Introduction

The Zambia Health and Wellbeing Survey (H-Well), also known as Violence Against Children Survey (VACS), is the first national survey of violence against children in Zambia. The survey systematically measures the prevalence, nature and consequences of sexual, physical and emotional violence against children. It enhances the country’s capacity to design, implement, and evaluate violence prevention and response programs and build successful child protection systems.

Objectives

The key objectives of H-Well are to:

- Identify the health and social consequences of sexual, physical and emotional violence against children;
- Identify the risk and protective factors for physical, emotional and sexual violence against children;
- Assess the knowledge and utilization of medical, psychosocial, legal, and protective services available for children who have experienced sexual, emotional and physical violence;
- Make recommendations to relevant ministries in Zambia, UN agencies, International and National Non-governmental Organizations on developing, implementing, enhancing prevention and response strategies to address violence against children as part of a larger, comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to child protection; and
- Identify areas for further research.

Partners

The H-Well Survey was a multi-sectoral undertaking involving in-country and international partners.

In Country: H-Well was a Government of Zambia survey led by Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MCGCD) in collaboration with Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH), Central Statistical Office (CSO), the University of Zambia, Department of Population Studies (UNZA, DPS), United Nations Children’s Fund in Zambia (UNICEF) and US in the household to build rapport with the family and to determine current socioeconomic status of the household and also includes a respondent questionnaire for 13 to 24 year olds, which includes the following topics: demographics, socioeconomic status; parental relations; education; general connectedness to family, friends, and community; marital status; sexual behavior and practices; sex in exchange for money or goods; pregnancy; HIV/ AIDS knowledge and testing behavior; experiences of physical, emotional, and sexual violence; health outcomes associated with exposure to violence; disclosure of violence; and utilization and barriers to services. There were a total of 1,819 completed interviews: 891 females with an overall response rate of 89.9% and 928 males with overall response rate of 92.8%. The overall response rate is calculated by multiplying the individual responses rate by the household response rate. At an individual level, response rates were 88.9% for females and 85.6% for males, and a household response rate of 93.3% for females and 94.4% for males, reflecting a strong survey design, well-trained interview staff, and a national willingness to participate. A key limitation of this study is that it may underestimate the prevalence of self-reported violence. Previous research suggests that it is not uncommon for adults who have experienced abuse in their childhood to have no memory of that abuse, particularly when that abuse occurred at a young age and by someone well-connected to the family.

The Zambia Health and Wellbeing Survey (H-Well) 2014

Methodology & Response Rate

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of any partner agency.
Zambia H-Well Data Highlights

Key Demographic Characteristics
- Never attended school: 23.3% of females and 25.1% of males aged 13-24 years
- Currently attending school: 75.9% of females and 71.1% of males aged 13-17 years
- Among those not in school, those who completed less than primary school: 4.3% of females and 3.5% of males aged 13-24 years
- Orphaned (single orphan) prior to age 18: 8.5% of females and 4.0% of males aged 13-24 years
- Orphaned (single orphan) prior to age 18: 22.8% of females and 18.8% of males aged 15-24 years

Sexual Violence
- Experiences of sexual violence reported by 13-24 year olds:
  - Any sexual abuse*: prior to age 18: 23.0% of females and 10.0% of males
  - Physically forced or pressured sex prior to age 18: 12.1% of females and 3.8% of males
  - Unwanted physical touching prior to: 18: 8.0% of females and 4.1% of males
  - Unwanted attempted sex prior to: 18: 8.1% of females and 5.0% of males
  - Reported that first sexual intercourse prior to age 18 as unwanted: 26.3% of females and 5.8% of males
- Experiences of sexual violence reported by 13-17 year olds:
  - Any sexual abuse*: in the past 12 months: 16.0% of females and 6.6% of males
  - Experiencing any unwanted sexual touching in the past 12 months: 16.0% of females and 4.7% of males
  - Experiencing any unwanted attempted sex in the past 12 months: 9.7% of females and 1.7% of males
  - Experiencing any physically forced or pressured sex in the past 12 months: 2.2% of females and 0.7% of males
  - First experience of sexual intercourse was unwanted among participants who had sex: 26.3% of females and 4.6% of males

Services for Children Who Experienced Sexual Violence:
- Reported receiving services for any incident of sexual abuse* occurring prior to age 18: 0% of females and 7.2% of males
- Reported receiving services for any incident of sexual abuse* that occurred in the past 12 months: 2.6% of females and 0.7%** of males 15-17 years of age
- HWI “Felping among those who had experienced sexual abuse*: prior to age 18: 58.9% of females and 41.9% of males aged 13-24 years of age
- Any sexual abuse*: prior to age 18: and know where to get an HIV test: 82.9% of females and 80.3% of males 13-18 years of age

Safety Abuse indicators include: 1) Unwanted Sexual Touching, 2) Attempted Forced Sex (sex did not happen), 3) Forced Sex and 4) (Pressed Sex).

Unwanted Sexual Touching: Has anyone ever touched you in a sexual way without your permission, but did not try and force you to have sex? Touching in a sexual way without permission includes fondling, pinching, grabbing, or touching you on or around your sexual body parts.

Unwanted Attempted Sex: Has anyone ever tried to make you have sex against your will but did not succeed?

Physically Forced Sex: Has anyone ever physically forced you to have sex and did succeed?

Pressed Sex: Has anyone ever pressured you to have sex, through harassment, threats or tricks and did succeed?

Physically Forced Sex: Has anyone ever physically forced you to have sex and did succeed?

Pressed Sex: Has anyone ever pressured you to have sex, through harassment, threats or tricks and did succeed?

Physical Violence
- Experiences of physical violence reported by 18-24 year olds:
  - Any physical violence* prior to age 18: 23.3% of females and 49.1% of males
  - Physical violence*: by a parent(s), adult caregivers or other adult relatives prior to age 18: 27.0% of females and 28.1% of males
  - Physical violence*: by adults in the community prior to age 18: 8.3% of females and 8.4% of males
  - Physical violence*: by an intimate partner prior to age 18: 6.1% of females and 7.2% of males
  - Physical violence*: by a peer prior to age 18: 3.7% of females and 6.6% of males
- Experiences of physical violence reported by 13-17 year olds:
  - Physical violence*: among 13-17 year olds in the last 12 month: 27.7% of females and 27.5% of males
  - Physical violence*: among 13-17 year olds by a parent(s), adult caregivers or other adult relatives in the last 12 months: 14.3% of females and 11.3% of males
  - Physical violence*: among 13-17 year olds by adults in the community in the last 12 month: 13.0% of females and 12.2% of males
  - Physical violence*: among 13-17 year olds by an intimate partner in the last 12 months: 4.4% of females and 1.2% of males
  - Physical violence*: among 13-17 year olds by a peer in the last 12 months: 7.7% of females and 10.8% of males
  - Witnessing of physical violence reported by 13-24 year olds:
    - Witnessing any physical violence in the home prior to age 18: 51.3% of females and 49.1% of males
    - Witnessing any physical violence (someone getting attacked) outside home and family environment prior to age 18: 41.4% of females and 34.4% of males
  - Witnessing of physical violence reported by 13-17 year olds:
    - Witnessing any physical violence in the home in the last 12 months: 25.7% of females and 20.3% of males
    - Witnessing any physical violence (someone getting attacked) outside of the home and family environment prior to age 18: 29.1% of females and 22.4% of males and 20.6% of males

Services for Children Who Experienced Physical Violence:
- Reported receiving services for any incident of physical violence among the 12-17 year olds occurring prior to age 18: 5.2% of females and 4.3% of males
- Reported receiving services for any incident of physical violence among the 12-17 year olds in the last 12 months: 29.1% of females and 22.4% of males

Emotional Violence
- Experiences of Emotional Violence:
  - Emotional violence* by a parent or caregiver prior to age 18 reported by 18-24 year olds: 15.9% of females and 20.5% of males
  - Emotional violence* by a parent or caregiver in the last 12 months reported by 13-17 year olds: 17.1% of females and 12.5% of males

* Emotional Violence indicators include: 1) Being told they were not loved, or did not deserve to be loved, 2) Being told someone wished they had never been born or were dead, and 3) Being ridiculed or put down, for example being told they were stupid or useless.

Experiences of emotional violence reported by 13-17 year olds:
- Emotional violence*: among 13-17 year olds in the last 12 month: 27.7% of females and 27.5% of males
- Emotional violence*: among 13-17 year olds by a parent(s), adult caregivers or other adult relatives in the last 12 months: 14.3% of females and 11.3% of males
- Emotional violence*: among 13-17 year olds by adults in the community in the last 12 month: 13.0% of females and 12.2% of males
- Emotional violence*: among 13-17 year olds by an intimate partner in the last 12 months: 4.4% of females and 1.2% of males
- Emotional violence*: among 13-17 year olds by a peer in the last 12 months: 7.7% of females and 10.8% of males

Witnessing of emotional violence reported by 12-17 year olds:
- Witnessing any emotional violence (someone getting attacked) outside home and family environment prior to age 18: 41.4% of females and 34.4% of males
- Witnessing any emotional violence (someone getting attacked) outside home and family environment in the last 12 months: 29.1% of females and 22.4% of males

Services for Children Who Experienced Emotional Violence:
- Reported receiving services for any incident of emotional violence among the 12-17 year olds occurring prior to age 18: 5.2% of females and 4.3% of males
- Reported receiving services for any incident of emotional violence among the 12-17 year olds in the last 12 months: 29.1% of females and 22.4% of males

Emotional Violence indicators include: 1) Punching, kicking, shoving or beating with an object, 2) Choking, suffocating, trying to drown, or burning, intentionally, and 3) Filing or threatening with a knife, gun or other weapon.