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Building safer communities through systemic approaches to violence prevention - A toolkit for participatory safety planning

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What Works in Violence Prevention? International Promising Practices and linkages to South Africa policies and approaches

The WHO is one of the international organisations which has undertaken research in the field of violence and violence prevention for many years. In 2010, WHO published a summary of research results on the effectiveness of violence-prevention interventions. The following table provides an overview on the evaluation results, and shows different kinds of intervention and their impact on specific types of violence²⁶:

Overview of violence-prevention interventions, with some evidence of effectiveness through types of violence prevented

Intervention	Type of violence					
	CM	IPV	SV	YV	EA	S
1. Developing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers						
Parent training, including nurse home visitation	•			o		
Parent-child programmes	o			o		
2. Developing life skills in children and adolescents						
Pre-school enrichment programmes				o		
Social development programmes				•		
3. Reducing the availability and harmful use of alcohol						
Regulating sales of alcohol				o		
Raising alcohol prices				o		
Interventions for problem drinkers		•				
Improving drinking environments				•		
4. Reducing access to guns, knives and pesticides						
Restrictive firearm licensing and purchase policies				o		o
Enforced bans on carrying firearms in public				o		
Policies to restrict or ban toxic substances						o
5. Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women						
School-based programmes to address gender norms and attitudes		•	o			
Microfinance combined with gender equity training		o				
Life-skills interventions		o				

26. WHO, 2010

Intervention	Type of violence					
	CM	IPV	SV	YV	EA	S
6. Changing cultural and social norms that support violence						
Social marketing to modify social norms		o	o			
7. Victim identification, care and support programmes						
Screening and referral		o				
Advocacy support programmes						
Psychosocial interventions			o			
Protection orders		o				
<p>Key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well supported by evidence (multiple randomized controlled trials with different populations) o Emerging evidence <p>CM – Child maltreatment; IPV – Intimate partner violence; SV – Sexual violence; YV – Youth violence; EA – Elder Abuse, S – Suicide and other forms of self-directed violence.</p>						

There is a lot that practitioners from different countries can learn from each other's experiences. And it makes sense to have a closer look at country-specific features. Each region and each community has very specific ways in which circumstances and conditions have unfolded, and a very specific set of local resources and sources of resilience to build on. This means: a thorough analysis of each situation is needed, and planning of measures by the people whose situation will be improved is essential. We cannot take a short-cut and use general evidence instead of specific analysis. Nevertheless, general conclusions can provide helpful insights for analysis and planning.