



**“...evidence suggests that there is low capacity amongst policy makers in low income countries to access and use research evidence and... [that] most decision makers are not naturally motivated to use research evidence.”**

— Department for International Development and UK Aid. 2014.  
What is the evidence on the impact of research on international development?  
A DFID literature review, London, UK.

The Multi Country Study on the Drivers of Violence demonstrates how establishing appropriate nationally-owned and directed processes engages policy makers with the willingness to both identify and respond to even highly sensitive issues.

## ZIMBABWE

**The Challenge:** The National Baseline Study for Adolescent Life Experiences (NBSLEA), Zimbabwe’s first violence against children survey, was completed in 2012. The results—which uncover high rates of sexual, physical and emotional violence—have yet to be officially recognized by the Government. Zimbabwe’s office of statistics, ZIMSTAT, will not release the data for further analysis.



**The Research Uptake:** With advocacy by UNICEF’s Zimbabwe Country Office supported by the Multi Country Study on the Driver’s of Violence credo: **national analysis implies national solutions**, ZIMSTAT invited the OoR and its academic partner, the University of Edinburgh, to train on secondary analysis using the NBSLEA data set.

**The Outcome:** The ZIMSTAT team eagerly learned how to generate wealth quintiles and conduct health outcomes analysis, risk and protective factor analysis and meditational analysis. An Action Analysis Template with simple, guided questions around key findings from the analysis allows ZIMSTAT to present its work while actively engaging the study’s Inter-Ministerial Advisory Committee in the interpretation of data and recommendations for response.

**Lessons Learned:** National data teams responsible for fielding population-based surveys are often ‘in the dark’ about why a survey is being done or how the results might be used. Too often, nationals are removed from making meaning of the analysis. Providing space to analyze and interpret findings is more likely to lead to ownership of an issue and naturally produce a commitment to change.

**“Before this training, I didn’t even know why Child Protection was important. Now I understand how complex this issue of violence really is—we should have understood this before we trained our field teams.”**

**“When can you come back? Can you teach us how to do the latent class demand analysis?”**

— Statisticians, ZIMSTAT

## PERU



**The Challenge:** In 2013, the Government of Peru piloted a large, nationally representative household survey on violence against children. The rapidly analyzed results were disconcerting and raised such overwhelming concerns about Peruvian children's welfare, that the survey findings were immediately (and quietly) dismissed with no further action taken.

**The Research Uptake:** Motivated by the multi-country study's central research question: 'What drives violence and what can be done to address it?' UNICEF's Peru Country Office persuasively advocated to the Ministry of Gender, the data owners, to release the data to UNICEF for secondary analysis. Selected allies from the Ministry of Finance (Peru's most evidence-based ministry) and the study's Technical Working Group supported the process. Guided by the study's academic partner, employing skype-based and face-to-face training, the data analysis is well underway and fully funded by the Government

**The Outcome:** The Ministries of Gender and Finance have agreed to co-publish the findings on the Government's national website accompanied by a national plan of action to address violence prevention.

**Lessons Learned:** Ministries that oversee child welfare issues are often disempowered with weak bases of evidence and low budgets to match. Unsettling survey results can be paralyzing. However, strong advocacy accompanied by a systematic action-oriented research plan that acknowledges collective national capacities across ministry lines, is proving to move violence squarely onto Peru's public's agenda, ensuring Government accountability in the process.

**“The training will build national capacity for analysis on violence against children, define strategies and evaluate success (or failure) linking knowledge generation with policy and programmes interventions at national and local level.”**

— Statistician, El Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI)

**Outputs:** In both Zimbabwe and Peru, highly sensitive data on violence against children—once shunned and even dismissed by some high level officials—is not only being analyzed in-country but applied towards the development of innovative solutions for violence prevention.

- The Action Analysis Template is a simple and inclusive way to garner a national 'read' on findings and generate contextually sound recommendations and solutions.
- A peer review manuscript entitled: Data Sovereignty: A Tale of Two Surveys will be published in 2015 with co-authors from Zimbabwe and Peru advocating for less 'data extraction' and increased in-country training so that nationals can access, evaluate and use research evidence for improved policy and practice.

## CONTACT

M. Catherine Maternowska PhD, MPH

mcmaternowska@unicef.org

+39 055 203 3345

UNICEF Office of Research—Innocenti

Academic Partner: University of Edinburgh