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**Violence Against Children in  
Nyarugusu Refugees Camp:  
Reporting and Perceptions Across  
Generations**

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Violence Against Children in Nyarugusu Refugees Camp:  
Reporting and Perceptions Across Generations <sup>1</sup>

Erin K. Fletcher\*, Seth R. Gitter#, and Savannah Wilhelm#

**Abstract**

*There are over two million displaced children worldwide living in established refugee camps. Many of these children have escaped violent conflict in their country, but still are victims of violence in camps. Yet, little is known about this violence and how camp residents subsequently react to it. We examine the issue of reporting violence using a sample of over 300 child-parent pairs of Burundian and Congolese refugees residing in Nyarugusu camp in Tanzania. To elicit social norms around reporting violence against children we use fictional vignettes of violent situations with randomized characteristics against a hypothetical child to measure parents' and children's perceptions of when children will report violence. Parents and children have similar beliefs that the vignette victims are more likely to report violence in school than in other locations. One contrast is that parents believe victims are more likely to report sexual violence than other types of violence while children do not. Additionally, we find a strong relationship between a parent and their child's beliefs of when the hypothetical victim would report violence.*

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Key Words:

violence, children, refugees, Nyarugusu, refugee camp, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo

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## **Introduction**

In 2015, war and persecution displaced an unparalleled 65 million people—numbers that have never been witnessed before. Over two million of these displaced persons are refugee children living in established camps, where, despite fleeing violence, they continue to be vulnerable to violence from family members and other displaced persons (UNHCR, 2016). Although violence tends to be less severe in refugee camps than in situations with no official protections in place for the displaced, camps are often still dangerous (Tyrrer & Fazel 2014). There exists little formal research addressing these types of violence and vulnerabilities, particularly with respect to collecting survey data, but there is a strong desire by decisionmakers to better understand violence and how to prevent it.

International organizations and host countries have a mandate to provide social protection for refugees. As a result, they have a strong presence in camps and typically put in place victim services, but little is known about under what circumstances and to whom children are willing report violence, potentially undermining the efficacy of services and giving little insight into how to change the impetus to report. Regardless, organizations are not all-seeing and they depend on victims of violence to report incidents in order to offer them victim services. Here, we focus specifically on reporting. To better understand the situations in which children report violence, we use hypothetical situational vignettes to measure social norms, or perceived peer actions and beliefs, from parents and children. Drawing from previous research identifying the types of violence typically committed against children in Nyarugusu Refugees Camp, we describe the circumstances under which children are likely to report with the aim of informing policy and programming to better serve victims.

We present child and parent respondents with situational vignettes to better understand their perceptions of how other children in the community would respond to victimization. The vignettes are given separately to adults and children and are based on scenarios described in focus groups of violence against children in the camp. From these, respondents are asked how they believe a hypothetical child victim would respond to violence using fictional vignettes. The vignette questions are designed to elicit descriptive social norms, or individuals' perceptions of what is normal or typical behavior in the community. By measuring social norms rather than individual behavior, we minimize the problem of underreporting that is a result of stigma and fear of retaliation associated with self-reported victimization. Social norms can influence individual behavior when the norm is important to group function or individual identity, and salient to a particular situation. How to measure and better understand social norms to affect individual behavior has become a touchstone of international development programming and research in areas such as gender-based violence (Ball Cooper and Fletcher, 2013), political and societal violence (Paluck 2012), child marriage, governance (Trujillo and Paluck, 2011), voting behavior (Banerjee et al. 2014), and more (Tankard and Paluck, 2016).

The data for this study come from Nyarugusu refugees camp, located in the Kigoma region of western Tanzania. It houses refugees primarily from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). At the time of the survey, it held over 130,000 refugees in fewer than five square miles and was the third largest camp in the world. Barring the availability of a census, the sample is close to representative; we discuss sample limitations in subsequent sections.

Qualitative data collection on violence in Nyarugusu camp suggests that physical and sexual violence is common (Norman and Niehaus 2015, Women's Refugee Commission 2012,

and Mabuwa 2000). However, existing programming to prevent and respond to gender-based violence by organizations such as the International Rescue Committee is associated with perceptions of higher security and safety as compared to refugees' home countries (Norman and Niehaus 2015). Few existing studies address refugee victimization directly and this survey declined to ask respondents to relate specific experiences of most types of violence due to ethical concerns around retraumatization and potential for retaliation. Using data from a short module on peer violence and bullying, we do find that most child participants (80%) report feeling safe at school even though violence there is relatively common; 59% of children in our sample report physical violence by a peer at school.

Despite the clear importance of the issue, we are not aware of any other surveys that measure reactions to violence within the camp. This is not surprising as collecting such sensitive data is difficult. Respondents may fear retaliation or stigma if they report perceptions or experiences perceived as 'incorrect' or 'wrong'. Refugees are also less likely to report violence to those who can offer help due to barriers such as language, familiarity with whom to report to, fear of officials, and fear of deportation (Freedman 2016). In order to elicit information about norms without putting the respondent in danger or bringing up traumatic experiences, we use situational vignettes. In a previous paper with the same data set (Fletcher et al. 2017) we find that children were more likely to believe that a hypothetical child victim would report violence that took place in school. This paper builds off the previous one by comparing and linking parent and child responses.

Specially, we measure both adult and children's belief that a hypothetical victim would report an act of violence to an official such as a teacher, police officer, or medical professional. We make three key contributions that further our understanding of intergenerational transmission

of norms and survey methodology when interviewing child-parent pairs. First, our results show that parents see more gradation in violence in children. Drawing on previous research and comparing to results here, parents are more likely to believe that children would report sexual violence than other types of violence, while children are fairly uniform in their reporting expectations regardless of the type of violence. Additionally, we find that both adults and children believe victims are more likely to report violence at school than other locations. Secondly, parent and child responses are correlated, indicating an intergenerational transmission of norms, though we do not describe the mechanism. Finally, from a survey methodology perspective, our results suggest that adult responses may be altered when the hypothetical victim matches their own child's gender. Specifically, we find that parents of boy respondents are more likely to believe that male victims would report violence than female victims. If parents identify the hypothetical victim with their previously identified respondent child, they might think of their own boys when answering the vignette questions, perhaps they believe their own boys more likely than average to report violence. The result is robust for four subsamples of the data by the parent's gender and nationality.

In the next section we discuss in further detail the literature related to violence and social norms. We then shift our focus in the third section to Nyarugusu camp and provide a summary of the conflicts that occurred in the refugee's home countries of Burundi and DRC. In the fourth section we describe the data of the 300 child-adult pairs and include a descriptive analysis. Section five describes our econometric approach and section six the results using the vignettes randomization to estimate the relationship between parent and child as well as gender. Finally, in the seventh and concluding section we discuss limitations of the study, provide policy

recommendations focused on increasing school based reporting and potential areas for future research that measure program effectiveness at addressing these norms.

## **Section II: Literature Review**

Violence from civil wars and conflict, such as those in Burundi and the DRC, has been shown to have negative long-term impacts on children's health and schooling. Bundervoet et al. (2009) and Verwimp & Van Bavel (2013) find that both children's health and schooling was reduced in areas with greater violence from the civil war in Burundi. Jeusette et al. (2017), using a sample of children in Burundi, shows domestic and school-based violence reduces children's aspirations to leave agriculture for better economic opportunities. In the DRC, Kandala et al. (2011) and Lingskog (2016) find that civil war increased malnutrition and child mortality. Refugees fleeing this violence likely face better conditions in camps like Nyarugusu. In an assessment of the camp using interviews Norman and Niehaus (2015) conclude that respondents report feeling safer than in their home country even though they face some violence in the camp. Notably, those fleeing the violence in their home country carry those experiences with them, and might in turn affect both their perceptions of violence and their children's. We do not address violence experienced before participants arrived at the camp.

Asking children and adults direct questions about the violence they have experienced and their likelihood to report is fraught with ethical issues. First, respondents could face fears of retaliation and may underreport their experiences. Second, tallying experiences does not allow for inquiry into the social motivations for how a victim responds. Ultimately, we are interested in social norms that guide behavior, or how perceptions of what one's community "does" or "should do" can influence decisions to report or otherwise act. We describe here these perceptions and leave programming design for future iterations. In order to elicit these beliefs,

we use vignettes, which are short hypothetical stories about a violent situation that is realistic but non-threatening. Vignettes have been used to examine a wide range of sensitive topics including domestic violence (Aviram & Persinger, 2012), stigmatized lifestyle choices (Velleman et al., 1993), electing corrupt officials (Bannerjee et al., 2014), and drug use (Hughes, 1998). Like Banerjee et al. (2014) we randomize parts of the scenario to explore relationships, in our case between the characteristics of the violence including the victim, location and perpetrator.

One of the most valuable insights this study can potentially provide surrounds the impact of intergenerational transfer of violence and perceptions or attitudes. Intergenerational transmission refers to the transfer of individual abilities, traits, behaviors and outcomes from parents to their children (Lochner 2008). One explanation for this transmission is that family units are a primary socializing institution, providing guidance or readily available “scripts” for how children should behave (Black, Sussman, & Unger 2009). Even ignoring mechanisms, there is evidence that children’s perceptions and actions with respect to violence are correlated to their parents’ and primary role models’. In a systematic review, Thornberry et al (2012) find that child victims of violence are more likely to perpetrate violence as adults and are more likely to be victims of violence though the causal link is often weak in studies. Crombach, A., & Bambonyé (2015) show mothers in Burundi who were victims of violence were more likely to also use violence on their own children. Because we do not observe direct victimization or perpetration of violence in this survey, we envision the evidence here for intergenerational transmission of trust—here defined in terms of willingness to trust officials enough to report to them—for which there is existing evidence (e.g., Dohem et al., 2011).

The literatures suggests that men and women experience violence differently, and at different rates, and thus too we expect that perceptions of violence held by men and women may differ

due. Stark and Landis (2016), in a review of violence in conflict-affected areas, find that boys are more likely to experience physical violence and girls more likely to be victims of sexual violence. In the DRC, one study finds that over one third of adolescent girls had been beaten and one in five had been sexually abused in the last year (Stark et al. 2017). Given the more recent nature of the civil conflict in Burundi, parallel data is to our knowledge unavailable. Dijkman et al. (2014) summarize two surveys given in Burundi in 2002 and 2005, well before more recent violence documented here, showing roughly one-quarter of women had experienced violence.

Across sub-Saharan African, women are more likely to be the victims of violence at school and in the home. Leach (2006), in a mixed-methods study of Zimbabwe, Ghana, and Malawi, finds girls were much more likely to be victims of violence in schools. La Mattina (2017) shows that women married after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda experienced more domestic violence, while Horn et al (2014) in focus groups demonstrates a link between civil war and domestic violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In Uganda nearly half of women report being victims of domestic violence and 40% of husbands admit being a perpetrator; this high rate of incidence could be related to the influence of salient social norms on reported behaviors in a country where where three-quarters of women and half of men report having positive attitudes toward domestic violence (Speizer 2010).

### **Section III: Nyarugusu Refugee Camp and Data Description**

Nyarugusu refugees camp in Tanzania was in 2015 the third largest refugee camp in the world (Lombardo & Wheeler, 2016). The camp is widely considered overcrowded, hosting nearly 130,000 refugees at the time of the survey, double its intended capacity, in an area that is

smaller than five square miles (UNHCR 2016). The population is roughly equally split between newly arrived Burundian refugees and the longer tenured refugees from the DRC. Those from the DRC have been in the camp on average over a decade, with many having spent up to twenty years in Tanzanian camps, while those from Burundi came to the camp within a year of the survey.

Refugees from both the DRC and Burundi escaped extreme violence occurring in their home country. From 1998 to 2007 there were roughly half a million deaths per year in the DRC due to conflict (UNHCR, 2014). Many citizens of the DRC fled the country to escape the fighting, but have been unable to return home as the violence has subsided. There were two major surges of refugees from the DRC to Tanzania: the first in 1996; and the second one occurring from 2002-2005 (UNHCR, 2014).

The most recent conflict in Burundi is much newer relative to the DRC, though many refugees fleeing in 2015 were also witness to or subject to earlier civil conflicts and many Burundian refugees currently in Tanzania have earlier stints in camps (Schwartz 2017). Political violence began in 2015 as the head of state Pierre Nkurunziza announced his intention to stand for a controversial third term. In 2015, Nyarugusu's population doubled with record numbers fleeing violence in Burundi that included abduction, extrajudicial killings, and torture stemming from political uncertainty (Schwartz 2017). In September 2016, the number of refugees fleeing from human rights atrocities in Burundi surpassed 300,000 (UNHCR, 2016).

Though conditions are a substantial improvement in the camp over the countries the refugees have fled, focus group interviews conducted as part of qualitative work suggest violence is still present in the camp. Focus groups and key informant interviews conducted by the researchers working with IRC protection programs uncovered high levels of gender-based and

sexual violence (Norman and Niehaus 2015). Similarly, the Women’s Refugee Commission (2012) reported that refugees from the DRC faced problem such as sexual favors in exchange for grades, and beatings from authority figures including teachers. Further back, Mabuwa (2000) found that women were at a high risk for sexual violence and lacked reliable reporting mechanisms in camp. Formative research work for this study with focus groups and key informant interviews also uncovered significant sources of violence in schools including violence perpetrated by teachers as punishment, violence perpetrated by children on other children, and dangers on the way to and from school.

#### **Section IV: Data Description**

The data used originate from an International Rescue Committee (IRC)-funded study where one of the paper’s co-authors oversaw interviews of 316 parent-child pairs in the Nyarugusu refugee camp discussed in the previous section. Sampling was stratified by country origin, so roughly equal numbers of refugees from Burundi and DRC were surveyed. These data represent valuable information for two reasons. First, there is a lack of survey data coming out of the collection site, which these data address. Second, we can link parent and child responses, to measure intergenerational links.

To obtain eligible respondents, trained enumerators using tablets were deployed over two weeks to the 13 zones of the camp. Enumerators were dropped as a group in one part of a given zone each day and consulted a random walk generator from the tablet that instructed them to approach a given household. Enumerators asked to speak with any available adult in the household. These adults were read a short description of the study and screened to see if they had a child in school within the age range of seven and twelve. They were asked for verbal consent to

be interviewed and for verbal consent to allow a given child, who should also be present at home during that time, to be interviewed. When all scripts were read, a child selected, and consent obtained, enumerators began interviews with the adult participant, and upon completion, the previously selected child respondent. Parents were encouraged to stay within sight of the child taking the survey but were asked to give the child privacy to answer the questions without his or her parent hearing. Following the completion of both parent and child interviews, enumerators were given another random walk prompt by the tablet and repeated the process in a new household.

The sample was stratified by nationality and zone of residence, which roughly correlates with time of arrival, but not for adult gender. As a result, approximately two-thirds of adult respondents are female.<sup>2</sup> In that sense our comparison by gender should be interpreted as comparing males and females who would be present for an interview. The gender of child respondents is balanced.

Children and parents were each presented with two situational vignettes of violence. As discussed earlier, direct victimization was largely not addressed in his survey due to the sensitive nature of questions regarding physical and sexual abuse. We do know from focus groups and previous literature that both types of violence are present in the camp, though the extent is unknown. Focus group data collected before this survey by the researchers indicate that both sexual and physical violence are perceived as common, but this could be a result of a few high-profile incidences, as opposed to actually high rates. Rather, to better understand how children may react to violence we employ vignettes with randomized characteristics. Vignettes are broadly constructed to describe a victim experience a type of violence by a perpetrator in a

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<sup>2</sup> Exact population numbers by gender in the camp are not known. Of biometrically registered refugees in March 2017, about half were male and half were female (UNHCR 2017).

certain location. The victim's gender [boy or girl] and age [6, 10 or 12], violence type [teased, hit or sexual], perpetrator [neighbor, teacher or other child] and location [school, on way to school or home]. are randomized, resulting in total of over 4,700 potential combinations. Sample vignettes include: "A ten-year old girl was teased by a student on the way to school" or "A twelve-year old boy was beaten at school by a teacher". Each respondent received two unique, randomly selected vignettes and a child did not necessarily hear the same vignettes as his or her parent.

Following the vignettes, both children and adults are asked if they believe the victim would report the violence and to which particular people. We consider this perception of beliefs of what the hypothetical vignette victim *would* do as an indication of descriptive social norms, consisting of descriptions of perceived normative behavior, rather than injunctive social norms, or what the respondent believes the victim *should* do. Specifically, we focus on if the respondent believes victim would report the incident to an official. We define official as the school headmaster, medical professional, teacher, police, or camp staff. Respondents could list multiple people they would report to, however for ease of analysis we created a binary variable if the respondent believes the victim would report to any of the above-described officials. Adults believe the child victim of the violence would report to at least one official on average 77% of the time. Children are less likely to believe a victim would report, responding that a child would report to an official only 67% of the time.

We exploit the vignette randomization to test relationships between different types and characteristics of violent acts and the likelihood of reporting. Table 1 outlines the prevalence of each of the randomized characteristics in vignettes presented to respondents. We also include a measure of vignette order (*Vignette Number=1*), as each respondent heard two vignettes, in case

there is some learning that occurs. We include a number of controls representing the various randomized characteristics of the vignettes in our regression specification, omitting one category from each set of characteristics to form the comparison group.

First, we control for location as either happening at school (*Violence at School=1*) or other places in camp such as fetching water or in common areas (omitted) to identify whether school is seen as a safe place due to the presence of teachers and headmasters as well as being among peers. We are interested in the effect of having more powerful perpetrators as the literature suggests violence by an authority figure is less likely to be reported of fear of retaliation or consequences. Alongside, children may view telling on their peers as more common, so we estimate regression coefficients on instances of hearing about child (*Child Perpetrator=1*) or powerful perpetrators (*Authority Perpetrator=1*). The omitted category includes older children and adolescent perpetrators.

The vignettes included several different types of violent acts, but we simplify to categorize all violence as low, medium, or high severity, or sexual violence. We control for three of these, omitting the medium category. *Low Severity* (= 1) includes teasing; Medium severity includes things like rapping the knuckles with a stick, and high severity violence (*High Severity* = 1) includes punching or beating severely with a stick. Finally, *Sexual Violence* (= 1) includes being teased or touched sexually. Sexual violence scenarios are not detailed and enumerators used euphemism in many cases.

Victim ages were chosen to be close to the age of respondents, but also generalizable, and thus were limited to three categories. Older children may feel the need to handle situations on their own while younger children may be seen as more likely to seek help. Our regression specification includes dichotomous controls for victim age, which can be six (*Victim age 6* = 1)

twelve (*Victim age 12 =1*). Age ten is the omitted category. The influence of the gender of the victim (*Female Victim =1*) on reporting is also estimated.

**Table 1: Vignette Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>
Told Officials	76%	67%
<b>Vignette Characteristics</b>		
Violence at School	57%	57%
Child Perpetrator	29%	35%
Authority Perpetrator	49%	41%
Adolescent Perpetrator#	22%	24%
Low Severity	20%	20%
Medium Violence#	19%	21%
High Severity	49%	48%
Sexual Violence	12%	11%
Victim age 6	33%	33%
Victim age 10#	35%	32%
Victim age 12	32%	35%
Female Victim	49%	48%
Vignette Number (1 if first vignette, 0 if second)	0.5	0.5

#indicates omitted category for comparison group with multiple binary variables

As we are interested in the relationship between parent and their child’s beliefs, we first show that the two measures are related when examined without controls. Children of parents who reported the victim would report in both vignettes were more likely to believe the victim in their own vignettes would report compared to children with parents who believe the victim would report in one or zero of the vignettes, by 17 and 27 percentage points respectively. The relationship between parental and child responses illuminate the possible intergenerational transmission of violence perceptions within the population. While we cannot identify a mechanism, that these answers are closely related suggests that parents’ might exert an influence on their children.

One concern is in 26 cases out of the 316 parents and children could not be matched due to survey collection problems. Children were matched to their parents using parent first names, enumerator names, and time of survey. Child and parent surveys were to be given sequentially by a single enumerator in order to ensure matching. However, some children did not know their parent's first name, or the parent may have provided a nickname or alternate name, or the surveys were conducted on different days, and so some pairs could not be matched. We find that on average parents who were matched to their children and those that did not had no meaningful difference in how they responded to the vignette. Those that did not match answered the victim would report on average 1.37 times compared to 1.34 for those where we could match.

The hypothesized effect of victim and respondent gender of the victim is ambiguous with respect to reporting norms. First, as discussed above, a vast literature suggests women are generally more likely to be victims of violence, so respondents may have (or feel they have) better information about how female victims will respond to an attack. Second, male and female respondents might see one gender as more likely to report. In a previous paper using only the children's data from this same survey, (Fletcher et al. 2017), we found no strong relationship between the gender of the hypothetical victim and the respondent's belief that the victim would report. This finding is replicated in Table 3 below: 67 percent of male children believe a male victim would report, compared to 71 percent of female children regarding female victims.

For adults, gender appears to play a stronger role. Fathers were most likely to think that male victims (82%) would report than any other combination of adult respondent and child's gender, which is statistically significantly larger than the 72% for father's beliefs of girls. Mothers' beliefs were less differentiated by the gender of the victim, stating that 76% of boy victims and 74% of girls would report.

Exploiting the sequential, parent-then-child, survey design, we also examine more closely a methodological question of priming. Specifically, we ask what the adult respondents think of when presented with a vignette. Given that the child respondent was chosen before the survey was administered, we hypothesize that adults may think of the child who was chosen when they respond to their own the vignette, while children may think of themselves. We believe this identification is made salient when the victim in the vignette is the same gender as the child respondent and thus might affect responses. So the final two rows of Table 2 present beliefs based on the gender of the child paired with the adult. The responses for adults such that adults are roughly 12 to 15 percentage points more likely to believe the victim would report the violence if their child is male and the victim in the vignette is also male as shown below in Table 2. It is worth noting that most parents (89%) have both sons and daughters, but only one of these took the survey. One clear concern is that the result may just be a Type 1 error and factor of the data. However, this result appears to robust for subsamples of men, women, DRC and Burundi adult respondents as will be shown in the regression results. .

Table 2: Influence of Victim, Respondent's, A child of Respondent's Gender

	Male Children	Female Children
Victim Male	67%	67%
Victim Female	68%	71%

  

	Fathers	Mothers
Victim Male	82%	76%
Victim Female	72%	74%

  

	Parents of Male Child	Parents of Female Child
Victim Male	87%	75%
Victim Female	73%	72%

Demographic variables such as age, education, nationality, number of children and time in camp of the respondents have the potential to influence views on violence. Given the relationship between gender and violence discussed above we compare responses by gender of the respondent and victim in the analysis. One concern is that gender could influence other observable demographic characteristics if there was heterogeneity between male and female migrants on variables such as education and age that might also be related to the beliefs in the vignette analysis. We later use these demographic variables as controls in the analysis. There were two potentially meaningful differences between the demographic aspects of 109 male and 197 female respondents. First, adult males were 7 years older and second males were less likely to have only completed primary school reflecting higher levels of education. These differences may or may not be present in the population at large. We have balance on the other observables including time in camp and number of children. It is worth noting that the time-in-camp-months variable applies only to Burundian nationals as they entered the camp within a year of the survey, while the years in camp applies only to DRC nationals, who have been in the camp on average almost nine years. We were also missing education data on roughly 10% of the sample; there was no systematic difference between men and women on missing education.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Adult Demographics**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Age	35	42***
Burundi National	50%	50%
Did Not Complete Primary	29%	23%
Completed Primary	30%	15%***
Some Secondary	12%	13%
Secondary Completed	23%	33%
University Educated	6%	16%
Missing Education	9%	10%
Total Children	5.5	5.8
Boy Children	2.8	2.9
Girl Children	2.7	2.8
Months in Camp (If Burundi)	4.4	4.5
Years in Camp (If DRC)	8.8	9.1
T-test of difference *** p<0.01		
Female n=197 Male n=109		

## **Section VI: Statistical Model**

The main outcome of interest is the respondent's belief on whether a hypothetical vignette victim will report the violence to an official. For both adults and children, we measure the influence of the vignette characteristics on this belief, controlling for demographic characteristics. For children, we also include a measure of their parent's belief. In one set of specifications, we control for whether parents answered a victim would report on one or two vignettes. In a second, preferred set of specifications, we control for parents' beliefs using the mean the error terms calculated from regression analysis on two observations (one per vignette). Finally, for adults we also estimate the impact of gender of the victim, respondent and the paired child on the vignette response to test for priming by selecting a potential child respondent.

Below, equation (1) shows our initial estimation for the adult and child responses to the vignettes based only on the randomized characteristics of the vignettes. As mentioned above, these vignettes are hypothetical stories about a scenario where a child is the victim of violence. The respondent is asked how the victim would respond. We code the outcome variable as one if the respondent believes that the victim would report the violence to a person we have designated as “official,” i.e., a teacher, police officer, or NGO representative. We estimate the probability of an affirmative response for respondent  $i$  for vignette  $t$ , [ $t = 1, 2$ ], controlling for characteristics of the vignette, whose coefficients are denoted by  $\gamma$ . In select models we also include demographic controls, whose coefficients are denoted with  $\beta$ . The full model is detailed below in equation 1.

$$\begin{aligned}
 (1)Pr(Y_{it} = 1) = & \beta_0 + \gamma_1 Location\ School_{it} + \gamma_2 Perp\ Child_{it} + \gamma_3 Perp\ Authority_{it} \\
 & + \gamma_4 Low\ Violence_{it} + \gamma_5 High\ Violence_{it} + \gamma_6 Sexual\ Violence_{it} \\
 & + \gamma_7 Victim\ Female_{it} + \gamma_8 Respondent\ Victim\ Female_{it} + \gamma_9 VictimAge\ 6_{it} \\
 & + \gamma_{10} VictimAge\ 12_{it} + \gamma_{11} Vignette\ Number_{it} + \beta_1 Female\ Respondent_i + \beta_2 Age_i \\
 & + \beta_3 Burundi_i + \beta_4 Total\ children_i + \beta_5 Completed\ Primary_i \\
 & + \beta_6 Some\ Secondary_i + \beta_7 Completed\ Secondary_i + \beta_8 University\ Educated_i \\
 & + \beta_9 Missing\ Education + \beta_{10} Present\ months_i * Burundi + \beta_{10} Present\ years_i \\
 & * (1 - Burundi) + \epsilon_{it}
 \end{aligned}$$

For children we are additionally interested in the relationship between their parent’s answers and their own. The regression for child (c) responses to vignettes parallels the adult equation discussed above with the addition of the parent’s response in two separate analysis shown in Equations #2 and #5 For childrene we are predicting the probability that child "c" believes the victim would report the violence to an official ( $y = 1$ ), to help the notation we denote the child’s

response in lower case. In Equation #2, we estimate the difference in children's responses to vignettes based on if their parent believed the victim would report in 1 of the 2 vignettes they received (*Parent 1Yes*) or both of the two vignettes (*Parent 2Yes*) with children of parents who believe the victim would not report in either of the vignettes as the comparison omitted category.

$$\begin{aligned}
 (2)Pr(y_{ct} = 1) = & \beta_0 + \alpha_1 \textit{Parent 1Yes}_i + \alpha_2 \textit{Parent 2Yes}_i + \gamma_1 \textit{Location School}_{ct} \\
 & + \gamma_2 \textit{Perp Child}_{ct} + \gamma_3 \textit{Perp Authority}_{ct} + \gamma_4 \textit{Low Violence}_{ct} \\
 & + \gamma_5 \textit{High Violence}_{ct} + \gamma_6 \textit{Sexual Violence}_{ct} + \gamma_7 \textit{Victim Female}_{ct} \\
 & + \gamma_8 \textit{Respondent Victim Female}_{ct} + \gamma_9 \textit{VictimAge 6}_{ct} \\
 & + \gamma_{10} \textit{VictimAge 12}_{ct} + \gamma_{11} \textit{Vignette Number}_{ct} + \epsilon_{it}
 \end{aligned}$$

In Equation #5 we control for the vignettes the parent received by replacing the first two terms of equation (2) with a single measure of parent's responses controlling for their vignettes.

Specifically, we first calculate the predicted probability that the adult believes the child victim will report for their first and second vignette,  $\hat{Y}_{it}$ . As shown below in equation 3 this prediction is based only on vignette characteristics. So the error term contains both their observable and unobservable differences. We then calculate the mean parent error (see equation 4), which is the average difference between their actual response ( $Y_i$ ) and the predicted probability ( $Y_{hat}$ ) from equation 3 for the two vignettes. Finally the mean error term is used in the estimation of the child's believes as shown in Equation #5.

$$\begin{aligned}
(3)\widehat{Y}_{it} = & \gamma_1 Location\ School_{it} + \gamma_2 Perp\ Child_{it} + \gamma_3 Perp\ Authority_{it} + \gamma_4 Low\ Violence_{it} \\
& + \gamma_5 High\ Violence_{it} + \gamma_6 Sexual\ Violence_{it} + \gamma_7 Victim\ Female_{it} \\
& + \gamma_8 Respondent\ Victim\ Female_{it} + \gamma_9 VictimAge\ 6_{it} + \gamma_{10} VictimAge\ 12_{it} \\
& + \gamma_{11} Vignette\ Number_{it} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned}$$

$$(4) \text{ Mean Parent Error} = \frac{Y_{i1} + Y_{i2} - (\widehat{Y}_{i1} + \widehat{Y}_{i2})}{2}$$

The response of the child is estimated based on their parent's error term from equations 2 and 3. It is worth emphasizing that parents and children received unique vignettes and the characteristics were random for both and not correlated between parent and adult. We predict that a higher error term for the parent will be associated with children being more likely to believe the victim will report.

$$\begin{aligned}
(4)Pr(y_{ct} = 1) = & \beta_0 + \alpha_1 \text{ Mean Parent Error Term}_i + \gamma_1 Location\ School_{ct} \\
& + \gamma_2 Perp\ Child_{ct} + \gamma_3 Perp\ Authority_{ct} + \gamma_4 Low\ Violence_{ct} \\
& + \gamma_5 High\ Violence_{ct} + \gamma_6 Sexual\ Violence_{ct} + \gamma_7 Victim\ Female_{ct} \\
& + \gamma_8 Respondent\ Victim\ Female_{ct} + \gamma_9 VictimAge\ 6_{ct} \\
& + \gamma_{10} VictimAge\ 12_{ct} + \gamma_{11} Vignette\ Number_{ct} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned}$$

We divide the sample by nationality and respondent's gender in order to examine systematic differences in the subsamples. We performed a similar analysis on children in a previous paper, Fletcher et al. (2017). Here, the results and across gender and nationality the results are consistent with the previous findings.

Finally, we return to the adult responses to test the prediction about the link between the child's gender and the adult response. As we showed above in the descriptive stats, male adults were more likely to believe that a male victim would report. For both female and male adult respondents were more likely to believe a male victim would report if their corresponding child

respondent was also male. To the above specification (2), we add two variables that test if parents of female child respondents respond differently to vignettes about girls (*Daughter\*FemaleVictim*), and correspondingly, if parents of male child respondents respond differently to vignettes about Boys (*Son \*Male Victim*). Recall above there is a variable for female victim, therefore the comparison group these interactions is when the victim is male and the respondent has a daughter.

## **Section VII: Results**

Based on the strategy described in the previous section, we find and highlight four key results on reporting on violence and intergenerational transmission of norms. First, adults are more likely to believe victims will report sexual abuse than other types of violence while children show no difference. Secondly, both adults and children believe victims are more likely to report at school. Next, we find a strong link between a parent response to the vignettes and their child's responses to their own vignette. The point estimates and most of the statistical significance are robust to analysis by four subgroups based on the respondent's gender and nationality. Finally, we show that parents of boy respondents are more likely to believe male victims would report. These results are shown in more detail in the following tables: vignettes for adults (Table 4) and children (Table 5) and an additional analysis on the relationship between the adult's responses and the gender of the victim and their own child (Table 6). The outcome of interest in the vignettes is the respondent's belief a hypothetical child victim would report violence.

When comparing the adult responses (Table 4) and the children responses (Table 5) some similarities and several contrasts appear. Both child and parent respondents believe the victim is more likely to report if the violence took place at school (16% more likely for adults and 24%

more likely for children). However, adults believe that victims are much more likely to report sexual violence (18% more likely) than physical violence. Children believe all forms are equally likely to be reported with some weak evidence that high severity violence is less likely to be reported. All results are statistically significant at the 1% level for all four subgroup analyses by gender and nationality. Children also believe that when the perpetrator is a child the victim is more likely to report, though this result does not maintain statistical significance for Burundi children.

Table 4: Adult Responses Marginal Effect of Probability Vignette Victim Would Report

Sample	(1) Full	(2) Full	(3) Burundi	(4) DRC	(5) Female	(6) Male
Violence Occurred at School	0.158*** (0.0370)	0.186*** (0.0379)	0.128*** (0.0457)	0.243*** (0.0598)	0.161*** (0.0464)	0.272*** (0.0689)
Child Perpetrator	-0.0321 (0.0541)	-0.0269 (0.0542)	0.0382 (0.0606)	-0.0936 (0.0866)	-0.0106 (0.0617)	-0.141 (0.122)
Authority Perpetrator	-0.0734 (0.0471)	-0.0732 (0.0472)	-0.0255 (0.0578)	-0.131* (0.0761)	-0.0247 (0.0547)	-0.216** (0.0886)
Low Violence	-0.00908 (0.0546)	0.0211 (0.0517)	0.0435 (0.0546)	-0.0210 (0.0896)	0.0610 (0.0602)	-0.0730 (0.0991)
High Violence	0.0544 (0.0456)	0.0602 (0.0450)	0.107** (0.0524)	-0.0204 (0.0768)	0.0491 (0.0553)	0.0781 (0.0770)
Sexual Violence	0.177*** (0.0409)	0.185*** (0.0358)	0.139*** (0.0355)	0.225*** (0.0699)	0.206*** (0.0358)	0.154** (0.0676)
Victim Age 6	-0.0955 (0.0683)	-0.0888 (0.0686)	-0.0400 (0.0823)	-0.0938 (0.105)	-0.0828 (0.0864)	-0.0897 (0.121)
Victim Age 12	0.0196 (0.0590)	0.0251 (0.0578)	-0.0278 (0.0763)	0.124 (0.0857)	-0.00936 (0.0776)	0.0407 (0.0953)
Female Victim	-0.0597* (0.0358)	-0.0545 (0.0356)	-0.0403 (0.0444)	-0.0611 (0.0569)	-0.0966** (0.0442)	0.0350 (0.0625)
Vignette #1	-0.0358 (0.0508)	-0.0449 (0.0503)	-0.0500 (0.0594)	-0.0719 (0.0819)	-0.0306 (0.0645)	-0.0548 (0.0832)
Demographic Var	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	564	564	265	288	359	202

Standard errors in parentheses, coefficients for demographic variables are omitted for readability and available upon request

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

We hypothesized that parental beliefs about who will report are connected to children's and this hypothesis is supported by the results of the analysis of the children's vignettes (see Table 5 below). In models 1 we use the indicators for the number of vignettes their parent believed the victim would report. For children of parents who thought the victim would report in

both vignettes their children were 24% more likely to believe that the victim in their vignette would report compared to those with parents who did believe the victim would report in either vignette. There was not a statistically significant difference between children with a parent with 1 or 0 vignettes where they believed the victim would report. Models 2-4 examine subgroups by gender and nationally. In the case of gender the relationship between parent and child responses is similar for boys and girls, though stronger for children from the DRC than Burundi. In models 6-10 the main variable of interest is the parent's error term, defined as how much more likely was the parent to believe the child would report than predicted by the estimations from the first column of Table 1. The coefficient is statically significant and positive for the full sample; parents who are more likely to believe the victim would report also have children who are more likely to believe. To interpret the coefficient, the standard deviation in this variable is .31, so a 1 standard deviation increase in parent's mean error is estimated to increase the likelihood a child would report by 5.8% based on model 1. The result is robust for subsamples of boys and girls. By nationality, the statistical significance does not hold, though point estimates are of similar magnitude. The results presented here use the error term from the full sample, creating new error terms for the subsamples by re-estimating the first stage for only the corresponding subset does not alter the results.

Table 5: Child Responses Marginal Effect of Probability Vignette Victim Would Report<sup>3</sup>

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Sample	Full	Male Children	Female Children	DRC	Burundi	Full	Male Children	Female Children	DRC	Burundi
Violence Occurred at School	0.234*** (0.0428)	0.228*** (0.0599)	0.243*** (0.0626)	0.319*** (0.0611)	0.158*** (0.0580)	0.230*** (0.0425)	0.225*** (0.0594)	0.240*** (0.0625)	0.325*** (0.0613)	0.156*** (0.0578)
Child Perpetrator	0.200*** (0.0510)	0.237*** (0.0752)	0.171** (0.0706)	0.294*** (0.0729)	0.0225 (0.0799)	0.193*** (0.0512)	0.231*** (0.0753)	0.161** (0.0714)	0.295*** (0.0737)	0.0187 (0.0798)
Authority Perpetrator	-0.00955 (0.0543)	0.0628 (0.0809)	-0.0746 (0.0741)	0.108 (0.0783)	-0.189** (0.0797)	-0.0152 (0.0544)	0.0497 (0.0808)	-0.0720 (0.0744)	0.112 (0.0794)	-0.198** (0.0795)
Low Violence	0.00513 (0.0559)	-0.0547 (0.0804)	0.0624 (0.0785)	-0.0608 (0.0855)	0.0729 (0.0688)	0.00329 (0.0552)	-0.0561 (0.0790)	0.0553 (0.0779)	-0.0574 (0.0852)	0.0710 (0.0690)
High Violence	0.0800 (0.0621)	0.00796 (0.0968)	0.144* (0.0795)	0.0438 (0.0989)	0.0771 (0.0704)	0.0799 (0.0615)	0.00981 (0.0961)	0.136* (0.0796)	0.0536 (0.0986)	0.0733 (0.0713)
Sexual Violence	-0.00972 (0.0784)	-0.0904 (0.122)	0.0447 (0.101)	-0.0992 (0.123)	0.0371 (0.0860)	0.00405 (0.0767)	-0.0662 (0.119)	0.0519 (0.0997)	-0.0878 (0.124)	0.0474 (0.0844)
Female Victim	0.0560 (0.0428)	0.0826 (0.0612)	0.0331 (0.0618)	0.0441 (0.0641)	0.0216 (0.0555)	0.0615 (0.0425)	0.0949 (0.0604)	0.0278 (0.0615)	0.0580 (0.0641)	0.0153 (0.0554)
Victim Age 6	0.0434 (0.0518)	0.000912 (0.0764)	0.0840 (0.0716)	0.145* (0.0748)	-0.0648 (0.0744)	0.0562 (0.0511)	0.0500 (0.0729)	0.0729 (0.0728)	0.147** (0.0745)	-0.0435 (0.0723)

<sup>3</sup> Model also includes controls for child's gender and age, coefficients not shown for space constraints. The Parent's error term is calculated using predicted values and responses for subsamples of Burundi and DRC adults for models 9 and 10.

Victim Age 12	0.0584	0.0530	0.0806	0.103	-0.0164	0.0625	0.0764	0.0681	0.0958	-0.00919
	(0.0507)	(0.0740)	(0.0712)	(0.0763)	(0.0676)	(0.0501)	(0.0714)	(0.0714)	(0.0760)	(0.0673)
Vignette Number 1	-0.0380	-0.0217	-0.0554	-0.101	0.0396	-0.0322	-0.0225	-0.0461	-0.0939	0.0434
	(0.0427)	(0.0615)	(0.0600)	(0.0640)	(0.0535)	(0.0425)	(0.0607)	(0.0598)	(0.0641)	(0.0537)
Parent 1 Yes on Vignette	0.0660	0.0517	0.0719	0.0623	-0.0995					
	(0.0760)	(0.124)	(0.0970)	(0.0988)	(0.206)					
Parent Both Yes on Vignette	0.242***	0.282**	0.204**	0.209**	0.0324					
	(0.0756)	(0.122)	(0.0967)	(0.0954)	(0.191)					
Parent's Error Term						0.188***	0.225**	0.157*	0.133	0.0866
						(0.0689)	(0.108)	(0.0897)	(0.102)	(0.107)
Observations	510	262	248	270	240	518	266	252	278	240

As with children in the previous paper, there is little distinction by adult respondent gender in overall beliefs. We find no major difference between male and female adult respondents in their belief the victim would report. With respect to hypothetical victim gender, there are small differences. Adults are less likely to believe a female victim would report, though the result is only significant at the 10% level and not robust to subsamples.

To further explore the potential effects of gender and priming prompted by the survey design, we include a term for adults that interacts their own child's gender and the victim's gender (see Table 6). The respondent's own gender and victim's gender—or their interaction—does not seem to matter. However, the gender of the child respondent does matter. When both the child respondent is male and the adult's vignette describes a male victim, the adult is 14 percentage points more likely to believe the victim would report, regardless of the adult's gender. In this case the comparison group is parents of daughters when the vignette victim is a male. This result is consistent with the descriptive statistics in Table 3, so controlling for observable factors does not have an effect on this correlation. The result is robust and of similar magnitude and statistical significance for sub-samples of only male adults, female adults, DRC and Burundi. Importantly, the gender of the vignette victim is randomized and while parents who perceive stronger reporting norms could have systematically chosen male children as respondents, this selection is not apparent in the data.

**Table 6: Adult Responses Marginal Effect of Probability Vignette Victim Would Report  
with Gender of Child Respondent**

Sample	(1) Full	(2) Women	(3) Men	(4) DRC	(5) Burundi
Violence Occurred at School	0.196*** (0.0381)	0.168*** (0.0466)	0.272*** (0.0693)	0.256*** (0.0606)	0.134*** (0.0455)
Child Perpetrator	-0.0276 (0.0540)	-0.0119 (0.0620)	-0.112 (0.120)	-0.0992 (0.0873)	0.0470 (0.0574)
Authority Perpetrator	-0.0753 (0.0469)	-0.0299 (0.0546)	-0.201** (0.0896)	-0.131* (0.0765)	-0.0186 (0.0567)
Low Violence	0.00916 (0.0527)	0.0563 (0.0607)	-0.0969 (0.103)	-0.0414 (0.0922)	0.0322 (0.0555)
High Violence	0.0490 (0.0449)	0.0420 (0.0557)	0.0628 (0.0770)	-0.0363 (0.0778)	0.0978* (0.0514)
Sexual Violence	0.183*** (0.0343)	0.205*** (0.0347)	0.139** (0.0707)	0.237*** (0.0647)	0.127*** (0.0358)
Victim Age 6	-0.110 (0.0709)	-0.109 (0.0909)	-0.0771 (0.119)	-0.0877 (0.106)	-0.0715 (0.0887)
Victim Age 12	0.0207 (0.0579)	-0.0148 (0.0783)	0.0359 (0.0953)	0.142* (0.0829)	-0.0307 (0.0759)
Female Victim	0.0800 (0.0656)	-0.0624 (0.0592)	0.121 (0.0804)	0.200* (0.108)	0.0167 (0.0768)
Respondent and Victim Female	-0.120 (0.0826)			-0.260** (0.130)	-0.0283 (0.0952)
Daughter and Female Victim	0.00751 (0.0486)	0.0346 (0.0580)	-0.0378 (0.0923)	-0.0574 (0.0840)	0.0582 (0.0490)
Son and Male Victim	0.142*** (0.0392)	0.107** (0.0533)	0.168*** (0.0612)	0.173** (0.0681)	0.134*** (0.0414)
Vignette Number 1	-0.0374 (0.0501)	-0.0177 (0.0649)	-0.0664 (0.0819)	-0.0773 (0.0823)	-0.0383 (0.0578)
Female Adult	-0.0854 (0.0636)			-0.151 (0.103)	-0.0292 (0.0741)
Observations	564	359	202	288	265
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## **Section VIII: Conclusion**

One of the first steps to improving support for the large number of child victims of violence in refugee camps is to better understand the beliefs of these children and their parents. Using a matched pair sample of over 300 children and their parents in one of the world's largest refugee camps, Nyarugusu, our results shed light on these beliefs. To summarize we show adults and children think violence at school is most likely to be reported. That adults are more likely to think the vignette victim will report sexual abuse will compared to other types of violence, while children show no difference. Next, we demonstrate a positive relationship between the parent-child pair's responses. Finally, we show that parents of boys are more likely to think that male victims will report.

There are some inherent limitations to this study. First, the survey was not stratified on the gender of the adult so some bias may occur. We show small differences based on observables (age and education) for male and female adult respondents, though we cannot confirm whether or not these are present in the population. As a robustness check we also rerun the regressions using weights to correct for the potential overrepresentation of women and get essentially the same results (these results are available upon request). Second, the sample size is slightly small and we were not able to ask some questions directly to respondents. Both of these reflect the difficulty of doing survey work in refugee camps and the sensitivity of the subject.

The vignettes suggest that men and women have generally similar beliefs though men may be more willing to report physical violence against children and women believe boys slightly more likely to report. These similarities do not indicate that one gender is in particular need of intervention more than the other. Finally, the vignettes show a strong relationship

between parental and child beliefs. This is potentially suggestive that a policy aimed at parents could have the added benefit of influencing children's norms. Finally, both children and adults see school as a place where children are likely to report violence. This suggests a potential for partnering with schools in harm reduction.

The next step for research in this area is to identify ways to increase reporting of violence in order to get services to victims and potentially use social norms to reduce the acceptability of violence. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and other organization already run harm reduction programs in refugee camps like Nyarugusu, the direct effects of which we do not measure here, but could be examined rigorously or combined with other pilot programs and evaluated. One potential avenue is to provide education in refugee camp schools, though the potential effectiveness for such a program is unknown. The vignettes methodology used in this paper and the formative results described above could potentially be applied to program evaluation of programs that aim to increase reporting of violence.

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