REAL FATHERS INITIATIVE

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Semi-Annual Report

(October 2013-March 2014)

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Institute for Reproductive Health Georgetown University

Save the Children

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APS	Annual Program Statement
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
CAO	Chief Administration Officer
DHO	District Health Officer
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
GREAT	Gender Roles Equality and Transformations Project
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IRC	Institutional Review Committee
IRH	Institute for Reproductive Health
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PRH	USAID Office of Population and Reproductive Health
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
REAL	Responsible, Engaged and Loving
RMEC	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TASO	The AIDS Support Organization
UNCST	Uganda National Center for Science and Technology
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

A. INTRODUCTION

In October 2012, additional funds were added to the Gender Roles, Equality and Transformations (GREAT) Project under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-10-00073 to develop and test an approach for engaging men and boys in the prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV) in northern Uganda. Georgetown University's Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) chose to develop a father-focused parenting intervention given the strong intergenerational links between IPV and harsh punishment of children.

Figure 1 | Young father with his child [Photo Credit: Dickens Ojamuge, Save the Children International]

The project, named the Responsible, Engaged and Loving (REAL) Fathers Initiative, is being implemented in partnership with Save the Children in Atiak sub-County of Amuru District. The project started in October 2013 and will be implemented through September 2014.

The REAL Fathers Initiative is testing the acceptability, feasibility, and effectiveness of the following interventions:

- A **mentoring program** which aims to build positive parenting practices and relationship skills among young fathers (ages 16-25 years) in post-conflict northern Uganda
- A **community poster series** that uses emotion-based messages conveyed through community posters to catalyze diffusion of reflection on fatherhood norms, parenting practices, and IPV

The REAL intervention design is based on a review of the literature and an analysis of the most effective father-centered approaches to reduce IPV. The interventions are designed to reach young men before their expectations, attitudes, and behaviors related to relationships are well developed, which the literature suggests is the most effective approach. In addition, the intervention focuses on young fathers who are parenting toddlers (ages 1-3 years) as this a developmental stage where children begin to test boundaries and exert independence, and is thus when disciplining often begins. Evidence also suggests that during toddlerhood, children carefully observe and later model their parents' behaviors.

These interventions are being evaluated with a pretest-posttest control-experimental design in which fathers (ages 16-25 years) have been randomly assigned to intervention and control arms of the study. Men who were assigned to the intervention arm are participating in a series of 12 mentoring sessions (six individual and six group) and are being exposed to the community poster series. Men assigned to the control arm are only being exposed to the community poster series.

Focused Life Histories are planned to be conducted with young fathers from the intervention arm to explore the various factors contributing to any changes (or lack of) among intervention participants. After endline data have been collected and analyzed, participants from the control arm will have the opportunity to receive elements of the intervention proven to be most successful.

This report presents progress achieved in the first half of Year 2 of the project (October 1, 2012 – March 31, 2014). Highlighted activities for this reporting period include the recruitment and training of additional mentors for Cohort 2; recruitment of newly married couples for Cohort 2 and implementation of individual and group mentoring sessions for Cohort 2; focus group discussions with wives and partners;

community celebrations for Cohort 1; monitoring activities including observation visits; and a meeting for mentors to share experiences.

B. PROGRESS OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1. Project Management

Significant project management activities occurred during the first two quarters of Year 2 include:

- **Additional Funding:** IRH received two grant awards in January 2014, one from the Oak Foundation and another from an anonymous donor. Funds from the Oak Foundation were provided to strengthen the rigor of the evaluation design of the REAL Fathers Initiative by supporting the increase in sample size from 340 to 500 young fathers. The anonymous donor award was provided for general support in ensuring high quality data. These funds include but are not limited to supporting data collection at 12 months post intervention to assess sustained change over time.
- **Staff Changes:** Melissa Adams, IRH lead on the REAL Fathers Initiative, left IRH in December 2013. Kim Ashburn joined IRH in January 2014, assuming the role of the REAL Fathers Initiative IRH lead. No other staffing changes occurred during this period.

IRH and Save the Children project staff participated in virtual meetings on a regular basis throughout the past six months. During these meetings headquarters and field-based project staff reviewed the work plan, discussed progress, successes and challenges, and identified solutions or needed work plan adjustments.

2. Stakeholder and Community Involvement

Figure 2 | Community Introductory Meeting at Palukere Village
[Photo Credit: Dickens Ojamuge, Save the Children International]

With the additional funding support from the Oak Foundation and anonymous donor, the REAL Fathers Initiative was able to increase the sample size of the study from 340 to 500 young fathers by adding a second cohort. This addition of Cohort 2 enabled the project to expand to the last two of the eight parishes in Atiak sub-county that had previously been left out of the study, Bibia and Pacilo. All eight parishes in Atiak are now covered by the REAL Fathers Initiative. As with Cohort 1, introductory meetings were held in each of the study communities. These meetings were attended by 204 men and women including a range of community residents, parish chiefs, local council representatives, clan leaders (*Rwot Kweris*), and newly married men and their wives. Working through the existing community structures and engaging the entire community into these introductory meetings facilitated access to the target population and gained the involvement and collaboration of local leaders. An integral part of community engagement, the Rwot Kweris and the Local Council 1 (LC1) leaders were influential in reminding the newly recruited Cohort 2 young fathers to attend the training and inception meetings.

Project staff engaged with stakeholders during the reporting period. The REAL Project Specialist participated in the GREAT Project Partnership Consortium and TAG (Ministry of Health, UNFPA, and USAID representatives) review meeting. During the

meeting, a project update was provided and practical steps for redefining the intervention and preparing for scale-up were generated. One recommendation was that the GREAT Toolkit for the newly married and out-of-school adolescents could be used in the REAL Fathers Initiative with young fathers.

Prior to the GREAT Partnership Consortium meeting, the Project Specialist joined GREAT Consortium members in a meeting with Sara Buchanan, Team Leader USAID Uganda/Northern Uganda Field Office to update her on the REAL Fathers Initiative. Ms. Buchanan was also invited to the community celebrations. The USAID mission in Uganda has continued to have a keen interest in the progress of the REAL Fathers Initiative.

At the organization level, REAL Fathers Initiative staff attended a two-day training (March 24 and 25, 2014) on Save the Children budget management. The training aimed to strengthen staff confidence in managing funds and to improve efficiency, and was facilitated by the Save the Children International Finance Director and the Grants Manager.

3. External Presentations and Representation

Project staff disseminated lessons learned in various venues during the reporting period. Save the Children's Project Specialist participated in the PEPFAR Implementing Partner meeting, "Strengthening Caregiver Relationships: Linking Evidence with Practice," held in Cape Town, South Africa, December 11-14, 2013. The meeting provided an opportunity for the REAL Fathers Initiative to share experiences with the intervention and learn from other practitioners. This meeting resulted in recommendations for USAID for strengthening caregivers' relationships to improve parenting.

3. Study Implementation

3.1 Group Discussions with Wives

Ensuring the understanding of wives and partners of the REAL Fathers Initiative is key in garnering the support young fathers need to successfully participate in the program. The original protocol includes six individual mentoring sessions for young fathers and their mentor, two of which also involve the wives or partners of the fathers. Project staff wanted to create additional opportunities for engaging the young mothers in supporting young fathers to practice new skills. They also wanted to provide an opportunity for mothers to reflect on and discuss their observations of the fathers' experiences with the REAL Fathers Initiative.

Two focus group discussions were held with wives in two parishes with the main objective of understanding the acceptability of the REAL Fathers Initiative among wives and to assess the feasibility of increasing the women's engagement in the program. Results of these focus groups are included as an annex to this report (Appendix A). Women's reactions to the program were very positive. Young mothers were very keenly following the ongoing mentoring activities of young fathers and described some of the initial changes they observed in parenting behavior, spending time with the child, and sharing household responsibilities. Women expressed an interest in having some intervention activities specifically for the wives.

Based on this experience, project staff decided to provide an opportunity for women to learn how to support the fathers in their participation in the program through group discussions. Young mothers were also encouraged to share their testimonials during the community celebrations held at the completion of the mentoring sessions. Following the two focus groups, fifteen group discussions using a semi-structured discussion guide were held with the wives during January and February 2014. The discussion guide is included as an annex to this report (Appendix B). The main objective of these discussion groups was to build wives' skills in supporting their partners in developing and maintaining new parenting skills

acquired through their participation in the REAL Fathers Initiative. During the community celebrations many women expressed their gratitude to the REAL Fathers Initiative for the positive changes they have seen in their partners' communication with their wives, men offering to share in the housework and child care, and men spending more time playing with their children. Women also commented on reduced use of alcohol and violence towards the women. The quote below illustrates some of the sentiments shared during the community celebrations,

> *I now feel very proud of my husband because he used to beat me a lot. In our marriage, before this project was introduced, I used not to take a month without running away to our home because of the beating but now it has turned to be like small heaven on earth…We talk well in our home, I prepare for him good meals. My good husband nowadays buys soap, salt…He no longer delays at the trading centre because he knows there is someone who loves him who has remained home.*

The wives also pledged to support the men in putting their newly learned parenting skills into practice. The wives were appreciative of the program and felt they had benefitted in many ways, but like their husbands, the women requested economic strengthening activities to help the fathers meet the financial needs of their families.

3.2 Development of Life History Interview Guides and Consent Materials

IRH led the development of the Life History Discussion Guide and consent forms (Appendix C) through an iterative process which included reviews from project staff. The discussion guide was developed after review of Life History Interviews as a data collection technique for learning about trajectories of people's lives, transitional points, and events or experiences that serves as catalysts for change. The guide includes open ended questions and projective techniques to facilitate more abstract thinking among REAL participants. Fathers are asked to draw a timeline starting at when they became a father to the present day. They are asked to mark in along the timeline any significant events during that time to generate a discussion about those events as they related to fatherhood. Fathers are also asked to "name the words that come to mind that describe a good father." The fathers are then asked to relate the words to themselves or what they have discussed as part of their participation in the REAL Fathers Initiative. Fathers are also asked to compare their experiences so far in their relationships with their wives and their children to fathers and children 50 years ago. Fathers are asked to draw this hypothetical comparison because many young fathers lost their parents, or were not raised by their parents, during the internal conflict in northern Uganda.

3.3 Ethical Approvals

No IRB approvals were required or submitted ruing this reporting period.

4. Intervention Implementation

4.1 New Mentor Recruitment (Cohort 2)

The same multi-step participatory process used to recruit the Cohort 1 mentors was used to identify new mentors for the REAL Father Initiative. During pretest activities with young fathers, they were asked about the ideal characteristics of mentors and the type of men they would feel honored having come into their homes. Secondly, during a series of community meetings attend by a total of 204 young people,

Figure 3 | Mapping of potential mentors
[Photo Credit: Save the Children International]

social mapping exercises were used to identify potential mentors.

Through this process, a total of twenty mentors were identified. Project staff contacted the nominated men, explained the project and mentoring role to them, and sought their consent to participate. Each mentor was informed that he would be responsible for mentoring 3-4 fathers and would be provided a bicycle to facilitate transportation to the young fathers' homes. Project staff conducted background checks on each mentor to determine if their parenting and relationship history was consistent with the values the project seeks to promote.

4.2 Recruitment of Newly Married Couples (Cohort 2)

During October and November of 2013, a total of 160 newly married couples were recruited for Cohort 2. Clan leaders, Rwot Kweris, provided an initial list of young fathers in their communities. Each young father on the list was reviewed to determine if he met study eligibility criteria (aged between 16 and 25; father of a toddler between 1 and 3 years; married to, or cohabitating with their intimate partner; residing in the study community). The young fathers were oriented to the program during inception visits with their mentors in the same manner as Cohort 1 fathers.

4.3 New Mentor Training (Cohort 2)

A total of eighteen of the twenty new mentors attended a five-day training workshop in January 2014 to prepare them for implementing the individual and group mentoring sessions. The training was facilitated by field-based Save the Children staff and was conducted in Luo. The training followed the Mentors Training Manual and covered topics including gender relationships (in couples), parenting, positive child discipline, dealing with stress and managing emotions, and effective communication strategies with intimate partners. Role plays and simulation exercises were used to familiarize the mentors with the protocol content and strengthen their mentoring skills. The training also used cultural traditions, such as holding discussions around an evening bonfire *or "Wang-oo"* to create an open and supportive atmosphere. The last two days of the training were dedicated to simulation exercises where mentors could practice through role play the inception visits and the first two individual and group visits. Daily observation and assessment showed that all of the mentors had a good understanding of the material. One mentor with lower literacy skills was teamed with another mentor with stronger literacy skills. The Senior Project Officer (SPO) provided extra support to that mentor during the monitoring and observation visits.

Figure 4 | Role play on the individual mentoring session during the mentors training
[Photo Credit: Dickens Ojamuge, Save the Children International]

Following the mentor training and after completion of the first three mentoring visits, the mentors came together for a three-day meeting. The meeting was designed to give all mentors an opportunity to share their experiences and to prepare new mentors for the next mentoring visits, three through six (Visit Three: Family Dreams; Visit Four: Loving My Family; Visit Five: Communication; and Visit Six: Parenting). Role plays and simulation exercises during the meeting allowed new mentors opportunity to practice their new skills. Two of the new mentors had dropped out before this meeting was scheduled. To replace them, two new mentors were identified and joined the meeting. All mentors were provided the Women's Group Discussion Guide for future training in implementing the group discussions, and Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Pledge, a requirement by Save the Children for any staff or volunteers working directly with children participating in Save the Children's programs.

4.4 Community Celebrations

All six of the planned community celebrations were successfully conducted for the twelve sub-parishes with Cohort 1 fathers. Young fathers and their wives attended the celebrations which attracted a total of 665 (380 men and 285 women) attendees including community leaders, religious leaders, local councilors, and youth council representatives. Each celebration was held in a predetermined area of the community. These celebrations provided space for young fathers to share with the community their newly acquired communication skills with their wives and new nonviolent parenting practices.

Fathers provided testimonials describing their appreciation for being involved in the program, and the timeliness of the program in their lives. Couples shared their experiences with improved communication, reduced alcohol use, reduced use of violence, and young fathers increased time spent with their families and children. As one young father said,

> *I was feared in the whole village and famous for being a drunkard and fighter. Every time I returned home, I would fight with my wife and beat up the children. I would want to fight anybody who I met on the way back home from my daily drinking sprees. I was bad news, anyone here in the community celebrations can testify. But since I joined the project I have changed and I no longer drink so much. I used to think my wife is ugly but now I realize she I the most beautiful woman in the village. I love her and I am now planning to pay the dowry for her marriage.*

Local leaders also provided testimonials about the changes they observed in the young fathers, particularly in their parenting practices. Older women in one village noted that they were no longer feared walking on the road in the evening unlike in the past when they were afraid of being knocked over deliberately by reckless drunken young men. One village chairman of the LC1 noted that it was the first time he had seen an Acholi man hold the hand of his wife in public. Many observed and were enthusiastic about these positive changes. Diffusion of REAL-related ideas were also evident. For example, a Rwot Kweri who had visited one of the community celebrations was so impressed by what he saw that he visited the home of one of the mentors in his village to learn about the project and later tried to put into practice some of what he learned.

Each celebration was highlighted by young fathers signing a pledge on one of the large poster billboards showing their commitment to continue to uphold and practice the newly acquired parenting skills.

4.5 Bicycle Distribution and Communication Materials

A total of twenty bicycles were procured and distributed to mentors and to community mobilizers. The bicycles will facilitate home visits and group mentoring sessions, and for maintaining frequent contact with mentees and community leaders.

A total of six message boards have been erected at strategic locations in the Cohort 2 villages and six posters have been printed and are being displayed in these locations according to the sequence outlined in the protocol.

C. MONITORING AND LEARNING

IRH and Save the Children collaborated closely to develop a system and tools for monitoring implementation roll-out and fidelity to the intervention, and informing the project learning agenda. The objectives of the REAL monitoring system are to:

1. Monitor progress on activities and outputs on a regular and timely basis

2. Generate useful information for evidence-based decision-making
3. Document lessons learned to promote organizational learning
4. Strengthen collaboration amongst partners and donors
5. Strengthen feedback mechanisms and information sharing with all stakeholders

1. Individual Mentoring Sessions

REAL Fathers staff completed monitoring reports on a quarterly basis for October to December 2013 and January to March 2014. Individual sessions one through five were monitored during the October to December quarter for Cohort 1. Results of individual monitoring sessions showed that fidelity to the intervention was very high. Between 92% and 100% of mentors conducted the game or activity specified in the session, assigned homework as required, and completed the entire session according to the protocol.

2. Group Mentoring Sessions

Group sessions monitored during the October to December quarter included the Family Dreams, Loving My Family, and Communication themes. Almost all mentors – at least 95% – participated in these group sessions. There was a high level of participation in the group sessions. For example, 92% of Loving My Family sessions had a father volunteer to read their commitment out loud to the group.

3. Monitoring Reports

Monitoring reports were submitted on time each quarter and provided important documentation of fidelity to the intervention, level of participation, and comprehension among the fathers as the program progresses. These reports documented issues related to adherence to appointments for mentoring sessions by the father, described here in Section D below. The monitoring helped to identify this early on and develop strategies to effectively manage obstacles related to adherence.

4. Structured Observations

REAL Fathers project staff conducted six structured observations of individual mentoring sessions with Cohort 1 and four with Cohort 2; and eleven of group mentoring sessions with Cohort 1 and four with Cohort 2. During these observations, field staff noted that mentors appeared confident and competent in implementing session protocols as intended and that participating fathers displayed enthusiasm and interest in session content. Among the Cohort 2 mentors, the mentor with lower literacy skills was observed to be as fluent with the material and comfortable in implementing the sessions as the other mentors.

5. Learning to Action Meetings

To facilitate project learning, bimonthly "Learning to Action" meetings are conducted by IRH/Uganda's Research Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator with field-based staff to discuss monitoring data, and identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned from project implementation. Monitoring reports were reviewed by IRH Washington staff and comments provided for areas of improvement. The comments were primarily to create space on the monitoring forms to capture reasons young fathers dropped out of the program. The monitoring forms have been updated to include an additional space for reading in this information.

D. CHALLENGES, DELAYS, AND SOLUTIONS IN YEAR 2

The REAL Fathers Initiative project team has successfully implemented activities so far in Year 2 in accordance to the project timelines and work plans. The team has been very agile in making

adjustments in activities under additional funding. There were, however, some challenges and delays. These are outlined in the table below along with the strategies adopted to address them.

Table 1 | Year 2, Quarters 1 and 2 Challenges, Delays, and Solutions

Challenge/Delay	Solution
Attrition of mentors *Two mentors in Cohort 1 were in poor health during Quarter 1 of Year 2, delaying home visits. Four mentors dropped out during Quarter 2 of Year 2.*	In the case of the mentors who became ill, the young fathers were re-assigned to other mentors within the same parish. During Quarter 2, young fathers affected by the four mentors who dropped out were asked to select new mentors. Two new mentors were recruited and oriented to take the place of the departed mentors. Older mentors from Cohort 1 oriented the new mentors. All mentors joined in the reunion/experience sharing during Quarter 2. Currently there is a gap of three mentors (one in Cohort 1 and two in Cohort 2).
Attrition of fathers *Five fathers dropped out of the project during quarters 1 and 2 of Year 2. One young father has a mentally ill wife and one has separated from his wife. Two young fathers have gone back to school (away from the research area) to pursue vocational training courses.*	Project staff are closely monitoring participation levels in mentoring sessions. To date, attrition has been due to factors unrelated to intervention content or implementation (e.g. economic and relationship issues) therefore no specific solutions have been adopted.
Non-adherence to appointment schedules *Non-adherence to appointment schedules continued to be a problem for some young fathers affecting planned activities and mentor home visits. In some cases, mentors have come to the home of the young father for a scheduled home visit only to find the young father is not there.*	Continuous reminders are provided to the mentors about the appointment days and times. The LC1s have been asked to support fathers and remind them of the importance of planning and making time for their appointments. Two active local council leaders have been identified in the Cohort 2 parishes (Bibia and Pacilo) to assist the mentors in mobilizing young fathers. Their role is mainly to encourage the fathers to attend the mentoring sessions and to remind them of the mentoring appointments. As with Cohort 1 communities, young fathers are encouraged to pass reminders to their colleagues, and are encouraged to attend group meetings with other fathers to support each other in attending the meetings together.
Demand for livelihood support	Save the Children program implementers have explained that the project so far does not have an economic component. IRH's new grant proposals include a livelihood support component and integration of REAL in cross sector programming including economic development or agricultural development. This demand has been clearly articulated and IRH hopes to address this in the future.

E. SUSTAINING THE REAL FATHER INITIATIVE

As the REAL Fathers Initiative nears the final year of funding, several proposals were submitted to garner additional funding sources to document the program implementation process (SVRI); scale up and evaluate the intervention (DFiD); and explore ways to integrate REAL across sectors into ongoing programs in education, agriculture and other areas (USAID). IRH has received positive encouragement from USAID on the funding award for cross-sectoral integration.

F. PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR 2, QUARTERS 3 AND 4 (APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2014)

The next project period will focus on completing intervention implementation, continuing monitoring and learning activities, conducting endline interviews with Cohort 1 fathers, conducting focused life histories with ten young fathers, and conducting focus group discussions with mentors (Appendix C). Key planned activities for the next reporting period include the following:

1. Research Activities

- Conduct endline interviews with Cohort 1 fathers
- Obtain approvals for life history interviews from Georgetown University's IRB and the ethics review committee of the Ugandan AIDS Service Organization (TASO) and the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology
- Develop life history interview guides
- Conduct and analyze focused life history interviews
- Conduct and analyze endline interviews with Cohort 1 young fathers
- Based on endline data findings, identify 10 young fathers for focused life history interviews
- Disseminate research findings at local and international conferences/meetings

2. Programmatic Activities

- Implement individual and group mentoring sessions with new cohort of fathers (N=160)
- Continue collection and analysis of monitoring data
- Conduct focus group discussions with mentors to determine lessons learned
- Disseminate results of REAL endline with Cohort 1 fathers in strategic venues in the US and Uganda

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Report of Women's Discussion Groups

REAL FATHERS INITIATIVE

JANUARY 2013

Activity Report:

Discussions with Wives of the REAL Fathers Initiative Participants

Dennis Eluk, Senior Program Officer
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USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND KEY PHRASES

FGD	Focus group discussion
IRH	Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University
REAL Fathers Initiative	Responsible, Engaged and Loving Fathers Initiative
VSLA	Village savings and loan association

INTRODUCTION

Georgetown University's Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) in collaboration with Save the Children have developed the Responsible, Engaged and Loving (REAL) Fathers Initiative, a mentoring program and community awareness campaign that aims to build positive relationships and parenting practices among young fathers (ages 16-25) in post-conflict northern Uganda (Attiak sub-county, Amuru district). The REAL Fathers Initiative is being evaluated with a pretest-posttest control experimental design in which 500 fathers (ages 16-25 years) were randomly assigned to intervention (n=250) and control (n=250)groups. Men who were assigned to the intervention arm are participating in a series of six groups and six individual mentoring sessions and are being exposed to a community campaign using a series of posters with themes corresponding to the mentoring sessions. Men assigned to the control arm are only being exposed to the community poster series, but will have the opportunity to receive elements of the intervention proven to be most successful after endline data have been collected. The intervention will be evaluated by pre-post test quantitative surveys, focus groups with wives of REAL fathers and life histories among a small number of men several months to 1 year after the intervention is completed. This report, however, presents findings from focus group discussions conducted with the wives of participating young fathers after the completion of the mentoring sessions.

Figure 1 | Young father with his child [Photo Credit: Dickens Ojamuge, Save the Children International]

Formative research and pretesting for the REAL Fathers Initiative showed that obtaining buy-in and support from partners and wives is critical to ensuring the young fathers' successful participation in mentoring activities. To guide further activities and involvement for the women, Save the Children staff conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with wives and partners of REAL fathers to gain feedback on the REAL Fathers Initiative from the women's perspective and to gather ideas about effective ways to increase their participation in the project.

OBJECTIVES

Overall Objective

The overall objective of the focus groups with wives and partners of REAL fathers was to ascertain the feasibility of increasing women's involvement in the ongoing mentoring sessions, and to gather ideas about the best way to do so.

Immediate Objectives

- To ascertain the feasibility of increasing women's involvement in the ongoing mentoring sessions
- To get feedback on homework that the young fathers complete with their wives
- To get feedback on the men's group mentoring sessions and community posters
- To gain wives'/partners' insights on how to best introduce additional sessions for the women

METHODOLOGY FOR PRETESTING

The FGD discussion guide (see Appendix A) was pretested with potential clients in the local language, Acholi. The discussion guide included questions regarding involvement of wives in the inception visit, changes seen in their husbands as a result of participation in mentoring sessions, wives' feedback on the mentoring sessions, REAL Fathers posters shown on community message boards, and other project-related topics. FGDs were conducted in two parishes (Kal and Pawel) with a total of 32 participants (16 participants in each meeting).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FGD findings are presented here according to the thematic areas covered during the discussions.

Wives' involvement in inception visits

All of the wives who participated in FGDs had participated in their husband's inception visit and had learned about the project alongside their partner. Several of the wives mentioned that they had seen the intervention as a positive "window of hope" that would help them resolve ongoing conflicts with their husbands. The women generally felt that their husbands had sought and responded positively to the wives' opinions on their participation in the intervention.

Feedback on ongoing mentoring sessions

The majority of women participating in FGDs reported that before the REAL Fathers intervention, there had been a significant amount of "rope-pulling" (disagreement and conflict) with their husbands. Once the intervention began, however, the husbands and wives were able to start working together and discussing issues that arose between them. Wives and partners generally felt that the intervention increased levels of understanding and discussion with their husbands, and that it had helped them respond to their husbands in ways that were less "annoying" and led to less violence.

> "The mentoring sessions should continue for as long as possible; even for another five years so as to sustain on the changes because we are hopeful as women, our husbands will continue to witness and experience changes as a result of these discussions for example the spinning exercise that I believe keeps reminding them each and every time they think of taking alcohol."
>
> -- *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

While the wives in the intervention were overwhelmingly positive about the REAL Fathers Initiative, they expressed a desire to be involved in the program themselves and suggested that they be allowed to join the mentoring sessions with their husbands. A few of the women reported that their husbands sometimes forget to tell them what they discussed with the mentor, and that they have to ask about the sessions to find out what he learned (while ideally the husbands would share all topics with their wives, the wives' interest in the topics shows that the women are engaged in the intervention). Wives would like their husbands to tell them about all feedback and information from the mentors.

Wives were in support of their husbands' participation in the program and stated repeatedly that they hoped the mentoring sessions would continue because of the positive changes they saw in their husbands' behavior and relationships in the home. The women expressed hope that the changes experienced thus far would be sustained, and suggested that mentoring sessions continue as long as possible. They worried that without the mentoring sessions, the husbands might revert to previous behaviors and "leave [the women] on their own."

Women also said they expected "their husbands to remain faithful and not marry another wife." This was qualified by adding that although things were going well now, "one cannot rule this (marrying a second wife) out completely."

At the neighborhood level, some women confessed that the effects of the parenting intervention are "trickling down" in their neighborhoods, as their neighbors have been applying REAL fathers' actions to their own homes as well.

Changes observed in participating young fathers

While the REAL Fathers Initiative has been in action for only a few months, the wives reported seeing changes in their husbands' behaviors and relationships. Some of the most notable reported changes included:

- **Participating men are now more involved in child care.** Wives reported that the REAL participants now play with their children and carry them, and that they make time to interact with their children. One woman stated that since joining the program, her husband has started bathing their child and carrying him to the church service if she is running late on Sunday.

> "My husband used to get home at 9:30 PM at the earliest. With the ongoing mentoring sessions, my good husband now gets home as early as 7:00 PM. In fact, we now usually have a *wang-oo* (fireside gathering) at our house – something that I never dreamed would happen."
>
> – *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

- **Husbands emphasize praising their children for positive behaviors.** The wives reported that their husbands not only praised their children regularly for doing something well, but also reminded the wives to give positive reinforcement to their children.

> "My husband used to call me by my surname, but now he calls me Mama Irene. When he does this, I respond with a smile and prepare myself to listen."
>
> – *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

- **Wives have noticed reduced drinking and violence.** Whereas before the intervention the husbands drank frequently and wives had "diminished hope for happy, peaceful marriage[s]," husbands in the program now drink only once or twice a week. One wife stated, "Drinking is not good; such commitments geared towards helping our husbands to reduce drinking make me feel happy because I know violence will lessen [with less alcohol]. I would do everything to make sure he sustains his statement of not drinking."

> "My husband came home and told me that… starting that day whenever there is any money, whether made by me or by him, we should sit down together and plan on what we want to use it for. I accepted because I thought of it as something that will enable us move on together as members of the same family."
>
> – *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

- **Husbands increasingly share in work and household duties.** Wives stated that mentoring sessions are motivating their husbands to share responsibility around the house. Some of the women said that the program was encouraging to both them and their husbands as co-parents, and that their husbands had started helping them with cooking, washing clothes, fetching water, or even bathing the children. One woman said, "Last month when our beans were ready for harvesting, my husband joined me and we did it together. Previously, he saw the work as a role only a woman should perform."

- **Couple communication has improved.** Wives reported that husbands now discuss budgeting, financial planning, and work with them, and that the young fathers actively promoted respect and love within their households. They also said that their husbands had become "shock absorbers" in their relationships, meaning that they were able to keep calm and allow their wives to vent until emotions were cool and the couple could have a calm discussion over the issue in question. Both the men and the women have, as a result of the program, learned good listening skills.

- **Participating fathers now encourage wives to play with their children.** Some women confessed to scoffing at their husbands when the men played in the sand with their children, and said that their husbands responded by teaching them what the men had learned in mentoring sessions: that getting down on the ground with the child encourages closeness, and that "parenting is like a game." One woman noted that this increased focus on playing with their child had fostered a sense of togetherness. "When my husband is playing with the child, I feel the urge to join them as well. This keeps us united."

Support from wives for participating young fathers

Wives said that they provided support for their participating husbands in several ways, both at home and when the fathers attend mentoring sessions. To help their husbands attend the sessions, the women reported making sure that the food and tea were ready early so that their husbands would be on time to the sessions. The wives also noted washing their husbands' clothes so that they would look clean and "smart" in public and be able to think, "It is my wife who did this for me" if they are complimented.

> "When we come back from the garden, my husband tells me to sit as he does household chores…he cooks food that is enough for the whole family. When he does this, I eat it and tell him good words so that he continues with his good deeds."
> — *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

Beyond preparing for the sessions, the wives also said that they gave ongoing encouragement and support in their homes by thanking their husbands for new positive behaviors, asking their husbands about what they discussed in mentoring sessions so that the couple is in agreement about parenting strategies, and complimenting their husbands on the good work during mentoring sessions. One woman confessed that she occasionally "peeps from the kitchen" on the mentoring sessions so that she can observe what happens between her husband and his mentor.

> "On a day we are expecting the mentor to visit our home...I tell my husband that today we should not go to the garden. I then prepare food and tea early for him and we wait for the mentor when he is full."
> — *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

Wives reported that their husbands asked them to participate in the homework assignments and that the men were communicative and open to discussing what their roles should be in completing the assignments. The women, in turn, supported their husbands in completing the assignments and becoming better fathers by showing maximum respect to them in the home, remaining faithful to them, trusting them and reminding them that they are trusted, being good listeners, and showing happiness at home.

> "Sometimes it is the women who cause trouble for the family. Now that the men have started changing, we too need to be mentored in certain areas so that we lead a harmonious and happy family life."
> — *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

> "It's like we are already part of the REAL Fathers Initiative because when our husbands are mentored, they come back and tell us what happened [in their sessions]."
> — *Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

Thoughts on additional sessions for wives

Wives of REAL Fathers Initiative were strongly in support of additional sessions for themselves, and suggested that some of the sessions be with wives and husbands together as a couple. They advocated, however, that the majority of women's sessions be held separate from the men's sessions because men tend to dominate conversations in between both sexes, and because the women would feel uncomfortable expressing certain thoughts with men present.

Generally, the women liked the setup of the men's program and felt that their sessions could be similarly structured: held once a month for one hour at a central location in the parish, and with information regarding their participation passed

though the mentors or community leaders. The wives felt that the current trained mentors would be able to facilitate the women's sessions, and that both men and women could be mentors if they were properly trained. The facilitator should also be able to read, write, and speak Acholi fluently, and men to be considered should be highly travelled and experienced in parenting. To encourage women to participate in the program, the wives suggested that the posters feature women as model parents as well, and one participant suggested supplying t-shirts to the wives.

> "When I saw the posters, I read them and I eventually made a decision to do things to become a REAL mother."
> *– Wife of REAL Fathers Initiative participant*

When asked about potential topics to be covered in possible women's sessions, the wives suggested subjects that closely mirrored the men's curriculum. In addition to tips for emotional control and exercises on controlling alcohol intake, they proposed sessions on interpersonal communication to help them interact with husbands, in-laws, neighbors, and relatives with whom they share courtyards. The wives also said that they wanted to learn about positive, nonviolent child discipline, noting that since their husbands started the sessions, the women have often found themselves seeming "rough" with their children by comparison.

CONCLUSION

Wives of the young fathers participating in the REAL Fathers Initiative strongly support the project and report positive parenting and relationship changes in their husbands in the four months since it began. In particular, the women noted that their husbands are now making time to be with their families and play with their children, participating in household chores, and are communicating more calmly and regularly with their wives. The women, in turn, are supporting their husbands' involvement in the project by helping them with homework assignments, encouraging new behaviors, and asking their husbands to share the outcomes of their discussions with mentors.

Figure 1 | Wives participate in FGD
[Photo Credit: Dickens Ojamuge, Save the Children International]

Wives participating in the FGDs expressed a desire to participate in the mentoring sessions with their husbands so that they could learn the same parenting practices that their husbands learn. Further, they were enthusiastic about the possibility of having their own sessions, suggesting that such sessions could be used to cover alcohol abuse, interpersonal communication skills, nonviolent child discipline techniques, and ways to improve control over emotions. The women suggested that anyone – regardless of gender or previous participation in the program – could be a mentor if trained properly, but requested that any new mentors be fluent in Acholi and experienced in parenting. They noted that the current group of trained mentors would be acceptable facilitators for the wives' sessions. One woman explained that she had seen a number of positive changes in her husband because of the mentoring sessions, and said that "now that the men have started changing, we too need to be mentored on certain areas so that we lead a harmonious and happy family life."

Based on these discussions, the REAL Fathers team concludes that the mentoring program has thus far been successful in teaching young fathers parenting and relationship skills that can help improve the health of their families. Given that the wives are involved in homework and well-aware of the mentoring activities and discussions, the team does not feel that it is necessary for the wives to join the mentoring sessions, and will maintain the original project strategy in which parenting methods are improved through mentoring of young fathers in individual and group sessions.

The current level of involvement with the wives provides adequate opportunity to gain the women's buy-in, but one additional session for the women alone will be created to foster reflection and further discussion on issues pertinent to parenting and supporting the men. While ideally the curriculum would include two to three sessions for the wives alone, budgetary constraints allow for only one such session, which will focus on four key themes identified by the wives during the FGDs:

(1) negative effect of alcohol on children and families;
(2) positive, nonviolent child discipline;
(3) controlling emotions and non-violent communication with husbands; an,
(4) changing gender roles in the home and how husbands and wives can support each other.

APPENDIX A: GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH WIVES

Duration: 45 – 60 minutes
Venue: Location of wives' choice
Facilitators: Project staff and mentor leaders

Overall Objective:

- To ascertain the feasibility of increasing women's involvement in the ongoing mentoring sessions

Immediate Objective:

- To ascertain the feasibility of increasing women's involvement in the ongoing mentoring sessions
- *To get feedback on the homework that the young fathers are given to do with their wives*
- *To get feedback on the men's group mentoring sessions and community posters*
- *To seek wives' feedback on how to introduce additional sessions for the women*

FGD Questions:

Feedback on the inception visit

In this section we would like to determine whether the current protocol provision of involving the wives in the inception visit/ meeting was able to make the wives aware of what was happening in their household.

1. Did you participate in the inception meeting when the project was introduced? (If no, seek justification).
2. If Yes in question 1, share with us your impression about discussions in that meeting. Were your opinions sought in that meeting?
3. Since the inception visit, your husband has gone through various mentoring sessions. What are your comments on the ongoing mentoring sessions with your husband?
4. Since the ongoing mentoring session with your husband, please share with us any changes you have observed in your husband. (Probe for any changes in parenting methods, care, communication and dislike, conflict resolution etc.).
5. Do you have any concerns with the changes you are seeing in your husband? What things would you like to see him do more of? Less of?

Feedback on the homework

We are aware that, for every mentoring meeting, the young fathers are given homework which they do with their wives. The discussion in this section is to assess the implementation of this strategy and its effect.

1. Do your husbands share the homework with you after the individual meeting with the mentor? (Ask a few wives to share their experiences.)
2. Since your husband always leaves with homework, what support are you offering him to complete the homework?
3. In your opinion, how would you support your husband differently to help him complete his homework?

Feedback on the group mentoring sessions and posters

Your husband also goes to group sessions with other men and discusses the posters in the community. The men also make a group commitment at the end of each meeting.

1. I want to read to you some of the commitments the men have made so far. [Read a few commitments to the wives.] How do you feel about these commitments? What would you say to your husband if you saw him doing these behaviors? Do you want him to do these things?
2. There have been posters being placed in the communities. [Show the laminated versions of the posters that have already been posted in the community]. How do you feel about these posters? What would you say to your husband if you saw him doing these behaviors? Do you want him to do these things?

Additional sessions in the ongoing mentoring protocol

1. Besides being involved in the inception visit, you will also be involved in two of the mentoring sessions with your husband. Are there other ways you would you like to be involved in this initiative? What else could be done for women?
    a. If you would like to be involved in other ways, what subjects should be discussed in such meetings/sessions? (Probe further on the relevance of the subjects). Are there any topics your husband has been learning about with his mentor and in group visits that you would like to learn more about as well?
2. We have an idea of introducing a few women's only group meetings to discuss some of the same topics your husbands are learning about. Who would you be comfortable with as a facilitator for these meetings?
3. How often should the meetings be held? Where should they be held?
4. What would be the duration of such meetings?
5. How should such meetings be organized? How could we let you know of the date and time of the meetings?
6. Besides being involved in meetings, are there any other alternative ways you would like to be engaged in the ongoing mentoring activities?

Appendix B: Women's Group Session Guide

REAL FATHERS INITIATIVE

Women's Group Session Guide

Purpose: To strengthen the skills that wives need to support their husbands in building and maintaining the parenting skills acquired from the REAL Fathers Initiative mentoring sessions.

Preparation: Reflect on discussions with the young fathers during concluded six mentoring sessions. Focus discussion particularly on the last two sessions (i.e. *Session 5: Communication* and *Session 6: Parenting),* in which the wives participate with their husbands.

Time: 60 – 90 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Husbands and wives are central pillars of the family. While marriage is not always easy, it is important to try as a couple to understand each other and build a strong relationship and family. The wife and the husband are equal parts of a marriage, and each can help set a positive tone for the relationship. Each day will present new situations and unique challenges, and it is important that wives and husbands understand that how they approach these situations will affect their relationships.

As you are all aware, the mentoring activities that we have been conducting through the REAL Fathers Initiative are coming to an end. It is against that background that we will discuss ways in which you and your husband can maintain a harmonious relationship and work together to use nonviolent discipline with your children. Your husband counts on your support to help him apply the skills and knowledge he has acquired to improve his relationship with you and your children. Remember that husbands and wives are like the front and rear "*boda boda*" tires: without both tires intact, the motorcycle cannot run!

1. GENERAL FEEDBACK ON THE MENTORING PROJECT 10 min.

Explain: A lot of mentoring activities have been conducted with the young fathers over the past six months. As part of the winding down of activities for the project, we would like for you, the wives, to provide your impressions and feedback about the activities.

Ask: What are your impressions about the completed mentoring activities?

Ask: What changes, if any, have you seen in your husband's parenting methods since he enrolled in the project?

Ask: What changes, if any, have you seen in the way your husband communicates with you? With the children? Does he prioritize his time differently? In what way?

2. NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES 20 min.

Explain: In one of the sessions with your husbands we reflected on the pressures that men, as fathers, experience. One example is the pressure to spend time with their friends, sometimes drinking alcohol. From discussions with the young fathers and with community members, it is has become clear that women also have the same pressures. Drinking alcohol can be a good way to enjoy time with family and friends, but drinking too much and getting drunk can have a negative effect on the family. Today we will reflect briefly on the effects of drinking too much alcohol and learn ways for men and women to deal with alcohol responsibly.

Exercise: Spinning out of Control

Ask: What kind of a parent do you want to be and what do you want to achieve for your family and children?

Pick a point across the compound 3 - 5 meters away. Use a stick to draw a straight line in the dirt.

Explain that the end point of the line represents the mother's goal for her family and her hopes and dreams for the family. The line represents the mother's journey in life to achieve these goals.

Instruct the wife to spin around quickly five times and then walk on a straight line toward the point, trying not to step off of the line.

Next, instruct the wife to close her eyes and spin around quickly five times and then walk in a straight line toward the end point, trying not to fall off of the line.

Ask: How did that feel?

Explain: Each time you spin, imagine it was like having another round of beer.

Discussion

Ask the wives to explain how drinking too much alcohol is like the spinning game, and how drinking affects one's ability to reach her goals for her family.

Explain that even if she does not get drunk, she may feel pressure in the future to do so, or have friends who do.

Ask: What do you think a child sees, learns, and feels when she sees both of you drunk?

Invite volunteers to role play the scared reaction of the children when they see their parents drunk. Another person can play children modeling the drinking behavior of their parents. How would you feel as parents going to drink the next day?

Ask: What role can you play to avoid drinking too much alcohol? What role can you play to help your partner avoid drinking too much, or help both of you to avoid drinking too much? What can you do to help your partner reflect on drinking behavior?

3. GENDER ROLES IN THE HOME/SUPPORT BETWEEN PARTNERS 10 min.

Explain: After the completed mentoring sessions, the young fathers are committed to changing their parenting methods by using less violence with their children and improving their relationships and communication with

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their wives. Experience has shown that a man's effectiveness in parenting positively depends on the support he gets from the people around him, especially his wife.

Ask: What obstacles do you see that might hinder husbands from achieving the goal of being a REAL Father?

Ask: What role can you play to support your husband so that he can maintain the positive parenting skills and nonviolent communication skills acquired from the mentoring project?

4. CONTROLLING EMOTIONS AND COMMUNICATING WITHOUT VIOLENCE AT HOME 15 min.

Explain: In one of the sessions with the men, we discussed the high importance of communication. The way we communicate determines the way the other person responds and reacts to what we say. When we communicate in a careful and polite manner and listen to each other even when we disagree, it leads to understanding and a mutually agreed upon conclusion. Communication is the key to a long-lasting successful and harmonious relationship. There are many causes of poor communication including alcohol abuse. In this segment, we will reflect on how we commonly communicate.

Role Play: Scenarios

Ask volunteers to step forward to play role s in scenarios depicting good and bad interpersonal communication.

Read: Yesterday, Kidega and his friend Juma returned home from drinking and watching an Arsenal vs. Manchester United football match in the wee hours of the night. They returned home drunk, staggering, and angry since their team had lost. Earlier in the day, the wives of the two young men had met at the bore hole and expressed their dissatisfaction with the behavior of their husbands because the men were drinking, coming home late and acting irresponsibly as parents. The two wives promised to deal with the two husbands.

Scene 1: When Kidega reached home he knocked on the door, however, there was no response from his wife or even the children. Instead his wife shouted at him and told him to go back to where he had come from. In annoyance, Kidega kicked the iron sheet door open. A quarrel ensued and there was a scuffle, however the wife managed to escape and run away.

Scene 2: Meanwhile, Juma also had a similar reception. The door was only opened after several knocks and pleas by Juma. Reluctantly, his wife opened the door and allowed him inside and asked him why he had stayed out so late, as it had become habit. She reminded him about the dangers of coming home late. Juma kept quiet, feeling guilty. As Juma sat on the chair in the house, he discovered that the "yellow card" was hanging on the wall. This was a sign that there was a problem in their relationship that needed to be discussed. He ashamedly asked his wife, "Why is the yellow card up?" His wife replied firmly, "When you are sober, we will discuss how I am feeling and your habit of returning home late when the children and even the flies have gone to sleep."

Discussion

Ask: What is your comment on Scene 1? And on Scene 2?

Ask: Have you experienced similar situations with your husband? If so, how did you react?

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Ask: What lessons (both bad and good) can you learn from the two scenarios?

5. POSITIVE, NONVIOLENT CHILD DISCIPLINE 15 min.

Discuss: Discipline means setting rules and limits that help children behave well. The aim of discipline is to improve children's behavior in the future. Discipline is not the same as punishment. Discipline means to teach, guide, or correct someone. Punishment means to penalize for doing something wrong. In a family, both husbands and wives have the responsibility of teaching and guiding children to grow up and behave correctly. Parents should therefore discipline children with love. In this segment we will reflect on the ways we discipline children and review some of the skills your husbands have been learning to positively discipline children.

Ask: What would you consider to be good ways of disciplining children? What are the bad ways of disciplining children? What are their effects? *(Hand out REAL Fathers Resource Sheet #4.)*

Discuss if they have seen their husbands using these skills. Could they, as mothers, also discipline in these ways?

Ask how it felt as a parent to use good versus bad discipline – which seemed to work better?

Remind the wives what happens when parents hit/beat children. *(Refer to REAL Fathers Resource Sheet #6.)*

Remind the wives that it is important for parents to agree on how to work together to provide guidance to their child nonviolently.

6. WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS 15 min.

Explain that while the project has been working with the young men, positive parenting depends on both the husband and the wife. Both fathers and mothers are therefore important partners in parenting. The young fathers look to their spouses/wives for support in achieving positive parenting goals.

Remind the wives that a community ceremony is planned for the men/husbands to share with their views and experiences related to what they learned, how they have changed and what they have committed to continue.

Ask for views from the wives about what they would want to share with the community on what has changed in the parenting style of their husbands. What are the women committed to doing to support their husbands as good parents?

Appendix C: Life History Interview Guide and Consent Materials

Life History Discussion Guide for Young Fathers
IRB #2013-0205

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today. Our discussion will take about an hour and a half.

Today we are going to talk a little bit about your experiences as a father and as a husband. I'm going to help you tell your story. We'll use different activities to help you tell your story. Do you have any questions before we start? If you would like to take a break at any time you can. If there are any topics you do not want to talk about, you can just let me know. I am honored that you are willing to share your story with me. Are you ready to start?

Purpose: To understand REAL fathers relationships with their own fathers and mothers and significant others and how they are experienced. (time line 10 minutes; discussion 20 minutes)

We are going to start working on your story. I have a long sheet of paper with a line across the middle and some markers and crayons. I want you to draw a time line of your life as a father. Let's start together. First, on one end put a mark to represent the time that you became a father. On the other end, mark today on the timeline. All of this space in between shows all of the days and years in between. Mark where you began to live together with the mother of your child as a couple. This may have happened before you became a father, so you can put it before the beginning mark for "father". I want you to draw or write events or times in your life that you think are important to include in your own story as a father. They can be either moments when you felt very safe and happy or moments when you felt sad, threatened or scared. If it was a happy time, write above the striped line. If it was a sad time, write below the stripe. Once you finish drawing your time line, we'll look at it together.

What are the important events you identified in your story of being a father? (Review these events with the participant. Ask about each event, why it was significant and how the father felt during each event, and what memories the event recalls for him. If the participant has not put marriage or fatherhood on the timeline, ask if they want to add those events. Note if the father put participation in REAL and ask if he feels that was a significant event that he wants to add. If not, probe on why.)

Purpose: To understand how fathers experience their relationship with their wives. (20 minutes)

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your wife and your relationship with her. Tell me about your wife, what kind of person is she, what work does she do?

What kind of marriage do you have (Islamic, church, traditional, DC/registered)? (Probe: If not married, are you planning to marry your wife? How far have you gotten in the process?) How old were you both when you got married? How did your life change when you began to live together as a couple? Were these happy changes for you?

How would you describe your relationship with your wife? Can you describe a happy time that you have had with your wife? What was happening in your relationship then that made it happy? Now can you

describe a time when it was not very happy, tell me what was happening then that made it sad for you. What was happening in your life then that made it sad for you? How is your relationship with your wife different from the relationship of your parents (or the people that raised you)? In what ways is it similar? (Probe on how you communicate, make decisions, deal with disagreements or conflict, who makes final decisions if you disagree)

When you found out that your wife was pregnant with this child, what was your reaction to the news? What were your feelings at the time? Was having a child something that was important for you to do in your life?

Purpose: Understand in what ways REAL facilitated behavior change and identify barriers to behavior change. (40 minutes)

(Refer back to the time line to the point where REAL is marked on the timeline.)

How did you first hear about the REAL fathers program? What was your initial reaction when you heard about it? What motivated you to join? (Probe on personal experiences that prompted participation, wanted to be recognized by others as a good father, wanted to learn about parenting, wanted to have a better relationship with his wife?) Did anyone influence your decision to participate? Who was that person? (Probe wife, mentor, other significant person?) What did that person say to persuade you?

Now I'd like you to talk about your experiences with REAL. I have 12 paper circles with the themes from each session you had with your mentor written on each circle. I would like you to put these 12 circles in one of two piles. The pile on the left is for the sessions that were easier for you participate in the activities and discussions, and the pile on the right is for sessions that were more difficult for you to discuss or participate in. As I read each theme from each session and some of the activities, please put the circle in either the easier or more difficult pile.

Looking at the pile on the right, the more difficult pile, what was difficult for you about these sessions? Tell me more about how you managed these difficulties. Did your participation in any of these activities or discussions recall any emotions or memories for you? What were those? What do you think were the most important things that you learned during these sessions?

Some of the things you discussed in the REAL program were about spending time with your child. I'd like to talk about some of the things you do with your child. Quickly name some of the activities you do with your child (Provide examples if the father needs help in starting such as play games, sing songs, bathe or feed the child, etc. Write each activity he mentions on a separate card.) I wrote each one down on a separate card. I will read each one and I want you to tell me if this is something you did with your child before you participated in REAL, or if this is this something you do now with your child after REAL. (Read each card out loud and let the father say if it was something they did with their child before or after REAL)

Let's talk about the things you do with your child now after REAL. Was it difficult to start doing these things with your child? Tell me about the first time you tried to do one of these activities and how that felt. What was challenging for you in starting to do this? (Probe was did the child respond, was your wife encouraging? Were friends and neighbors encouraging?) How do you feel when you spend time doing these things with your child? What are some of the emotions you feel during those times? What have your

friends/wife/others said to you when they see you doing this? Is part of you ever embarrassed? Do you ever feel proud as a father? About what things? Do you feel frustrated? What makes you feel that way?

I like to talk a little bit more about how you see yourself as a father. I have a piece of paper and a pencil. I would like you to draw a picture of yourself as a father before you joined REAL and then another picture of yourself after you completed the REAL program. (Give the father a piece of paper and a pencil. Allow him time to draw.) Tell me about how you have drawn yourself as a father before REAL. How does this compare to now, after REAL? How do you see yourself as a father now? (Probe on parenting and nonphysical discipline – how comfortable do you feel using non-physical discipline with your child?)

How is the way you manage the child's behavior different or similar from your experience with the man who raised you? or with fathers and sons 50 years ago? How confident would you feel standing up to your neighbors to defend your views on how fathers should be today? How comfortable would you be in teaching them about how fathers should be?

How do you see your relationship with your child in ten years? What do you think will be the most challenging for you in raising your child? Who do you see as a person (or people) who can support you in being the type of father you would like to be?

We've talked a little bit about experiences as a father. Now I'd like to ask you about your experiences in managing your relationship with your wife. Tell me about the last time you had a disagreement with your wife. What happened and how did you handle it?

(If not mentioned above, probe: have you or your wife ever tried to use the yellow card? What happened? How well did that work? What was difficult about using the yellow card? How did friends, neighbors, elders react?) (Probe on praise from elders, friends; improved relationship with wife; personal fulfillment)

How was using this strategy the same or different from your own parents' relationship, or couples' relationships 50 years ago?

How do you see your relationship with your wife in ten years? How would you like your wife to describe you in ten years? How would you like your elders to describe you in ten years? Who do you see as the person or people who can support you in being the type of husband you would like to be?

Who is it most important to you to see you as a good father? As a good husband?

Closing questions (10 minutes)

What are you most proud of in your life? Who do think has most influenced you in becoming the man, the father and the husband that you are today? When your child becomes a man or a woman what do you want them to say about you? Is there anything else we have not discussed that you would like to talk about?

Georgetown University, Institute for Reproductive Health
Informed Consent for Young Fathers to Participate in Life History Interviews

You have been asked to participate in an interview being done in Uganda by the Institute for Reproductive Health. Please take as much time as you need to make your decision. Feel free to talk about your decision with anyone you want, but remember that ***the decision to take part in the study, or not take part in the study is yours.*** If you decide to take part in the study, you will be interviewed.

The interview will take place wherever you prefer, at a time that is good for you. We are doing this study to find out whether activities that are happening in your community help young fathers to use parenting skills to make their families healthier. During the interview you will be asked some questions about yourself such as who raised you and where you grew up. The interviewer will also ask about your thoughts on and experiences with being a father, and your experiences in taking part in the REAL initiative; what you learned and the changes, if any, in your life after REAL. The interviewer will also ask you some questions about your relationship with the mother of your child and about your thoughts and experiences with violence.

Before you decide to take part, we the researchers must tell you about:

1. The reasons why this study is being done, how it will be done and how long it will take.
2. Any activities or tests that are not well-studied.
3. Any risks or benefits from the study that we think might happen.
4. Any other activities or treatments that are different, but could be helpful to you.
5. How we keep everything private.

The interviewers must also tell you about other things that may concern you, such as:

1. Any payment or medical treatment you could get if you were injured by the study.
2. The chance of risks we do not know about.
3. Situations where the researcher could stop you from being in the study.
4. Any added costs to you from being in the study.
5. What happens if you decide to stop being in the study.
6. When you will be told about new findings which could affect your decision to be in the study.
7. How many participants will be interviewed.

If you have questions about the study, you may contact Rebecka Lundgren at the Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University, in Washington, DC, USA, at +1-202-687-7969. You can also contact Thomas Odong, Program Manager, Institute of Reproductive Health in Gulu, Uganda at +256-752-853443.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Georgetown University IRB Office in the United States at +1-202-687-6553 (8:30am to 5:30pm, Eastern Standard Time, Monday to Friday) or email irboard@georgetown.edu.

Taking part in this study is your decision, and you will not be affected by any negative consequences if you refuse to participate or decide to stop.

Signing or putting your thumb print on this paper means that the study, including the above information, has been described to you, and that you freely agree to participate.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

_____ _____

Signature of witness Date

We are doing this study to find out whether activities that are taking place in your community help young fathers to use parenting skills that make their families healthier. We will use the results to see if these activities work well. This study is being sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This means that USAID is paying Georgetown University to conduct this study with Rebecka Lundgren as the primary researcher. Save the Children is a partner in this study.

You are being asked to take part in this interview because you are a young father who participated in the Responsive, Loving and Engaged (REAL) Fathers Initiative; you are between the ages of 16 and 25 and you have a child between the ages of one and three years. We will interview up to a total of 15 young fathers like you who participated in the REAL Fathers Initiative in Uganda.

If you decide to take part in this interview, the interview will take place at a private location in your community. The interview will take about an hour and a half. You will be asked questions about your experiences as a participant in the REAL Fathers Initiative, what you learned, what you liked about the project, what was difficult about participating, and what if any changes in your life have occurred as a result of your participation. A trained interviewer will ask you questions and record the answers. The information you give us will not be shared with anyone other than our study team. We will not discuss your answers with the mother of your child, your mentor or with other young fathers participating in the REAL Fathers Initiative.

During the interview you will be asked some questions about yourself, such as who raised you and where you grew up. The interviewer will also ask about your thoughts on and experiences with being a father, your experiences in taking part in the REAL initiative, and how your life has changed after REAL, if it has. The interviewer will also ask you some questions about your relationship with the mother of your child and about your thoughts and experiences with violence. Any information that you share with us will be kept private. You can stop the interview at any time. Simply tell the interviewer that you would like to stop, and we will end the interview.

You can skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You can stop the interview at any time.

There are few risks to you in taking part in this interview. It is possible that talking about personal topics will make you feel uncomfortable or sad. You can skip any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. You will not have to talk about topics that embarrass you. At any time, you can ask to change the subject, stop the interview, or ask to stop being in the study. After the interview, if you want advice or information about any of the topics we discuss, let the interviewer know. He can help you find a trained person who can provide you with information or advice.

It might be embarrassing to you if anyone hears the answers you give during the interview. We don't want that to happen, so we will not share anything you tell us during the interview with anyone else in your community. Your name will not appear on any notes or on the interview guide. We will do everything possible to keep your information private. It is impossible to guarantee absolutely that no one will see the information. In order to keep information about you as safe as possible, as soon as we finish each interview, we will take the notes and interview guide to a locked and safe place. Only interviewers on the study will be able to see them. When we leave the village, we will take the notes and interview guide and put them in a locked and safe place again. The answers that you give us and all notes will be put on a special computer that no one can use except the interviewers who are doing the study. After the study is finished, the notes and interview guides will be taken out of Uganda.

If you agree to take part in this interview, there will be no direct benefit to you. That means you will not receive any money or gifts for being in the study. But we believe that what we learn from you and other young fathers we interview will help us and other groups like us create programs that will make the lives of families in your community and other communities in northern Uganda better.

We will do everything possible to keep your answers and any information we learn about you private. In order to keep information about you safe, your name will not be written in notes or on the interview guide. Your name will not

be in any presentation or publication of the results of this study. This means that no one will be able to link you with any of the answers that you gave during the interview.

Taking part in this study is voluntary at all times. You can choose not to take part at all or to leave the study at any point. If you decide not to participate or to leave the study, there will be no bad effect on your relationship with the interviewer, your relationship with Save the Children, or any other negative results for you. If you receive any services from Save the Children, they will not be affected in any way. If you choose to leave the study, you can still be in in the Young Fathers Mentoring Initiative.

During the interview, you do not have to answer all of the questions. Only respond to questions that you are comfortable talking about, and tell the interviewer if you do not want to answer a question. If you decide that you no longer want to be in the study, just tell the interviewer. In that case, the information we already have through your participation will be included in the data analysis and final report for this study, unless you tell us that you do not want it to be included.

STATEMENT OF PERSON OBTAINING INFORMED CONSENT

I have fully explained this study to the participant. I have discussed the study's purpose and procedures, the possible risks and benefits, and that participation is completely voluntary.
I have invited the participant to ask questions and I have given complete answers to all of the participant's questions.

_____ _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent Date

CONSENT OF STUDY PARTICIPANT

I understand all of the information in this Informed Consent Form.

I have received complete answers to all of my questions.

I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

☐ **YES** *(If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know)*

☐ **NO**

_____ _____

Signature of Study Participant Date

_____

Printed Name of Study Participant

Once you sign this form, you will receive a copy of it to keep, and the researcher will keep another copy in your research record.

Appendix D: Work Plan

v 24Apr2014

X	Completed
	Planned

REAL FATHERS MENTORING INITATIVE
Workplan 2012-2014

		YEAR 1 (2012-2013)												Year 2 (2013-2014)												Year 3 (2014-2015)											
		Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4		
Tasks/Activities	**Responsible**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**
Seasons:		Rainy		Dry Season			Rainy Season			Dry	Rainy Season					Dry Season			Rainy Season			Dry	Rainy Season					Dry Season			Rainy Season			Dry	Rainy Season		
Planting Seasons:		--		Harvest		Clear land	Plant			Tend	Harv est	Plant		--		Harvest		Clear land	Plant			Tend	Harv est	Plant		--		Harvest		Clea r	Plant			Tend	Harv est	Plant	
PROJECT START UP AND MANAGEMENT																																					
Recruit and hire consultants (formative research, intervention development)	SC			X																																	
Set-up consulting contracts (formative research, intervention development)	SC				X																																
Hold meetings with district government officials	SC, IRH						X	X	X																												
Hold meeting with GREAT TAG	IRH						X																														
Hold introductory meetings with community members	SC							X			X																										
Recruit and hire research firm (Baseline, Cohort 1)	IRH							X	X																												
Recruit and hire research firm (Baseline, Cohort 2)	IRH													X	X																						
Recruit and hire research firm (Wives' Endline Interviews)	IRH																																				
Recruit and hire research firm (Endline, Cohorts 1 & 2)	IRH																			X																	
Recruit and hire researchers for endline qualitative data collection and analysis (Life Histories)	IRH																																				
Submit report to Anonymous Donor (Jan 15, 2015)	IRH																																				
Submit semi-annual/annual report to USAID	IRH							X						X																							
Hold twice yearly phone calls with Oak																				X																	
Submit annual narrative & financial report to Oak (Oct. 1)	IRH																																				
Submit final report to Oak (Dec. 31, 2015)																																					
Recruit and hire research firm (Long Term Follow-Up)	IRH																																				
Develop progress brief?	IRH																																				
INTERVENTION																																					
Mentoring Program																																					
Develop Young Fathers Mentoring curriculum	SC					X	X	X																													
Develop monitoring tools (observation form etc.)	SC/IRH								X	X																											
Establish list of young fathers in intervention areas	SC							X	X																												
Conduct formative research to identify mentors	SC							X	X																												

		YEAR 1 (2012-2013)												Year 2 (2013-2014)												Year 3 (2014-2015)											
		Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4		
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Planting Seasons:		--		Harvest		Clear land	Plant			Tend	Harvest	Plant		--		Harvest		Clear land	Plant			Tend	Harvest	Plant		--		Harvest		Clear	Plant			Tend	Harvest	Plant	
Recruit mentors (Cohort 1)	SC							X	X																												
Train mentors (Cohort 1)	SC										X																										
Invite young fathers to participate, randomly assign to intervention/control group (Cohort1)	SC								X	X																											
Conduct individual mentoring sessions (Cohort1)	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Conduct group mentoring sessions (Cohort1)	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Conduct home visits (Cohort1)	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Develop wives support group session curriculum	SC														X	X	X																				
Recruit wife session facilitators	SC														X																						
Recruit wives/obtain consent	SC														X																						
Recruit additional mentors	SC													X																							
Train new mentors (Cohort2)	SC																X																				
Randomly assign 160 fathers to intervention or control arms (Cohort2)	SC													X	X																						
Conduct individual mentoring sessions (Cohort2)	SC																X	X	X	X																	
Conduct group mentoring sessions (Cohort2)	SC																X	X	X	X																	
Conduct home visits (Cohort2)	SC																X	X	X	X																	
Conduct women support session for 160 Cohort 2 wives	SC																X																				
Conduct structured observations	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																	
Analyze structured observation data	SC													X	X	X	X	X	X	X																	
Provide feedback to mentors	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																	
Compile and utilize monitoring data	IRH/SC													X	X	X	X	X	X	X																	
Offer successful components of intervention to control group (Cohort 1)	SC																																				
Offer successful components of intervention to control group (Cohort 2)	SC																																				
Community IEC Fatherhood Campaign																																					
Conduct formative research	SC					X	X																														
Design six posters	SC					X	X	X																													
Pre-test posters	SC							X	X																												
Produce posters	SC									X						X																					
Strategically place posters in community (Cohort 1)	SC											X	X	X	X	X	X																				
Strategically place posters in community (Cohort 2)	SC																	X	X	X																	
RESEARCH																																					
Develop data collection tools (Baseline/Endline)	IRH					X	X	X	X																												

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Develop detailed research protocol	IRH						X	X	X																												
Submit IRB application to Georgetown University (Baseline/Endline)	IRH						X																														
Resubmit IRB application (Baseline/Endline)	IRH						X																														
Submit IRB application to Ugandan IRB (Baseline/Endline)	IRH							X																													
Obtain approval from Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (Baseline/Endline)	IRH							X																													
Submit IRB amendment April 21 (Wives' Endline Interviews, Life Histories)	IRH																			X																	
Obtain approval from Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (Wives' Endline Interviews, Life Histories, Long-Term Follow-Up)																																					
Submit IRB amendment (Long Term Follow-Up)																																					
Baseline Data Collection																																					
Translate research instruments and consent forms into Luo (Baseline/Endline)	IRH							X																													
Train data collectors on research protocol and instruments (Baseline/Endline)	IRH									X																											
Develop data entry screen	IRH									X																											
Pre-test and revise research instruments	IRH								X	X																											
Obtain informed consent from all participants	IRH									X																											
Conduct 340 structured baseline interviews with young fathers (Cohort1)	IRH											X																									
Enter data into SPSS (Cohort1)	IRH											X																									
Analyze data (Cohort1)	IRH											X																									
Write baseline report (Cohort1)	IRH												X																								
Conduct 160 structured baseline interviews with young fathers (Cohort 2)	IRH														X																						
Enter data into SPSS (Cohort2)	IRH															X																					
Analyze data (Cohort2)	IRH															X																					
Write baseline report (Cohort2)	IRH															X																					
Conduct additional analysis on baseline data	IRH																																				
Endline Data Collection																																					
Develop data collection tool (Wives' Endline Interviews)	IRH																			X																	
Develop data collection tool (Life Histories)	IRH																			X																	
Update data collection tool (Endline)	IRH																			X																	
Update data entry screen (Endline)	IRH																			X																	

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Train data collectors on research protocol and instruments (Life Histories)	IRH																																				
Obtain informed consent from all participants	IRH																																				
Develop focus group discussion guides (mentors, Save staff)																																					
Identify and recruit six fathers for Life Histories (may need to revise date)	IRH																																				
Train researchers on qualitative component	IRH																																				
Conduct two focus groups discussions with mentors	IRH																																				
Conduct one focus group discussion with Save staff	IRH																																				
Conduct 340 structured endline interviews with young fathers (Cohort1)	IRH																																				
Enter endline data into SPSS(Cohort1)	IRH																																				
Analyze endline data(Cohort1)	IRH																																				
Conduct Life History Interviews	IRH																																				
Translate and transcribe interview data	IRH																																				
Analyze interview and focus group data	IRH																																				
Conduct 160 structured endline interviews with young fathers (Cohort2)	IRH																																				
Conduct endline interviews with 160 wives	IRH																																				
Develop data collection tool (Long-Term Follow-Up)	IRH																																				
Enter endline data into SPSS (Cohort2)	IRH																																				
Analyze endline data (Cohort2)	IRH																																				
Conduct long term follow-up endline interviews with 500 fathers	IRH																																				
Documentation and Dissemination																																					
Collect and document costing information	IRH																																				
Write and submit final technical report to USAID	IRH																																				
Finalize Mentoring Curriculum based on project results	SC																																				
Write and submit manuscript to peer-reviewed journal	IRH																																				
Develop and disseminate project brief describing results	IRH																																				
Organize two end-of-project dissemination meetings (Amuru and Kampala)	IRH, SC																																				
Submit abstract to one global health conference	IRH, SC																																				

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Present at MenEngage Global Conference (tentative)	IRH, SC																																				
Conduct Global Technical Consultation (Washington DC)	IRH, SC																																				
Organize Regional Technical Consultation (Kampala)	IRH, SC																																				