'LET'S STOP THINKING IT'S NORMAL'

Identifying patterns in social norms contributing to violence against women and girls across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific

Cover photo: Young activists who are part of the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign in Bolivia.

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ABSTRACT

This collated research report is based on formative research from 12 countries across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific. The report identifies dominant and common patterns in the social norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls; and discusses how formative research can be used to inform a campaign to influence behaviour change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

FGM	Female genital mutilation
INGO	International non-government organisation
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gender, inter-sex and queer people
NGO	Non-government organisation
WROs	Women's rights organisations
VAWG	Violence against women and girls

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

'It is frightening to think that you may not get home alive one day.' —Anita Guerrero, Nicaragua

One in three women will experience physical or sexual violence in her lifetime. Women and girls who experience multiple forms of discrimination, including women of colour, lesbian and trans-women, face increased levels of abuse. Whilst there is no single factor alone that causes violence against women and girls (VAWG), evidence shows some of the strongest and most consistent factors that predict VAWG are harmful social norms that contribute to gender inequality in different contexts.

Oxfam's worldwide Enough campaign to end VAWG (the Enough campaign) aims to challenge and change the harmful social norms that justify abuse, to ones that promote gender equality and non-violence. The Enough campaign's worldwide theory of change is underpinned by the belief that social norm change is possible when approached through holistic, long-term and multi-level gender transformative practice, and importantly that **ordinary people have the power to drive that change**.

The Enough campaign focuses on developing and delivering national campaigns based on formative research that identifies the most relevant social norm in that context. Campaigns are co-created with women's rights organisations (WROs) and feminist activists, recognising these actors have the expertise in this area.

Currently 15 countries have launched national campaigns and the aim is to increase this to 30 countries. Campaign actions aim to sensitise and build the capacity of different stakeholders eventually supporting them to mobilise their communities with messages of non-violence and gender equality. Campaign actions include: street art installations, public theatre, modules on gender equality accessed by mobile phones, peer-to-peer discussions, social experiments, film festival awards, collaborations with musicians and advocacy activities. Regional and worldwide initiatives, including joint campaign moments, workshops with journalists and convening spaces with feminist campaigners, complement the national work.

This collated research report is based on formative research from 12 countries[1] spanning Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the Pacific. These research studies were used to inform the national and regional campaign design, planning and activities. This was not a globally coordinated study; hence the research methods and scope are diverse across the countries.

This report aims to:

- Identify dominant and common patterns in the social norms that perpetuate VAWG; and
- Demonstrate how formative research can be used to inform a campaign to influence behaviour change (case study from Bolivia's campaign).

Three common patterns emerged from the national and LAC regional research studies.

'Let's stop thinking it's normal': Identifying patterns in social norms contributing to violence against women and girls across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific

1. MALE ENTITLEMENT, DOMINATION AND CONTROL OVER WOMEN'S BODIES

'I believe that everything arises from the fact that men see us as sexual objects and as the persons they need to fulfil their sexual needs.' —Young woman, Colombia

One of the most dominant patterns across all the research studies was male entitlement, domination and control over women's bodies in different spheres.

Male sexual entitlement in both **marital and dating relationships** was prevalent across the different studies, including the belief that women cannot deny their male partner sex. In the Solomon Islands, for instance, the research found that 52% of men believe a woman is obliged to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it. These norms contribute **to intimate partner rape and other forms of abuse**. The Tunisian research showed respondents believed it was acceptable for husbands to use sexual violence or physical violence as a punishment for denying sex.

In wider communities, similar dominant patterns emerged around male sexual entitlement over women's bodies contributing to **sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence**. This is powerfully demonstrated by the LAC regional research that found **75% of young people state their male friends believe harassment is normal.**

Communities can also use violence as a way to police girls' and women's bodies. In Nigeria, **female genital mutilation (FGM)** is used as a method to decrease sexual pleasure for women and therefore control her sexual desires. **Early marriage** is also used in Nigeria to control girls' sexuality and ensure they do become/are not seen to be promiscuous.

Another manifestation at the community level is that girls' bodies are often seen as assets that can depreciate or appreciate in value depending on community perceptions and notions about 'honour', contributing to **early marriage and FGM**. In Nigeria, this was summarized as '*You are worth more as a wife than as a daughter.'*

Finally, **stigma** is often placed on those who have experienced violence — blaming the survivor for abuse. This includes blaming women because they have broken rules relating to their bodies. In the regional LAC research, **seven out of 10 young men aged 15–19 blamed women for the violence they experienced because they were dressed 'provocatively' or out on the street late at night.**

2. RIGID GENDER ROLES AND POWER DYNAMICS

'If a man beats his wife, it means she did something wrong. He should have warned her though.' —Woman, Tunisia

The patriarchal culture across the research countries results in the dominant pattern of beliefs that men protect and provide for and have authority over their family and good women are submissive to men, have children, and prioritise their family's health and wellbeing.

For girls, the social expectation to demonstrate submissiveness can lead to **early marriage**. When married, women are expected to obey their husbands and raise their children. If they transgress these norms they may face **physical violence as punishment from their husband**. In Tunisia, respondents stated women should tell their husbands where she goes, with whom she talks, and when she will return home, and should make sure 'she is not agitating him'. The regional LAC research showed that a man has a right to correct or discipline the behaviour of women and for that he can use **any form of violence**. The Tunisian research found **physical violence** was justified when a woman does not obey her husband.

Female submissiveness is also expected to be displayed outside of the home. The research in Tunisia found women's participation in public spaces might be tolerated if they are seen to be 'playing by the rules'. However, if a woman enters the public sphere without the support of her family, she might be 'disciplined' by her husband.

For men, power and dominance can manifest in various ways. In dating relationships, male dominance can appear in the form of monitoring mobile phones and social media – **a form of coercive control**. The LAC regional research found 80% of young people say their male friends monitor their female partner's phone and 62% of young people report that their male friends monitor their female partner's social media.

In marital relationships, many of the studies pointed to men needing to financially provide for the family and be the decision maker for the household. Interestingly, the research found that men (particularly older men) who transgress gendered norms often do not face real sanctions because of patriarchal privilege. **However, men in their role of an authority figure are expected to sanction women who deviate from social norms, including through violence.** In Papua New Guinea, the research revealed that there is strong belief, among both women and men, that violence is acceptable, and even necessary, when used by men to discipline women for not delivering on their perceived responsibilities or when their behaviour transgresses social norms.

3. BELIEFS THAT FURTHER JUSTIFY VIOLENCE AGAINST MARGINALISED WOMEN, GIRLS AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE

'Sometimes I would be on the bus with my partner and people would say ... "You haven't had a proper shag; if I had been with you, you wouldn't be this way." That is really awful.' —Young woman, El Salvador

Another dominant pattern that emerged was how marginalised groups of women and gender non-conforming people face particular forms of violence because of discriminatory beliefs around their identities. This included the pattern that heterosexuality is the only sexual orientation that is acceptable. The LAC regional research found that 73% of young women (20-25) and 67% of young men (20-25) believe their friends believe that lesbians should not show their sexual orientation in public.

In addition to identifying patterns, this report provides a case study on how formative research informed a national campaign in Bolivia – **the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia** campaign – and some of the learnings from the campaign's activities.

The ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign was co-created between Oxfam Bolivia and women's rights organisations (WROs): Colectivo Rebeldía and La Coordinadora de la Mujer. The campaign also partners with 15 young people's organisations. Its primary aim is to get young people to practice non-violent and gender equitable behaviours in their romantic relationships.

The formative research identified three social norms that are contributing to increased violence in young people's relationships:

- **Love hurts.** This idea suggests that some degree of violence is inherent in all intimate relationships. To find 'perfect love', there will be lots of sour moments and violence is normal and inevitable.

- **Men must protect their partners, but this often translates into control.** Controlling how women dress, who they see, where and when they go out are often interpreted by young people as normal gestures of love. The rationale is that men are showing women they care, by protecting them from other men who want to take advantage of them. These attitudes reinforce the idea that a man 'owns' a woman, as well as the belief that women need protection, just like children.

- **Violence is a private matter.** Many young people shared the belief that if you ever intervene in VAWG occurring between intimate partners, you will most definitely lose a friendship because the couple will eventually reconcile. It was also common for young people to think it is the woman's responsibility to end a violent relationship.

By having three clear norms to focus on, the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign has been able to develop strategic plans, activities and clear messages to challenge and change these norms, including:

- **Engaging young people through Facebook:** The formative research identified that 98% of the campaign's target audience was active on Facebook. To ensure the campaign reached the target audience, a publicity firm was hired to create key messages and materials. Activities such as a meme contest led to high levels of engagement with the audience and provided a space to discuss harmful norms identified in the formative research.

- **Sparking conversations through social experiments:** Social experiments are research projects conducted in the real world and can take a variety of different forms. The campaign has conducted two filmed social experiments. The first was to expose the norm that violence is seen as a private matter. The second was to expose the norm that men must control their partner because of jealousy. Both videos sparked online conversations about two of the discriminatory norms identified in the research – with the first social experiment receiving over 1000 comments on Facebook within the first week.

- **Partnering with cultural influencers:** A collaboration with Bonny Lovy, a Bolivian reggaeton artist, led to a song about rejecting controlling forms of violence. The video for the song has been seen by over 1.2 million people. Six influencers of young people shared the video on their social media pages. In addition, partnerships with the TV programme *Bigotes* and Radio Disney allowed for significant reach to the target population.

- **Offline as well as online:** The young activists involved in the campaign were clear that activities needed to be offline in addition to the digital campaigning. Therefore, young people organised graffiti street art, hip hop shows, skateboarding events and street performances to highlight positive messages of non-violence and gender equality. The campaign also partnered with Mi Teleférico, the governmental transportation agency, to co-host a special concert with Ana Tijoux, a French-Chilean hip-hop artist to share the campaign's messages.

Whilst it is too early to say if the campaign has changed social norms, it is clear the campaign has prompted doubts in young people's minds about some seemingly inoffensive attitudes towards love and relationships that could contribute to intimate partner violence.

Another important learning has been the importance of not using INGO/NGO branding. The investment in a unique campaign identity has meant the messages have reached a young audience. Youth collectives who have joined the campaign have said that a lack of organisational branding means they can see the campaign as their own and not another NGO campaign.

'The issue of violence is not only a matter for the state, the police or the public prosecutor, it is also up to us as citizens to fight against the violence and macho culture prevalent in our society.' Christian Egües, one of the main young spokespersons for the ACTÚA campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for all actors working to end VAWG:

- Initiatives that aim to end VAWG must take a feminist approach, including:
  - Challenging and changing the social norms that make violence acceptable and replacing these with positive norms around non-violence and gender equality.
  - Promote models of male sexuality that do not depend on control, domination and entitlement over women's bodies.
  - Promote positive messages about healthy relationships including that violence is never acceptable, control is not an expression of love and that boundaries/independence are important.
- All initiatives aimed at ending VAWG must take an intersectional approach, including:
  - Ensuring formative research captures the experiences of women who face multiple oppressions.
  - Building partnerships with organisations led by marginalised groups of women, girls and gender non-conforming people.

Recommendations for local and national campaigns aimed at challenging and changing harmful social norms:

- Conduct formative research to ensure efforts target the most relevant social norms in that context.
- Partner with WROs and feminist movement actors from the conceptualisation of formative research to the design and delivery of campaign strategies.
- Consider not having organisational branding for campaigns, particularly if targeting young people.
- Identify unusual actors and cultural influencers to partner with – ensuring relevance to the target audience.
- Conduct research to understand if and how the target audience uses social media.
  - If social media is an appropriate channel to reach the audience, invest in the design and delivery of online spaces.
  - Ensure social media activities are monitored and adapted based on learnings.
- Ensure clear messaging on how activists can act when they see abuse and develop mitigation strategies to ensure activists do not experience violence when intervening.

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Recommendations for regional and worldwide campaigns and initiatives aimed at ending VAWG:

- Consider how regional and worldwide campaigning could contribute to the erosion of the dominant patterns identified in this report.

- Provide more spaces (online and offline) to discuss the patterns identified in this report and how to tackle these issues at a regional and worldwide level.

- Ensure worldwide and regional initiatives channel resources to feminist activists, particularly young feminist activists, at the local and national levels and their voices are central in the design of worldwide and regional initiatives.

1   INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is devastating lives, fracturing communities and stalling development. VAWG knows no boundaries: it takes place in all countries and across all cultures. Women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination, especially women of colour, indigenous women, women from marginalised castes, women living with disabilities and lesbian and trans-women, face higher risk of abuse.

Whilst there is no single factor alone that causes VAWG, evidence shows that some of the strongest and most consistent factors that predict VAWG are social norms that contribute to gender inequality in different contexts.[2] Social norms are shared expectations of specific individuals or groups about how people should behave. Such norms act as powerful motivators either for- or against individual attitudes and behaviours. Group members who conform to social norms often experience rewards or positive reinforcement such as social status and acceptance in the group. On the other hand, those who deviate from group expectations may be subject to shaming and sanctions of disapproval by others who are important to them. In this way, social norms act as informal social laws to regulate behaviour within a given social group. Below we give three examples of the types of violence women and girls face and the norms that contribute to the form of abuse.

First, for many women and girls home is a dangerous place. The most common form of VAWG is intimate partner violence: globally, it is estimated that 30% of women experience this form of abuse.[3] Data also shows that 38% of all women who are murdered were killed by their intimate partners.[4] Intimate partner violence can also manifest as coercive control, with male partners controlling women's lives through fear.

Norms that contribute to men's use of intimate partner violence include beliefs that:

- A man has a right to physically discipline a woman for 'incorrect' behaviour;
- Physical violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflict in a relationship;
- Divorce is shameful;
- Sex is a man's right in marriage/partnership.

Second, non-partner sexual violence is experienced by women all over the world. The global estimate of women who have experienced non-partner sexual violence since the age of 15 is 7.2%.[5] Most sexual violence is carried out by a single male perpetrator who is known to the woman.[6] Men's perpetration of non-partner sexual violence usually starts in adolescence, putting young women and girls at higher risk.[7] Furthermore, women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination experience higher rates of sexual violence.[8.] Evidence suggests that, as with other forms of VAWG, non-partner sexual violence is rooted in the patriarchal power imbalance between men and women.[9] A 2013 multi-country study of men's perpetration of VAWG found that among men who reported perpetrating non-partner rape, sexual entitlement was the most common motivation (I.e. 'I wanted to have sex').[10]

> **Norms that contribute to non-partner sexual violence include the beliefs that:**
>
> - Rape is a marker of men's power over women; and
> - Girls are responsible for controlling a man's sexual urges.

Third, more than 700 million girls worldwide have been forced to marry before the age of 18.[11] While early marriage affects both girls and boys, evidence shows that girls are disproportionately affected. Girls that are married at an early age are less likely to go to school, tend to suffer from sexual and reproductive health problems, and are more likely to experience abuse perpetrated by their husband and other forms of abuse.

> **Norms that contribute to early and forced marriage include the beliefs that:**
>
> - Girls are valued as wives not as individuals;
> - Unmarried girls are considered a burden to their families;
> - Girls' and women's sexuality is linked to family honour; and
> - Parents and extended family relatives are entitled and responsible for picking when and who a girl marries.

Rigorous evaluations and research are significantly increasing the evidence base for tackling harmful social norms and preventing VAWG through campaigning.[12][13] However, in the past many organisations' campaigns against VAWG have focused on changing individual attitudes rather than social norms and behaviours and/or have not been robustly measured.[14] Therefore, Oxfam's worldwide campaign Enough – Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls (the Enough campaign) focuses on challenging and changing the social norms that contribute to VAWG. The Enough campaign takes a one programme approach, which ensures campaigning is embedded into programmes. The campaign also recognises that social norm change must be evidence-based and tailored to the relevant context. To this end, it is relying on a strong research component at local and national level to ensure the campaign's effectiveness and appropriateness from design to evaluation.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS COLLATED RESEARCH

To inform national Enough campaigns, formative research has been conducted to identify the most relevant norms contributing to VAWG in the respective contexts as well as their mechanisms of existence. This report collates research conducted in eight countries across Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) as well as studies carried out in Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tunisia. The research findings were used to inform strategic campaign design and planning in each country.

This report aims to provide insights into worldwide patterns/commonalities on social norms that perpetuate VAWG. Furthermore, we want to reflect on how formative research can be used for campaign design. This paper is a learning product for researchers, practitioners and partners to support them to facilitate evidence-based practice and inform the discussion on tackling social norms to address VAWG.

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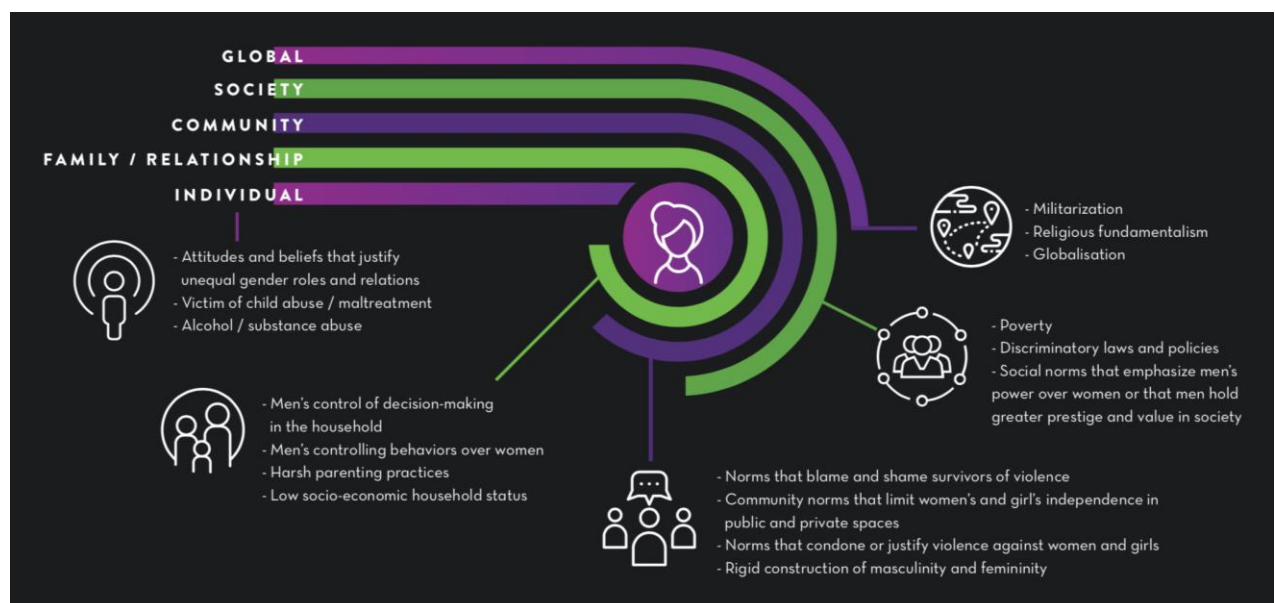
1.2 UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL NORMS AND VAWG

As noted above, social norms are shared expectations or informal rules among a set of people (a reference group) as to how people should behave.[15] Social norms are often held in place through social rewards for people who conform to them (for example, other people's approval and standing in the community) and social sanctions against people who do not (such as gossip, being ostracised or violence).

Social norms drive VAWG in two key ways. Firstly, some harmful behaviours are held in place by social norms that condone VAWG. These norms are based on shared beliefs that this behaviour is typical and appropriate within that reference group. Second, other forms of violence are underpinned by social norms around gender roles, family privacy, and male authority over women and children that can create expectations that perpetuate men's use of violence in some situations. For example, beliefs about men's right to sex within marriage, and that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband, can contribute to men's use of sexual partner violence.[16]

Social norms that contribute to VAWG are embedded in a system of practices and structures that maintain gender inequality at the individual, family, community, society and global levels (see figure 1). As the different levels perpetuating VAWG are interconnected in complex and dynamic ways, interventions that challenge inequality at one level can bring about changes in others.[17] To eradicate VAWG, it is therefore crucial to have a clear understanding of which social norms are in question and how the different domains interact to sustain these social norms.

Figure 1[18] 'The relationship between different levels and how this maintains harmful social norms'

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2 BACKGROUND

2.1 ENOUGH CAMPAIGN

The national formative research – conducted in Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tunisia – is part of the efforts to ensure the Enough campaign is evidence-based and theory-driven.

The vision of the Enough campaign is that more women and girls will live free from all forms of violence because social norms that contribute to VAWG have been replaced by positive norms that promote gender equality and non-violence. Therefore, the Enough campaign uses positive messaging on women's rights, and the powerful and positive contributions everyone can make in promoting gender equality and non-violence. To reach and influence its target audiences, the campaign is using messages that spark people to question their beliefs and attitudes around VAWG. Following sensitisation, the campaign aims to build the capacity of groups and mobilise them to reach out to their communities to promote gender equality and non-violence.

As of October 2018, the campaign has launched in 15 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin American and the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Eventually the campaign will have launched in over 30 countries. Oxfam is working with women's rights organisations (WROs), feminist movement actors and youth collectives at the national, regional and worldwide levels to campaign, influence and share learnings.

The campaign's theory of change is underpinned by the belief that social norm change is possible when approached through holistic, long-term, and multi-level gender transformative practice, and that people have the power to drive change. There are two primary domains of change within the theory of change: community norms and policy reform. These domains are interdependent: while policy and legislative changes can encourage or reinforce shifts in social norms at the local level, grassroots transformations in social norms can build momentum for policy reform at the institutional level. Both are vital to ending VAWG but they require different approaches to campaigning.

Given that social norms are deeply rooted at all levels of society, campaigning at the national and community levels are the primary focus of the campaign. The Enough campaign is strongly rooted in local contexts, having been co-created and co-organised by Oxfam country programmes working on VAWG, WROs and feminist activists. Each country team and their partners design a tailor-made campaign relevant to their context, choosing the issues to be addressed, key target groups and campaign tactics. The national campaigns aim to mobilise a diverse range of actors – including online groups, media, government officials, the private sector, key influencers/high-profile individuals, and educational, cultural and religious institutions. At regional and worldwide level the Enough campaign identifies commonalities to deliver joint work – including co-creating worldwide campaigning moments, research collation, taking part in regional and worldwide feminist campaigning actions, and co-convening feminist spaces with WROs and feminist movement actors.

2.2 COUNTRY BACKGROUNDS

In this section, we will briefly introduce the legal systems in the countries the formative research took place. Furthermore, we will present prevalence data of VAWG where available (sometimes based on our own research, but mostly based on external sources). This information will give a short overview of the background to which the research took place and is not designed to be a comprehensive synopsis of all issues related to VAWG in the given context. Societal views and norms on VAWG in the countries involved are not included here but are discussed in chapter 4 based on the formative research findings.

Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) VAWG is a significant and persistent problem. For example, 1,831 women were murdered by men in 2016 and 14 out of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide are located in Latin America and the Caribbean.[19] [20]

Across the region, considerable progress has been made in adopting laws that contribute to ending VAWG. First generation laws[21] that protect survivors of VAWG are in place in all eight of the countries included in Oxfam's regional research. Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua also adopted second generation laws[22] that provide more comprehensive protection and prevention of VAWG.[23] Colombia is the only country in the LAC study that extrapolated their efforts to include legislation on comprehensive sex education.

Despite legislative intentions, the LAC region faces shortage of funding to end VAWG, limited access to justice and a lack of political will which make it difficult to implement and enforce this legislation.

Nigeria

According to the 2013 National Demographic and Health Survey in Nigeria, 28% of women reported having experienced physical violence since age 15, while 7% reported sexual violence.[24] Prevalent forms of violence include female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage: one in four women between ages 15 and 49 has undergone FGM, and almost half (48%) of women between ages 20 and 49 were married before the age of 18.[25]

Although Nigeria has ratified international[26] and regional[27] women's rights protection instruments, discrimination against women persists widely both in law and practice. For instance, efforts to domesticate into national law the provisions laid out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women have not been successful. The Nigerian government has attempted to create a legal framework that provides more protection to women and girls – for example, with the 2015 Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act which prohibits FGM. However, the VAPP Act's effectiveness is hampered by the lack of adoption of the law at a state level. Nigeria has a tripartite legal system consisting of statutory, customary and sharia law (in

the northern states only). The three bodies of law contain numerous contradictory clauses that add a layer of complexity in addressing discriminatory practices and VAWG.

Papua New Guinea

In Papua New Guinea, women and girls experience high rates of gender-based violence. The precise number of women who experience violence is unknown, as the government does not systematically monitor the issue.[28] However, in a 2013 study on Bouqainville, an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea that endured a 10-year conflict, 80% of men who had ever had a partner reported that they had perpetrated physical and/or sexual violence against a partner.[29] Harmful practices that persist include the payment of bride price (the payment of money by a groom or his family to the family of the woman he is marrying), the 'giving' of women as part of compensation payment, and the brutal torture and killing of women and girls accused of witchcraft.[30]

The 2013 Family Protection Act was an important step forward as it criminalises domestic violence and allows survivors to obtain protection orders.[31] However, the act is not enforced. Police and prosecutors rarely pursue investigations or criminal charges against people who commit intimate partner violence – even in cases of attempted murder, serious injury, or repeated rape – and instead prefer to resolve such cases through mediation and/or payment of compensation.[32]

Solomon Islands

Oxfam in Solomon Islands' launch of the Side By Side Movement campaign with musicians. Photo: Oxfam in Solomon Islands. (2017)

Solomon Islands' cultures are incredibly diverse and predominantly patriarchal. Implicit within these cultures is a complex array of social and gender norms, which have been reinforced and strengthened over time through the process of colonization and exposure to Western institutions, including the church and government.[33] As a result, women experience vast and persistent gender inequality, which manifests itself in high rates of physical and sexual VAWG. For example, in 2009, 64% of women had experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence in their lifetime.[34] More recently, there has been a dramatic increase in recorded crimes involving family violence, from 55 reported cases in 2012, to 65 in 2013 and 806 in 2014. From January to September 2015, 726 cases were recorded[35] as a result of improved legislation and implementation.[36]

Currently, there is no constitutional guarantee of equality between women and men or adequate legislation defining discrimination against women. The Constitution continues to maintain exceptions for discrimination based on customary law in areas such as adoption, marriage, divorce, burial, devolution of property upon death, tenure, resumption and acquisition of land.[37] While women were highly underrepresented in the consultations on the draft federal Constitution (out of the 3,450 who were people consulted, only 75 were women),[38] the adoption of the Family Protection Act (2014) criminalising domestic violence is a sign of progress.

But despite this progress, access to justice for survivors of violence in Solomon Islands remains poor. At the time of writing, only one Interim Protection Order had been issued to a survivor of violence in the entire country.[39] Furthermore, the limited support services available to survivors of violence are almost exclusively based in the country's capital, making them inaccessible to those who live in rural areas and on remote islands.

Tunisia

Almost half of Tunisian women have experienced violence in their lifetime.[40] In nearly all cases of VAWG, the perpetrator is an intimate partner or family member.[41] However, VAWG in public spaces is also a grave concern, and more than 90% of Tunisians believe women should behave discreetly to avoid experiencing psychological, physical, or sexual violence in public.[42]

Ever since Tunisia's independence in 1956, the State has adopted a number of laws and policies to protect and promote women's rights. However, in many cases, such initiatives have been perceived as a form of highly politicised 'State feminism'. In addition, there remains limited progress towards gender equality because of a lack of enforcement of laws and policies. Against this backdrop, feminist civil society organisations have continued to advocate for a comprehensive framework for women's rights. Since the 2011 revolution, policy makers have made increasing efforts to create a legal framework that is more protective of women and girls' rights. For example, the 2014 Constitution acknowledges women's rights and equality between all citizens and commits the State to do all in its power to eliminate VAWG.[43] A commission for Individual Freedoms and Equality Committee was created by the President of Tunisia on 13 August 2017, tasked to prepare a report on legislative reforms needed to align existing laws touching on human rights with the new Constitution and international protocols ratified. At the time of writing, a draft law has been submitted to Parliament which aims to defend individual freedoms and challenge patriarchy and harmful social norms. In addition, another proposed law would bring in equality in inheritance between men and women, which would amend the current jurisdiction in the Personal Status Code.

The adoption of the first law to combat VAWG (including economic, sexual, political and psychological violence) was passed on 26 July 2017 and celebrated as an important step towards addressing VAWG.[44] Whilst there have been some signs of progress, it has been a struggle to put the law into practice because of the lack of funding attached to the law's implementation.[45]

3   METHODOLOGY

Since Oxfam strives to ensure campaigns are grounded in evidence, research is key to campaign design and planning. For the Enough campaign, many countries (including those not featured in this report) chose to support their campaign strategy with rigorous evidence by conducting formative research. The studies were not coordinated globally so the methodological designs and types of findings differ. For example, some studies focused on understanding the extent to which social norms are perpetuating VAWG, while other pieces of research attempted to deepen understanding of the mechanisms that hold social norms in place. Meanwhile, other countries chose to make use of existing studies that are informative to their work. Therefore, their research took the form of a meta-analysis that aimed to give a thorough overview of the existing studies' methodologies and findings. Herein, we focus on trends and diversity rather than strive for one common framework.

The campaign's worldwide theory of change guided the design and focus of the national formative research. But it is important to note the Enough campaign strives for a flexible approach to ensure national campaigns are context specific. Therefore, the formative research findings in all countries were used to develop a national theory of change (distinctive to the context) that aligns to at least one of the worldwide theory of change pillars. In Chapter 5, we examine in detail how one of the formative research studies was used to inform and develop a campaign in Bolivia.

Table 1 gives a short overview of the method, sample and involvement of WROs of the various studies included in this comparison. Herein we see a diversity of methods and scope of the research, with an emphasis on young men and women. Furthermore, we see in each study the involvement of local, national and/or regional WROs. In some studies, WROs were involved from the start in deciding on the scope of the research. In all studies, WROs were involved in the interpretation of the results for campaign design purposes. In section 3.1 the methodologies for each country are explained in more detail, including the research focus.

Table 1: Overview of methods and sampling per research

	Method	Sample	Involvement of WROs
Latin America and the Caribbean	Quantitative surveys	4,731 young women and men between the ages of 15 and 25 were surveyed in eight countries	WROs and youth organisations involved in research design. Analysis of findings was carried out through discussions among WROs and feminist thought leaders at national and regional levels. Campaign design was also done in collaboration with feminists and WROs.
	Focus group discussions (FGDs)	47 FGDs were conducted with young women and men between the ages of 15 and 25 in eight countries	

	Method	Sample	Involvement of WROs
	In-depth interviews	49 experts, journalists and influencers were interviewed	
Nigeria	40 in-depth interviews	Men and women of a variety of ages, marital status and with a variety of education levels in two regions	WROs were involved in deciding on the scope of the study and reflecting on the findings and formulation of campaign strategy.
Papua New Guinea	Literature review	The literature review synthesised theoretical approaches and practice-based evidence from a range of disciplines to create an evidence base that informs Oxfam Papua New Guinea's violence prevention strategy.	WROs were involved in formulation of campaign strategy in relation to the findings of the formative research.
	Scoping study with in-depth interviews and FGDs	A total of 36 women, 59 men and 20 community leaders participated in FGDs and individual interviews in three provinces	
Solomon Islands	Quantitative surveys	530 women and men were surveyed (equal ratio of women and men) in six communities	WROs were involved in formulation of campaign strategy.
	In-depth interviews and FGDs with youth	24 adult women and men were surveyed (equal ratio) and 12 focus group discussions conducted with youth (46 young women and 48 young men participants) in six rural communities across two provinces	
Tunisia	In-depth interviews	40 young men and women in peri-urban settings, with a balance across gender, education levels and marital status, were interviewed across three regions	WROs were involved in scoping the study, reflecting on the findings and formulation of campaign strategy.

3.1 METHODOLOGY PER COUNTRY / REGION

Latin America and the Caribbean

The research in eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean was conducted in 2017 with the support of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO in Spanish) and in Bolivia with Casa de la Mujer and Diagnosis. In total 4,731 quantitative surveys were carried out among young women and men aged 15–25 (55% women, 44% men, and 1% transgender and other gender identities), spread over the eight countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. At least 400 surveys per country were carried out online; however, in Bolivia and Cuba, surveys were carried out face-to-face, and in Nicaragua a combination of methods (online and face-to-face) was used. The survey contained 22 standard closed-ended questions, and a few country-specific questions to capture the particular cultural or national context. Dividing the sample by age (15-19 and 20-25) and gender, alongside the country comparisons, has been key in highlighting specific issues and evidencing which beliefs, attitudes and gender norms are more prominent in a particular country and among a certain group (for example, by age or gender). Further, qualitative data was collected through 47 focus group discussions with young people and 49 in-depth interviews with women's rights experts, journalists, and influencers. It is important to note that 87% of the young people who participated in the study said they lived in urban areas and 70% classed themselves as of medium social standing. Meanwhile, 78% were students: of these, 37% were secondary school students and 50% university students.

A comparison of the most significant harmful belief systems[46] and gender norms across the eight countries yielded eight main belief systems and social norms.[47] To identify these, the most significant harmful beliefs and gender norms in each country were analysed and then compared across the eight countries to determine which were the most common. A regional workshop, with feminist and youth organisations, developed the theory of change for the Enough (BASTA!) campaign in LAC.

Nigeria

The research in Nigeria was conducted in 2017 based on qualitative in-depth interviews with a sample of 20 men and 20 women from Bayelsa (on FGM) and Adamawa state (on early marriage). The sample was aged 18-35 with a variety of marital status and educational levels.

Due to the sensitivity of the subject, respondents were asked to comment on a *typical* response (empirical expectation) and what others would consider an *appropriate* response (normative expectation) to a situation described in a vignette (rather than describing personal attitudes or beliefs). Through the storylines of the vignettes, the respondents reflected on related sanctions when norms were broken. The results were discussed and interpreted, prioritised and linked to each other in a campaign design workshop carried out among survivors of VAWG, Oxfam Nigeria's partners, WROs, parliamentarians and a local celebrity.

Papua New Guinea

Conducted in 2017, the research in Papua New Guinea and was based on a literature review and a scoping study in Konomenpi (Eastern Highlands Province), Denbai and Waigar (Chimbu Province) and Yamben (East Sepik Province). A total of 36 women, 59 men and 20 community leaders from villages in the provinces participated in FGDs and individual interviews. The focus of the conversations was attitudes, knowledge and social norms across four gender-sensitive indicators related to VAWG: acceptability of violence, control over decision making, gender roles and beliefs around masculinity. The participatory learning and action methodology in the focus group activities (daily schedule, river of change and social network mapping) allowed the participants to draw on their lived experiences, enabling them to create visual and non-visual data to explore social problems, opportunities and questions in a way that overcomes literacy and language barriers. A participatory campaign design workshop was held in July 2017 with Oxfam's 11 community-based partner organisations, including WROs.

Solomon Islands

The #WomensWall street art project features murals of women pioneers and leaders from the Solomon Islands, such as Keinaho Prince-Chan, the first woman from the Solomon Islands to earn a commercial pilots licence and excel in a traditionally male dominated field. Photo: Bethan Cansfield/Oxfam (2018).

The research used to inform the campaign in Solomon Islands was collated from qualitative and quantitative research conducted on *Safe Families (*Oxfam in Solomon Islands' long-term project on community-level violence prevention) project areas. This was then validated by a variety of relevant secondary research conducted by other development actors and WROs. The primary formative research (conducted or commissioned directly by Oxfam) took place between 2015 and 2018 and consisted of:

- A quantitative baseline for the Safe Families project, comprising of a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice survey with 265 women and 265 men in each of the six

participating communities. Survey questions covered the prevalence, severity and causes of family violence as well as beliefs, attitudes, practices and norms contributing to this form of abuse; and

- A qualitative process evaluation for the Safe Families project – conducted in partnership with Monash University and The Equality Institute – comprising of in-depth interviews with 12 men, 12 women and 12 youth focus groups from six additional rural communities (not surveyed in the baseline). Questions focused on beliefs, attitudes and norms surrounding family violence, including the relationship between bride price and family violence.

This was supported by secondary evidence from a qualitative study of over 400 young people in rural and urban areas[48] carried out by Save the Children Australia and the Burnet Institute that included questions from the Gender Equality and Masculinity (GEM) set, as well as from the 2009 *Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety Study*.[49] WROs and other relevant development actors were involved in formulation of campaign strategy in relation to the findings.

Tunisia

The research in Tunisia was conducted in 2016 and was based on qualitative in-depth interviews with 40 young men and women in peri-urban settings in Tunis, Gafsa and Jendouba, with variety in geographical location, gender, education levels and marital status. Participants were asked about their first reaction to vignettes representing social norms and sanctions, including violence, in practice. Consequently, participants were asked about the attitudes, beliefs, and both typical and appropriate responses of their reference group (rather than individual attitudes and beliefs). Survivors of VAWG and health professionals were involved in the design of the vignettes. The results were discussed in a campaign design workshop with experts, NGOs, WROs and bloggers writing about VAWG.

3.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE COLLATED RESEARCH ANALYSIS

To analyse the different formative research studies we conducted a document analysis of all formative research reports and related campaign strategies per country (see table 2). Skype interviews with project managers were conducted to get an in-depth understanding of the methodologies and the findings. In some cases, project managers sent information via email.

Table 2: Sources of the document analysis for the collated research report

Country/region	Formative research	Enough campaign strategy (internal documents)
Latin America and the Caribbean	Oxfam (2018). Regional Report; Breaking the mould: Changing belief systems and gender norms to eliminate violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean	BASTA! Regional Campaign strategy and country campaign strategies
Nigeria	Oxfam (2018). Breaking the culture of silence; norms that perpetuate violence against women in North and South Nigeria.	Nigeria; Enough campaign strategy outline (2018)
Papua New Guinea	Oxfam and Alison Barclay consulting (2017). Evidence-informed innovation for the prevention of family and community in Papua New Guinea.	INAP NAU! Campaign strategy (2017)
Solomon Islands	IOD PARC Australasia (2016). Let's make our families safe (Mekim Famili Blong Iumi Sef); baseline report.	'Side by side'; a movement for gender equality campaign strategy (2017)
Tunisia	Oxfam (2017). Young couples in good times and bad; social norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls among young Tunisians in peri-urban areas.	Oxfam in Tunisia – Enough campaign National plans (draft) (2018)

4 DOMINANT PATTERNS IN THE DRIVERS OF VAWG

This chapter explores the three dominant patterns that emerged from the formative research: **1) male entitlement, domination and control over women's bodies; 2) rigid gender roles and power dynamics; and 3) beliefs that further justify violence against marginalised women, girls and non-conforming people.** It is important to note that there is some overlap in the patterns, demonstrating the inter-connected nature of the different contributors of abuse.

These dominant patterns should not extinguish or obscure the importance of analysis of local contexts. Social norms are context specific and a universal approach is neither desirable nor effective. However, the identification of regional and worldwide patterns may further support campaigners and programmers to develop regional and worldwide initiatives to complement local and national work.

4.1 MALE ENTITLEMENT, DOMINATION AND CONTROL OVER WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' BODIES

4.1.1 Patterns related to violence in the relationship

At the relationship level,[50] we see that in intimate relationships, women's and girls' choices over their bodies are dominated and controlled by their male partners and the belief that women's bodies should always be available to men.

In intimate relationships, there is a strong emphasis on **male sexual entitlement.** This becomes clear in the study from Tunisia, where semi-urban youth state that women should always be ready to satisfy a men's sexual urges. In Solomon Island, the research found that 52% of men believe a woman is obliged to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it. It also found 55% of men agreed that a woman should not refuse to have sex with her husband if he is drunk, whereas 55% of women said they should be able to refuse sex if their husband is drunk. Tunisian semi-urban youth who participated in the research stated that women should always be ready to satisfy men's sexual urges. The Tunisian research also showed that husbands using sexual violence or physical violence as a punishment for denying sex was acceptable for the respondents. Herein, the woman survivor is often blamed for the violence, since she did not adhere to male entitlement over her body (explored more below).

These beliefs are not only present or expected in marital relationships but also when dating. For example, the LAC research found 70% of young men aged 20-25 believe their male friends get angry if their partner does not want to have sexual relations.

Male dominance and control over women's bodies in relationships also manifests in the belief that **women do not/should not experience sexual pleasure**. In the regional study of LAC, 90% of young men believe they have a greater sexual desire than women and it is normal for men to have sexual relations with more than one women, but wrong for women to do the same. This

belief was also echoed in the Solomon Islands' research. In Papua New Guinea this is also reflected in the correlation of the status of men and the number of children they have.

These patterns of male entitlement, dominance and control paint a distorted picture of how loving relationships should be, contributing to the normalisation and acceptability of marital/partner rape and other forms of sexual, physical and psychological abuse.

4.1.2   Patterns related to violence in the community

In public spaces, we similarly found dominant patterns around **male sexual entitlement** over women's bodies, particularly if she is not 'protected' by other men. This results in the normalisation and acceptability of men to **sexually harass** women in public spaces and restrictive measures that prevent women from moving freely and independently. This is powerfully demonstrated by the LAC regional research that found **75% of young people state their male friends believe harassment is normal.** In Colombia, a young woman stated *'I believe that everything arises from the fact that men see us as sexual objects and as the persons they need to fulfil their sexual needs. And so, they start letting us know how they see us physically and what they would do to us …it makes you feel afraid.'*

Communities also use violence as a way to police girls' and women's bodies. In Nigeria, **FGM** is used as a method to decrease sexual pleasure for women. A male respondent in Nigeria stated '*They say that if the clitoris is not cut that the woman will be easily seduced... that she will always want to satisfy herself, so even in the absence of her husband she will not be bothered and will easily fall [to other men]'.* **Early marriage** is also used in Nigeria to control girls' sexuality and ensure they do not become /are not seen to be promiscuous. Communities also sanction girls and their families who do adhere to social norms on FGM and early and forced marriage. In Nigeria, a respondent stated: '*When people in the community hear that she refuses to get married at this age, they will regard her as a disobeyed child and insult her and make so many allegations against her [to] demoralise her and make her change her mind to get married.'* In addition, a male respondent said legal force may be brought to bear on a mother who refuses to practice FGM on her child*: 'If the community has law, and she will not do it, she must pay a fine over it.'*

Girls' bodies are often seen as assets that can depreciate or appreciate in value depending on community perceptions and notions about 'honour' contributing to **early marriage**. In Nigeria, this was summarised as: *'You are worth more as a wife than as a daughter.'*

Another dominant pattern at the community level related to male control, domination and entitlement over women's bodies is the **stigma placed on those who have experienced violence and blaming the survivor for the abuse they have experienced.**

Among the countries involved in the study, it is common to see communities blaming the actions of women to justify male sexual entitlement and violence. For example, in the research in LAC, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Tunisia there are specific rules for women about how to dress and that they cannot be out alone or at night, and if women transgress these rules they are culpable for any violence they experience. In the regional LAC research, **seven out of 10 young men aged 15–19 blamed women for the violence they experienced because they were**

dressed 'provocatively' or out on the street late at night. In Papua New Guinea, if women are out late at night they are not seen as good women in need of protection and therefore the violence is justified. These rules have variations in the different settings, for example in Tunisia women can go out independently in the evening if they are working or taking care of family members. However, the Tunisian research also found that a woman who experiences violence after refusing sex with her husband, is blamed for the violence, since she did not adhere to male entitlement over her body.

4.2 RIGID GENDER ROLES AND POWER DYNAMICS

The patriarchal culture across the research countries results in the dominant pattern of beliefs that **men protect and provide for and have authority over their family and good women are submissive to men, have children, and prioritise their family's health and wellbeing.**

4.2.1   Girls' and women's submissiveness to male family members

The research found that across the settings there was a strong pattern that women must be submissive to male family members in all aspects of her life.

At an early age, girls are expected to be submissive to male family members, for example fathers, uncles and brothers. In Nigeria, the research found respondents considered girls could show submissiveness towards men if they **married early**. It was also noted that **FGM** is performed to ensure girls remain obedient and respectful.

After marriage, women's most important roles are to serve their husbands and to have and to raise their children. The LAC study found 79% of young women believe that '*all women should become mothers'*. These beliefs are so strong that one young woman in Cuba stated: '*I think every woman is a mother, even if she doesn't have children*.' In the Solomon Islands, 49% of respondents in Temotu agreed a good wife should obey her husband even if he is wrong. Whereas, 29% respondents in Malaita agreed with this statement. In Tunisia, respondents stated women should tell their husbands where she goes, with whom she talks, and when she will return home, and should make sure '*she is not agitating him'*. The regional LAC research showed that a man has a right to correct or discipline the behaviour of women and for that he can **use any form of violence**. The Tunisian research found **physical violence** was justified when a woman does not obey her husband.

Being submissive often means that a woman should take care of the family needs in alignment with their husband's decisions. In Tunisia and Nigeria, it was very clear that women should act according to their husbands' wishes and not strive for equal decision making. Marriage is often viewed as a type of ownership of women by their husbands. In some countries, for example, a bride price is paid (Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea), whereas in others women are economically dependent on men (Tunisia and LAC). In Tunisia, any income a woman makes is often entirely dedicated to the family's needs. The LAC regional study found that one of the main reasons why women cannot escape violence is their lack of financial autonomy.

Decisions about if and how women participate in public spaces also need to be in-line with male decision making. In Tunisia, the research found women's participation in public spaces might be tolerated if they are seen to be *'playing by the rules'*. However, if a woman enters the public sphere without the support of her family, she might be 'disciplined' by her husband.

4.2.2 Men's power and control in relationships and families

Whilst women and girls are expected to be submissive, men are expected to exercise power and control in their families and relationships.

In dating relationships, the LAC research found young men have significant **control over their partners' social media use and phones** – with 80% of young people saying their male friends monitor their partner's phone and 62% of young people reporting that their male friends monitor their female partner's social media. One young man in Nicaragua stated: '*If you ask for the password or for the phone and [she] doesn't give it to you, you get angry and say that you don't trust her, that she's probably seeing somebody else.*' In Tunisia, research found appreciation for boys who monitor their girlfriend's social life and work. Monitoring of social media and phones are examples of **coercive control.**

For married men, most of the research pointed to the need to financially provide for the family and be the decision maker for the household. For example, in the regional LAC research and in the research in Nigeria and Tunisia it was seen as shameful for a man if he cannot provide for his family. Additionally, men are only considered fit for marriage if they have sufficient resources and preferably a stable income. In Papua New Guinea it is more important that the men control the finances, rather than bring it in. As noted above, an emphasis on the male bread-winner can leave women economically dependent on abuse men.

Interestingly, in most countries we saw greater acceptance of men who transgress these norms compared to women who transgress norms around submissiveness. Since men are held beyond scrutiny by patriarchal culture they are often excused for their failures as it is 'in their nature' to act irresponsible. For example, in Papua New Guinea, men are largely not fulfilling their gender roles and responsibilities in the family and the community. Younger men may face some chastisement from older men for not fulfilling these obligations, but older men face no sanctions because they hold so much power. As a result, men (particularly older men) do not face real sanctions for failing to fulfil their gendered responsibilities.

Controlling relationships and families also means that men should discipline their wives as they see fit. Men are expected to be all-knowing, and therefore are best to judge and punish inappropriate behaviour. These mechanisms of control are to 'protect' women who are considered vulnerable and in need of a guardian. Herein, violence is seen as unavoidable in many countries. In Papua New Guinea, the research revealed that there is strong belief, among both women and men, that violence is acceptable, and even necessary, when used by men to discipline women for not delivering on their perceived responsibilities or when their behaviour transgresses social norms. In the Solomon Islands, 65% of women respondents and 35% of male respondents agree

'Let's stop thinking it's normal': Identifying patterns in social norms contributing to violence against women and girls across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific

with the statement 'it is acceptable for a man to hit and hurt his wife if she doesn't do the housework to his liking'.

4.3 BELIEFS THAT FURTHER JUSTIFY VIOLENCE AGAINST MARGINALISED WOMEN, GIRLS AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE

Another dominant pattern that emerged in the collation of the research studies was how intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalisation make some women, girls and gender non-conforming people more likely to experience violence.

In Papua New Guinea, the research highlighted **marginalisation of divorced women and widows**, who are seen as having less value – since they do not have the monetary value of bride price anymore. Furthermore, they are considered to be property of the family in law who paid for them in the first place. Therefore, they are not respected in their families and often not protected against VAWG.

The research reports also found a dominant pattern of **violence aimed at those who transgressed norms around heterosexuality and gender identity** - lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gender, inter-sex and queer people (LGBTIQ people).

In terms of gender identity, the LAC region research found high levels of trans-phobia amongst young people, with six out of 10 young men (aged 15-19) believing it is not acceptable for people who are born with male genitalia to dress as women.

In terms of sexual orientation, the LAC regional research found that 73% of young women (20-25) and 67% of young men (20-25) believe their friends believe that lesbians should not show their sexual orientation in public. Young people aged 15–19 in Honduras and the Dominican Republic are the most lesbophobic, with 70% of Hondurans and 67% of Dominicans claiming that lesbians should hide their sexual orientation in public places.

Anita Guerrero, a young lesbian from Nicaragua, stated: *'I am aware that there are places where I can't risk being verbally or physically abused for expressing my affection for a woman; some women have been submitted to sexual abuse as a way of putting them right. This type of violence means that we can't just walk quietly on the streets without feeling fear; it is frightening to think that you may not get home alive one day.'*

5 USING FORMATIVE RESEARCH TO INFORM CAMPAIGNS: CASE STUDY FROM BOLIVIA

Young activists who are part of the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign in Bolivia. Photo: Oxfam in Bolivia. (2017).

In the past 20 years, Bolivia has adopted laws and regulations aimed at ending VAWG. Despite these positive steps, research has found that Bolivia has the highest rate of physical violence in 13 countries across the LAC continent and the second highest, after Haiti, for sexual violence. [51] UN Women suggests 75% of Bolivian women have experienced some form of violence over their life time,[52] and the official numbers from the Bolivian government indicate that one woman is killed every three days.[53]

In 2015, a national study showed that 75% of abused women never reported the incident.[54] The two major reasons these women gave were 'feeling ashamed' and 'the belief that no one would help'.

5.1 STARTING THE CAMPAIGN

The ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign launched in Bolivia in February 2017 after 12 months of planning. The campaign aims to make youth feel more confident in adopting positive social norms that promote gender equality and non-violence. It focuses on young people's romantic relationships because of the extremely high rates of violence facing young women – for example, during 2016, 48% of the reported cases of femicide were women aged less than 30 years old at the time of the crime.[55]

Based on the assumption that peer influence can have a positive effect in increasing violence-free relationships, the specific goals for the first year of the campaign were to:

- Encourage youth to socially disapprove of and intervene with their friends when witnessing gender-based violence, such as jealousy and control; and

- Deploy support networks for young women facing violence.

Oxfam and two WROs (Colectivo Rebeldía and La Coordinadora de la Mujer) co-created the campaign. In addition, 15 youth organisations were approached to be core stakeholders and allies.

5.2 FORMATIVE RESEARCH

Exploring VAWG in Bolivia using participatory action research

Participatory action research methods involve planning and conducting the research process with the people whose actions and thoughts are under study. In other words, the partner youth organisations were both the ones conducting the research and the subjects of the study. This transformative approach enables co-researchers to 'step back cognitively from familiar routines, forms of interaction, and power relationships to fundamentally question and rethink established interpretations of situations and strategies.'[56] Colectivo Rebeldía, Oxfam's partner organisation in Santa Cruz, supervised and trained the youth organisations to use this methodology.

To provide baseline data for the campaign, the partner youth organisations invited 224 young people (123 young women and 101 young men) to participate in 30 focus group discussions. The groups met at least once a month, from October 2016–February 2017, in La Paz, El Alto and Santa Cruz, the targeted cities for the campaign.

The focus groups gathered information on VAWG in Bolivia and explored opportunities for challenging and changing harmful social norms. Being an active part of the campaign meant young people became ambassadors and change makers in their communities. Taking on these roles enabled young people to reflect on their own internalised attitudes to VAWG. This process of internal reflection and the growing engagement of the ambassadors via the group discussions ultimately allowed Oxfam to tailor effective strategies and messages for online activities.

The focus groups discussed VAWG in the context of intimate relationships and identified the beliefs that were associated with violence and the normalisation of violent behaviours. These focus groups were run as safe spaces to allow participants to question what they thought was normal and voice their opinions without being judged.

Quantitative and qualitative surveys

The methodology of participatory action research is time consuming. Forming the groups and training them took significant time leading to a delay in implementing the campaign. To fill the information gap between research finalisation and campaign development, Oxfam and its partners conducted two independent quantitative and qualitative surveys in the three targeted cities. The first one looked into the values and attitudes associated with gender-based violence and cultural consumption of youth, and the second was a survey on gender roles and violence, media consumption and political participation.

These found that nearly half (48%) of urban youth (men and women) shared sexist beliefs that justify violence. Examples of sexist beliefs included: 'The way you dress provokes rape', 'Jealousy is part of love', and 'If you really love, you forgive violence'. The vast majority (86%) of the young people knew a friend who is suffering from violence by their partner. In addition, over half (57%) of young men and women stated their belief that very little can be done to prevent abuse, and 33% said that if their friend hit their partner, they did not get involved, because 'it's their private life'. The surveys saw more men agree with patriarchal beliefs than women: 54% of men, and 41% of women.

Comparing and analysing the results

Oxfam Bolivia, Colectivo Rebeldía and La Coordinadora de la Mujer identified three main social norms, which became the focus for the campaign:

- **Love hurts**. This idea suggests that some degree of violence is inherent in all intimate relationships. To find 'perfect love', there will be lots of sour moments and violence is normal and inevitable.

- **Men must protect their partners, but this often translates into control.** Controlling how women dress, who they see, where and when they go out are often interpreted by young people of both sexes as normal gestures of love – even when they are clear signs of jealousy. The rationale is that men are showing women they care, by protecting them from other men who want to take advantage of them. These attitudes reinforce the idea that a man 'owns' a woman, as well as the belief that women need protection, just like children.

- **Violence is a private matter.** Many young people shared the belief that if you ever intervene in VAWG occurring between intimate partners, you will most definitely lose a friendship because the couple will eventually reconcile. It was common to think it is entirely the woman's responsibility to end a violent relationship.

All three of these broad social norms are based on beliefs about how intimate relationships between women and men should be conducted and how violence within them should be understood. However, it should be recognised that these social norms are part of a much broader and complex patriarchal ideology that combine to produce a strong and coherent set of beliefs that justify VAWG, including **male entitlement over women's bodies in all spheres** and **rigid gender roles and power dynamics.**

Despite the statistics giving the impression that people are indifferent to VAWG, nearly half (43%) of young people questioned felt that violence could be reduced if the whole of society gets involved, and over half (54%) said they believed that the fight against violence is a priority for the development of Bolivia. These positive findings were also incorporated into the campaign design and messaging.

5.3 STRATEGIES DEVELOPED WITH PARTNERS

Bonny Lovy, Bolivian reggaeton artist, taking part in ACTÚA campaign activities. Photo: Oxfam in Bolivia. (2017).

This section will briefly explain some of the campaigning methodologies used to address the three main norms. This is not an exhaustive list – but should be read as key examples.

Engaging young people through Facebook

In Bolivia, a national study estimated that 96% of all Internet users have access to social media, and 94% use Facebook.[57] The formative research confirmed this was the case with our target audience, as 98% of youth, aged 15-29, living in the three targeted cities used this social media platform. A Facebook fan page for the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign was launched and publicity firm hired to help develop key messages and appropriate language to reach the target audience. The page aimed to increase awareness and promote positive social norms by generating an online discussion on VAWG. The page went live in February 2017 and three months later had a fan base of 21,329 people. As of November 2018, the page has over 38,000 followers.

Memes are worth a million words

The campaign has experimented with memes. Memes are made out of a culturally relevant image or symbol with added text or a caption, often as a way to publicly ridicule human behaviour. They are adopted and used by a community of people online, making them go 'viral'. The ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign capitalised on this interest by running a meme contest. The theme – *'El Control es Control es ridículo'* ('Control is ludicrous') – was announced on the Facebook page. In less than two weeks, the contest received memes from 134 young women and men. These were posted on the Facebook page and then the community was asked to vote for the best ones.

The contest generated nearly 20,000 reactions and 400 shares, and reached over 77,800 people by 16 November, with no paid promotion. The phenomenal interaction rate (25%) indicated that creating an online community to campaign for an end to VAWG really works. The online discussions that the contest created were the most interesting part. The aim was for the audience to not only view and share the memes, but, most importantly, to discuss and challenge social norms that justify violence.

Sparking conversations through social experiments

Inspired by other campaigns, the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia used social experiments, which are still a relatively new concept in Bolivia. Social experiments are research projects conducted in the real world and can take a variety of different forms. In more recent years, there has been an increase in using filmed social experiments that capture people's reactions to staged situations. If done correctly, these videos can powerfully expose negative social norms.

The campaign has so far developed of two different social experiments. The first one was staged by actors in a public space, to capture people's reactions when witnessing domestic violence out in the open. The goal was to confront the public with the social norm that 'violence is a private matter' to see how people reacted. Over the two hours running the experiment, only one person intervened. The video shared on Facebook was viewed 253,978 times and generated 14,371 reactions (of which 1,098 were comments), in one week. Most people were opposed to such obvious violent behaviour, and it sparked a conversation on why bystanders do not intervene.

The second social experiment was developed by some of our young activists at a weekend boot-camp. A video was produced to challenge the social norm that jealousy is a demonstration of love. The video was posted on the campaign's Facebook page and received 18,000 views and 16 comments. On Oxfam's Latin American Facebook page, the video had 255,000 views and 42 comments. Some people confirmed that controlling jealousy is normal whilst others argued that it is 'a sign of insecurity' and 'sickly'.

Combining 'offline' with the 'online'

Working with pop culture artists

The campaign partnered with Óscar Mario Paz Hurtado, alias Bonny Lovy, a young pop artist from Santa Cruz, Bolivia. With more than 961,000 followers on Facebook and 131,000 on Instagram, his music is a mix of reggaeton and pop, and he is most popular with teenage girls.

Whilst the idea of partnering with a reggaeton artist was celebrated by most of the campaign's young activists, concerns were raised by partner WROs. There were some concerns about Lovy's previous songs that made him look 'macho' or even sexist. After much discussion, they decided to take the risk to reach new audiences. A song with a video clip was produced for the campaign.

Results of the collaboration with Bonny Lovy

Traditional media

- Press conferences in La Paz and Santa Cruz: Both with around 100 people present. Activists were briefed on and presented the campaign messages with Bonny Lovy to the press.
- Media tours: Coverage on influential morning TV shows in both cities as well as securing high value coverage on evening news shows in La Paz and Santa Cruz. The campaign was also covered by national newspapers and by the Spanish news agency EFE.
- The campaign secured a powerful 18-minute interview on the TV show Bigotes.

Social media (17-30 May 2018)

- The campaign's fan page grew by more than 6,000 new followers;
- On ACTÚA's Facebook Page, the video has reached more than 1.2 million people, with 188,000 views generating 588 reactions and 2,270 shares.
- The video clip on Bonny's Facebook page and YouTube channel combined has been viewed 500, 000 times, generating 863 comments.

Influencers and radio stations

- Six influencers shared the videoclip on their social media pages, with messages supporting the campaign.
- TV programme *Bigotes* shared the video clip and the media interview on their Facebook page (847,699 followers).
- The campaign partnered with Radio Disney (the most popular radio station for the targeted age group) and other local radio stations to play the song, using the bill 348 – which aims to prevent intimate partner violence and punish abusers – as an argument to appeal to their social responsibility.

Public fairs and festivals: celebrating healthy relationships

Bolivian youth are still very much attached to more traditional types of campaigning to voice their opinions and demands, such as social gatherings and marching on the streets. This is why campaign ambassadors organised different kinds of events in the three targeted cities, to generate conversations on healthy, non-violent relationships. These involved graffiti street art, outdoor concerts, hip-hop and skateboarding shows, and street performances. One of the highlights of the campaign was partnering with Mi Teleférico, the governmental transportation agency, to co-host a special concert with Ana Tijoux, a French-Chilean hip-hop artist. Information materials were shared at every event to spread the campaign messages and empower ambassadors and make them feel part of the solution. In the first year of the campaign, ambassadors organised 38 activities involving 4,000 young participants, which secured media coverage on six TV programmes and seven radio stations, by two press agencies and in 14 newspapers.

5.4 MONITORING AND LEARNING: ANALYSIS OF THE FACEBOOK PAGE

It is critical to monitor and evaluate the campaign as a development intervention that seeks to end VAWG and promote gender equality. With this in mind, an external team of feminist sociologists, Lola Gutiérrez León and Dunia Mokrani Chávez, analysed secondary sources of information relevant to the campaign[58] and the comments and responses on the campaign's Facebook page, at six specific moments. In total, 883 Facebook comments were analysed, of which 56% were

written by women and 44% by men. The team also conducted three semi-structured interviews, one per city, each composed of one young woman and one young man; and four focus groups per city, composed of four to 10 young people, separated by gender. La Paz and El Alto were paired into the same focus groups because of geographical proximity. Finally, the external team also met with Oxfam's campaign team, and the WROs and youth organisations involved in the campaign, to share preliminary results and deepen the analysis.

The evaluators found a range of points of view as well as genuine reflections that in some cases show a change of perceptions on social norms justifying VAWG.

The action of tagging a friend on Facebook, for example, was used as a way to point out someone, even when it was done in a playful way. Tagging refers to naming a contact who will be notified and then look at the post. The researchers saw tagging as 'personalising a comment with a political intention'. **One interesting figure is that 79% of 'tags' are from women to men and from women to other women.**

Woman: '… you have to see this (tags a man). The video fits you like a glove'
Woman: '(tags a man) Haha we need to join the cause.'
Woman: '(tags a man) this is what I think.'
Man: 'Ok love. I understand a lot thanks to those words.'

There was also a sense of solidarity between women who talked about situations of violence in which they were involved, either as those experiencing abuse or friends of those experiencing violence. They are reflective, questioning and critical.

These comments show that women question themselves on a personal level but also question their friends, showing fellowship and trust. They also reflect on the conceptions of 'love' that society feeds us, evidencing some of the myths of 'romantic love'. When women tag their male partners, conversations tend to go around in circles, men tagging them back, returning the label of 'jealous' or 'controlling'.

Woman: 'You see (tags a man).'
Man: 'Haha do not throw me your ills (tags a woman).'
Woman: 'That's you, not me!!'
Man: 'That's you at seven when I'm not home.'
Woman: (tags a man)
Man: 'Haha, not you? Silly.'

Also, we are seeing increasing signs of both broader VAWG and violence in relationships being widely criticised by the ACTÚA online community. When the first social experiment video was published, showing a woman being harassed and pushed by her boyfriend because she refuses to show him her phone, a lot of comments were posted such as 'what a shame' and 'what outrage'. Some also pointed out there was something ingrained in our society, referring to sexist and stereotyped gender roles that are almost invisible (micro-machismos) and responsible for

producing, reproducing and maintaining a marked social order where the masculine predominates over the feminine.

Woman: '|What a disappointment. Please react to the violence. Let's stop thinking it's normal!'

Woman: 'It is because it is inserted in our chip that it is "normal" that as a woman, you can be publicly mistreated if you insist on having privacy. And if you tell someone that is not normal they look at you like weirdo or laugh. Really we all have to re-educate ourselves.'

Man: 'It shows how terrible machismo is on every woman.'

On the other hand, there are several comments that blame women for being victims of violence by their partners. These comments clearly show the disciplinary mechanisms for women and the system of privileges, as well as the moral, social and cultural values that consolidate inequality and hierarchical relations between men and women.

Woman: 'Basically, men turn a blind eye, obviously because they are the same, but what really caught my attention is that several women don't even move a finger to defend a person of the same gender. Even worse, they laugh and mock her… why so much jealousy between women, why can't we defend each other? What kind of third world ignorance is this…'

Man: 'Bitch, she was hiding something.'

Man: 'If you know what your partner is like, if you don't have anything to hide, you should have shown it to him to calm him down. Violence is not my thing, but neither is infidelity.'

These comments show there is still a long way to go to change perceptions of VAWG. But we can also assume that the discussion initiated by the campaign will help youth understand that these conceptions can be challenged, and there is not only one 'truth'. Some who are openly critical of violence and control may convince others that there are other ways of showing they care about someone. Again, the campaign focuses on creating spaces where these ideas can be discussed among youth.

The external analysis also confirms that the myths of romantic love are still valid among young people. The comments on the campaign Facebook page show the extent to which young men and women reproduce them on a daily basis. However, there are also comments from youth who question these myths after reading or listening to messages from the campaign.

Man: 'I didn't know, I thought I did it out of love. I will take this into account.'

Woman: 'I already took action.'

Man: '(Tags a woman) I learnt from this programme.'

The researchers found that these comments demonstrated the power of social media in enabling people to question and challenge personal attitudes. The dialogue between known and unknown people online opens up access to information and debate.

However, the research also found that the campaign ask of encouraging young people to take action when seeing VAWG was harder to do than to speak about online. **The campaign has to be clearer on how young people should act when faced with situations of violence.**

Friends can be instrumental in stopping the circle of violence, when they witness jealousy, control and aggressive behaviour. They can encourage their friends to seek professional help, and they can promote positive social norms within their groups of friends. Some campaign spikes have tried to show violent behaviour as ridiculous, using humour (the memes contest, for example).

Taking the campaign forward, Oxfam, WROs and the youth led organisations need to promote more of the positive attitudes in relationships, such as confidence, trust and respect.

Even if it is too early to say that the discussions catalysed by the Facebook page have influenced youth into changing their views about social norms that justify violence, it is clear the campaign has prompted doubts in young people's minds about some seemingly inoffensive attitudes towards love and relationships that could in fact lead to domestic violence. The campaign's focus on the myths of 'romantic love' seems to have generated a lot of interest with the target audience, and the campaign discussions have begun to broaden out beyond heterosexual relationships to include LGBTIQ communities. The ACTÚA campaign does not use the Oxfam branding and has created its own image, to reach younger audiences. This has been recognised as important by youth collectives that have joined the campaign, as they see the campaign as their own and not 'another NGO campaign'.

'I think the campaign uses an interesting approach. We don't talk of violence simply to denounce it, and we don't want to turn women into victims once again. The campaign aims to focus on something different, a more integrated approach, involving third parties. In other words: the bystander, the friend, the neighbour who knows that his/her colleague is enduring violence yet does nothing about it. But you as a person can do something about it. You can accompany, act, stop the violence. We want society to punish violence and violent people. We know that we won't solve the lives of women with this campaign, and we also cannot guarantee that a person who uses violence will go to jail. But what we can do, as citizens, is to look around us and act. The issue of violence is not only a matter for the state, the police or the public prosecutor, it is also up to us as citizens to fight against the violence and macho culture prevalent in our society.'

Christian Egües, Bolivia – Christian is a student and activist at the San Isidro Cultural Centre (Bolivia), and one of the main spokespersons for the campaign.

6   CONCLUSION

'LET'S STOP THINKING IT [VAWG] IS NORMAL'
YOUNG WOMAN, BOLIVIA

The findings of this collated report echo the findings of the growing evidence base on how to end VAWG and the recommendations from many WROs and feminist movement actors.

The dominant patterns of male entitlement, control and domination over women's bodies and rigid gender roles and power dynamics, add to the existing evidence base **that VAWG is rooted in, sustained and reinforced by gender inequality.** Initiatives aiming to end VAWG must take a feminist approach focused on securing transformational change in gender relations between women and men. This gender transformative approach should include a focus on challenging and changing the social norms that make violence acceptable; promote models of male sexuality that do not depend on controlling, dominating and entitlement over women's bodies; and promote healthy relationships.

The third pattern of beliefs that further justify violence against marginalised women and girls reinforces the need for initiatives aiming to end VAWG to take an **intersectional approach** that centres and addresses how women experience intersecting discriminations based on different forms of oppressions. The findings of the collated research indicate that marginalised groups of women and gender non-confirming people face increased violence. Partnerships with WROs and feminist movement actors should include organisations and groups led by marginalised groups of women and girls and gender non-conforming people

The report's identification of three dominant patterns that span across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific offers the opportunity for regional and worldwide campaigns to consider **how campaigning framed under these themes could add value to national work that is challenging context-specific norms.**

In addition, the collated research points to some practical recommendations on how to build national campaigns to challenge and change harmful social norms.

All countries included in this report have used the research to inform their campaign strategies, activities and messaging. It is clear that **undertaking formative research to ground campaigns in the local context** is an important step in ensuring the most relevant social norms are targeted. It is also key when developing a campaign that information is gathered on how violence is impacting women who are facing multiple forms of discrimination.

WROs and feminist actors are often best placed to understand the complex political, economic and social power dynamics that have led to women's inequality and the multiple levels of discrimination faced by marginalised groups of women. It is clear these actors should be **co-creators** – from the conceptualisation of formative research to the development and delivery of campaigns.

The case study from Bolivia of the ACTÚA, Detén la violencia campaign demonstrates the importance of **partnering with unusual suspects and cultural influencers**, including musicians, v-loggers (people who create video blogs), transport companies and TV stations. Ensuring the campaign does not include organisational branding has been vital in encouraging young people to adopt the campaign as their own. The case study points to the opportunities to spark debates amongst young people through social media, including via memes and social experiments. However, it is necessary to ensure clear messaging on how young people can act when they see abuse.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for all actors working to end VAWG:

- **Initiatives that aim to end VAWG must take a feminist approach, including:**
  - Challenging and changing the social norms that make violence acceptable and replacing these with positive norms around non-violence and gender equality.
  - Promote models of male sexuality that do not depend on control, domination and entitlement over women's bodies.
  - Promote positive messages about healthy relationships including that violence is never acceptable, control is not an expression of love and that boundaries/independence are important.

- **All initiatives aimed at ending violence against women and girls must take an intersectional approach, including:**
  - Ensuring formative research captures the experiences of women who face multiple oppressions.
  - Building partnerships with organisations led by marginalised groups of women, girls and gender non-conforming people.

Recommendations for local and national campaigns aimed at challenging and changing harmful social norms:

- Conduct formative research to ensure efforts target the most relevant social norms in that context.

- Partner with WROs and feminist movement actors from the conceptualisation of formative research to the design and delivery of campaign strategies.

- Consider not having organisational branding for campaigns, particularly if targeting young people.

- Identify unusual actors and cultural influencers to partner with – ensuring relevance to the target audience.

'Let's stop thinking it's normal': Identifying patterns in social norms contributing to violence against women and girls across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific

- Conduct research to understand if and how the target audience uses social media.
    - If social media is an appropriate channel to reach the audience, invest in the design and delivery of online spaces.
    - Ensure social media activities are monitored and adapted based on learnings.

Recommendations for regional and worldwide campaigns and initiatives aimed at ending VAWG:

- Consider how regional and worldwide campaigning could contribute to the erosion of the dominant patterns identified in this report.

- Provide more spaces (online and offline) to discuss the patterns identified in this report and how to tackle these issues at a regional and worldwide levels.

- Ensure worldwide and regional channel resources to feminist activists, particularly young feminist activists, at the local and national levels and their voices are central in the design of worldwide and regional initiatives.

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