-Graham and Leal 2015; Taylor et al. 2015; Saadeh Rivera and Caballero Garcia 2013; Pérez Armiñan and Rojas Hernandez 2011

41   Note that this case study was not designed to measure differences in AO intervention vs. non-intervention communities regarding norms, but rather differences over time in AO communities. However, we did conduct one focus group discussion with girls in a non-intervention community. We found that, while child marriage was beginning to be questioned in this community as well, the AO focus groups evinced more critical and nuanced discourse around the practice. A future research priority is to investigate the diffusion effects of AO from intervention to non-intervention areas.

42   Murphy-Graham and Leal 2015; Taylor et al. 2015

43   Bicchieri 2016

44   Because our focus is on social interactions, we do not discuss in detail these issues of personality and media sources. Note that, in the approach described below, media sources (e.g, the radio programs used by Tostan and

AO) can also be represented as nodes in the information network, though the flow of information is unidirectional in this case.

45 Bicchieri 2016

46 Bicchieri 2016

47 Chambers 1997; Cornwall 2003; Gryboski et al. 2006

48 Jewkes 2002; Krug et al. 2002

49 Keleher and Franklin 2008

50 Marcus and Harper 2014

51 Bicchieri and Chavez 2013; Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

52 Bicchieri 2006; Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans 2014

53 Cooper and Fletcher 2013; Paluck 2009; Miller, Monin, and Prentice 2000

54 Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

55 Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991; Cooper and Fletcher 2013

56 Mackie 1996

57 In Mackie's (1996) conception, a convention is defined in game theoretic terms as a solution to a coordination problem that relies on concordant mutual expectations. Mackie argued that for a convention to change, there must be a coordinated abandonment in which public declarations allow the mutual expectations to change all at once. Bicchieri argues that conventions differ from social norms in that they rely only on empirical expectations of what others do, without a component of what others think one ought to do (normative expectations).

58 Sagna 2014; Shell-Duncan et al. 2011

59 See Mackie et al. (2014) and Muldoon and Bicchieri (2011) for in-depth overviews of social norms theories. Appendix II of Mackie et al. (2014) includes a table mapping the elements of social norms, drawing from 17 different theorizations.

60 Cooper and Fletcher 2013

61 Paluck and Shepherd 2012

62 Pulerwitz and Barker 2008

63 Pulerwitz and Barker 2008

64 Mackie and Moneti 2014

65 Paluck and Shepherd 2012

66 Paluck and Shepherd 2012

67 Garcia Moreno et al. 2014

68 Diop and Askew 2009

69 Heise and Manji 2016

70 Heise and Manji 2016

71 Heise and Manji 2016

72 Chow and Vivalt 2016

73 Ghimire and Samuels 2014

74 Miller, Monin, and Prentice 2000

75 Miller, Monin, and Prentice 2000

76 Cislaghi and Heise 2017

77 Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans 2014

78 Tajfel 1981

79 Turner et al. 1987

80 Muldoon and Bicchieri 2011

81 Muldoon and Bicchieri 2011

82 Shell-Duncan et al. 2011

83 Page, Shute, and McLachlan 2015

84 Fekadu and Kraft 2002

85 Muldoon and Bicchieri 2011

86 Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

87 Cooper and Fletcher 2013

88 Cialdini, Kallgren, and Reno 1991

89 Fishbein and Ajzen 1975

90 Ajzen 1985; Mackie and Moneti 2015

91 Fekadu and Kraft 2002

92 Yzer 2012

93 Teitelman et al. 2013

94 Fishbein and Ajzen 2010

95 Mackie et al. 2014

96 Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans 2014

97 Cislaghi and Heise 2017

98 Cislaghi and Heise 2017

99 Deardorff, Tschann, and Flores 2008

100 Pulerwitz and Barker 2008; Barker et al. 2004

101 Scott et al. 2014

102 Nanda 2011

103 Latka et al. 2009

104 Waszak et al. 2001

105 Jaffer and Afifi 2005

106 Bubeck and Bilsky 2004

107 Liem et al. 2010

108 Tamm and Tulviste 2014

109 Shlafer et al. 2013

110 Svanemyr et al. 2015

111 Deardorff, Tschann, and Flores 2008

112 White 2015

113 Desai and Andrist 2010

114 Barnett, Maticka-Tyndale, and the HP4RY Team 2011; Zelizer 1997

115 Simon and Gagnon 1986; Simon and Gagnon 2003

116 Barnett, Maticka-Tyndale, and the HP4RY Team 2011

117 Barnett, Maticka-Tyndale, and the HP4RY Team 2011

118 Dodoo and Frost 2008

119 Varol et al. 2014

120 Luke 2003

121 Serpa 2010

122 Namuggala 2015

123 Updegraff, McHale, and Crouter 1996

124 Shepherd and Paluck 2015

125 Smith et al. 2010

126 McCleary-Sills et al. 2013

127 Muhanguzi 2011

128 Denner and Dunbar 2004

129 Burbank 1995

130 Kyegombe et al. 2014

131 Jejeebhoy et al. 2015

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