



**N E X T
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T A N Z A N I A**

Research briefing on youth
experience of violence



RESEARCH BRIEFING ON YOUTH EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

Introduction

The second phase of Next Generation Tanzania researched the views of more than 3,000 young people aged 15–24 on the issues of education, employment and violence. Discussion of the findings on education and employment can be found in a separate report. This short briefing focuses on the challenges posed to society by violence, and describes how young Tanzanians perceive and respond to the problem.

The first part of the briefing describes the research methodology. The second examines young people's perceptions of violence. The third and fourth look respectively at the perceived extent of violence in schools and in the workplace. Part five assesses the extent of violence in the community, both in general and against young people. The final three parts of the briefing discuss the perceived causes of violence, young people's responses to it, and recommendations for action.

It should be noted that the following discussion relates to young people's *perceptions* of violence. Their *knowledge* about how much and what types of violence actually occur in their societies may or may not be robust. Perceptions, however, are important in themselves – fear of violence, for example, can deter people from attending school, setting up in business or socialising in the community. Perceptions of unfair or violent treatment by those in authority – the police, teachers, community leaders, politicians and so on – can deter people from reporting violence when it does occur and hinder the development of solutions to the problem. The prevalence of actual violence, moreover, is hard to measure – often it goes unreported, or it is not recorded when it is reported – and changed perceptions of violence over time can be a valuable guide to whether the prevalence of violence is increasing or decreasing. The data presented here, therefore, could potentially be used as a benchmark against which to measure the success of violence prevention initiatives. They also provide a guide – albeit an imperfect one – to the violence that is taking place in Tanzania today.

One: Methodology

The research was conducted by Ipsos Tanzania, and comprised two main strands. The first was a household survey of 3,048 young people aged 15–24 years from the six regions of mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. Individual young people were randomly selected for face-to-face interviews. In each region, the allocated interviews were randomly distributed across rural and urban wards. Table 1 shows the geographical distribution of respondents.¹

The second strand was qualitative research, which comprised 14 focus group discussions with a total of 170 male and female participants aged 15–24 from across the country.

Fieldwork took place between 9 September and 2 October 2017.

¹ > For a detailed explanation of how the research was conducted, see the main Phase II research report.

Table 1: Geographical distribution of respondents

Region	Rural	Urban	Total
Arusha	195	120	315
Dar es Salaam	0	975	975
Dodoma	300	60	360
Mtwara	195	60	255
Mwanza	300	180	480
Tanga	285	90	375
Zanzibar	120	120	240
Total	1,395	1,605	3,000

Two: Perceptions of violence

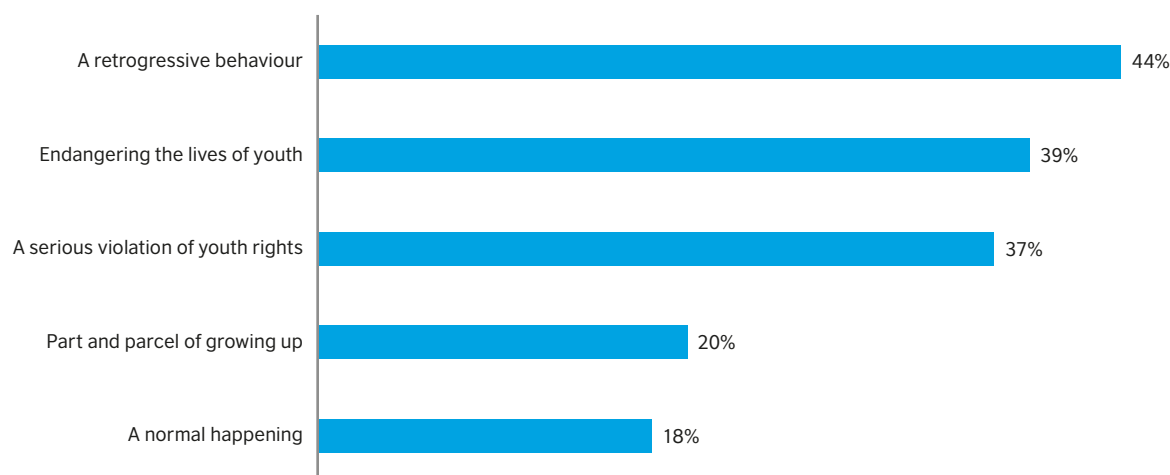
A significant minority of young people believe violence is increasing in their communities. A total of 39 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that ‘violence is a growing concern in the area where I live’ and 54 per cent disagree. Concern is highest in Tanga

and Mtwara, where 49 per cent and 45 per cent respectively believe violence is increasing.

When asked about their communities’ perceptions of violence against youth in particular, most feel that it is seen as a retrogressive behaviour and a violation of young people’s rights (see Figure 1).

However, one in five respondents feel that their communities see violence against youth as ‘part and parcel of growing up’ or as ‘a normal occurrence’. Young people do not support this sentiment – only nine per cent of them see violence as part of growing up, while only 35 per cent feel it mostly occurs among young people.

Figure 1: What do the community of this area think about violence against youth?



Three: Violence in school

The main expressions of violence in Tanzanian schools are the excessively harsh punishments meted out to pupils. In some cases, children are driven away from school altogether by this. When those respondents who had dropped out of primary or secondary school were asked why they had left, 14 per cent reported being ‘chased away from school’ and 11 per cent left because of ‘harassment or punishment by the school’.

Severe punishment is also a problem for those who remain in school. Forty-eight per cent of those who are still in or have completed school report being subjected to severe punishment at some point during their school careers, with 12 per cent experiencing this very often. The highest rates of severe punishment are found in Mwanza, where 58 per cent of young people reported receiving such punishment, half of them ‘very often’.

The second most common form of violence in schools is bullying. Twenty-four per cent of respondents report having experienced this, with the highest reported rates in Mtwara, Dodoma and Mwanza. This bullying may be at the hands of educators as well as peers – focus group respondents observed that academic professionals such as lecturers and school teachers often victimise students, taking advantage of being in control.

Sexual harassment by staff and peers is a further form of school-based violence, and it is experienced by both girls and boys:

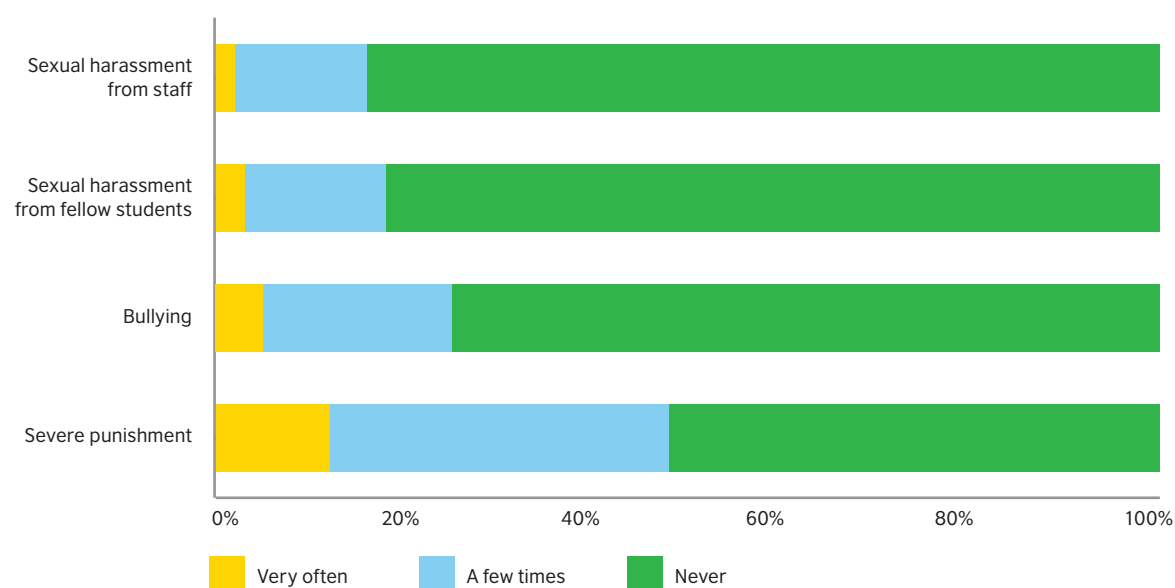
- seventeen per cent of girls and 14 per cent of boys report being sexually harassed by school staff
- twenty per cent of girls and 16 per cent of boys say they have been sexually harassed by their fellow students
- again, the regions of Mtwara, Dodoma and Mwanza have the highest reported rates in each of these areas, although it is uncertain whether this is because they have higher rates of sexual violence than other regions or better reporting channels.

Four: Violence in the workplace

Young people who are working in paid employment were asked about the challenges they face. Long hours and low wages were the main challenges, each reported by around 40 per cent of employed respondents. Violence is also quite common. One-quarter reported mistreatment or victimisation as a major challenge they face at work. Eighteen per cent mentioned bullying or verbal abuse. In the focus groups, participants noted that senior workers often harass and oppress young workers, and that the latter are also subjected to harassment by their seniors in the form of denial of employment or promotion opportunities.

Rates of reported sexual harassment were much lower in the workplace than in school. Part of this difference may be attributable to the tendency of men and women in wage employment to work in different sectors. Only five per cent of those in employment reported sexual harassment as a challenge, including eight per cent of females and three per cent of males.

Figure 2: Considering your time in school, how often do you experience/have you experienced the following?



Five: Violence in the community

Respondents were asked about violence in their community in general and violence towards youth in the community in particular.

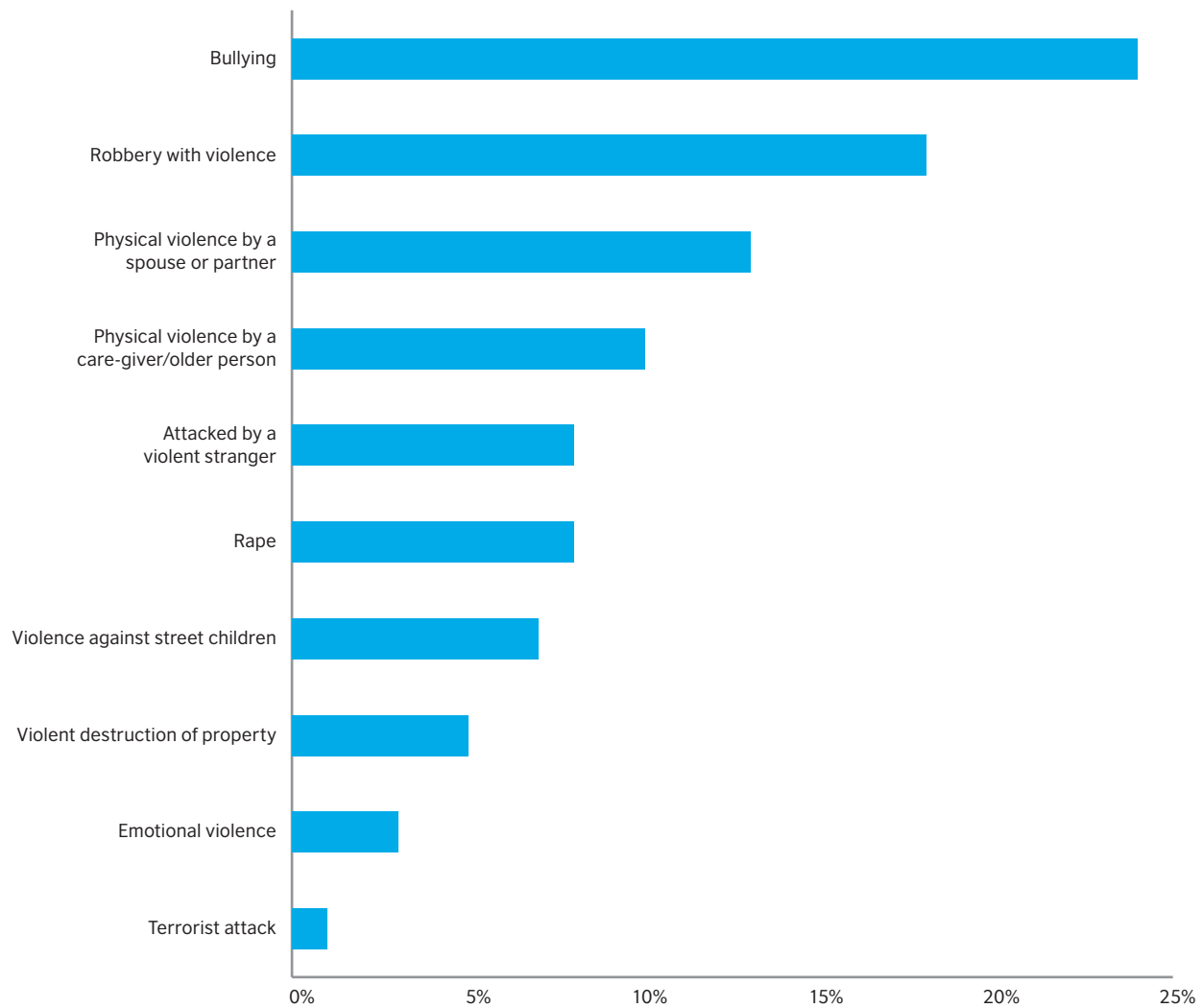
Asked whether they knew anyone in the area where they live who had been subjected to certain forms of violence in the past six months, significant minorities reported that they did (see Figure 3). Twenty-four per cent said they knew of

someone who had been bullied in the past six months, for example. Ten per cent said they knew of physical violence perpetrated by an older person.

Some forms of violence are more common in urban than rural areas:

- twenty-four per cent of urban respondents said they knew of someone who had been the victim of a violent robbery in the past six months, compared with 14 per cent of their rural counterparts
- eleven per cent of urban respondents knew of someone who had been attacked by a violent stranger or gang, compared with five per cent of rural respondents
- eight per cent of urban young people were aware of violence perpetrated against street children, compared with five per cent in rural areas.

Figure 3: Do you know anybody in the area where you live who has experienced the following in the past six months?

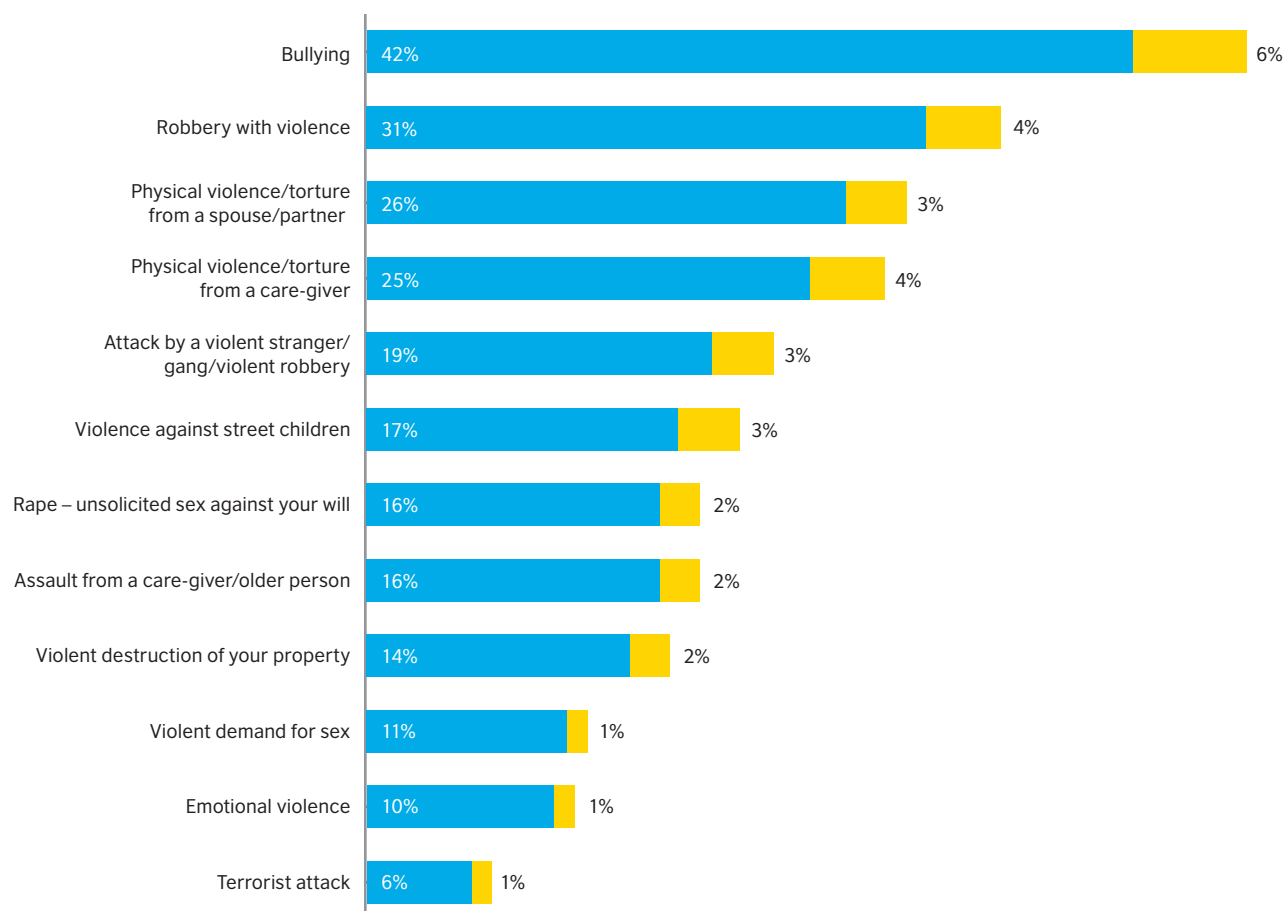


Gender-based violence, too, is not uncommon. Physical violence by a spouse or partner was reported by a total of 13 per cent of respondents, and rape by seven per cent. The latter was reportedly equally common in rural and urban areas, but urban respondents had slightly less gender-equitable attitudes when it comes to sex. Eleven per cent of them agreed that ‘it is acceptable to demand sex from a woman’, compared with eight per cent of rural respondents.

Respondents were also asked about the prevalence of violence against young people in the areas where they live. The picture here was similar to the overall pattern in the community (see Figure 4):

- bullying was the most frequently reported type of violence, with 48 per cent of respondents saying it happens sometimes or very often to young people in their communities
- thirty-five per cent report violent robbery against young people
- twenty-nine per cent report spousal or partner violence
- the main difference to the reported incidence of violence in the community overall was the frequency of violence against young people by a care-giver or older person (this is likely to mean a parent or other older family member). Twenty-nine per cent of respondents said young people experience this either sometimes or very often.

Figure 4: How frequently do these forms of violence happen to young people in the area where you live?



Six: The causes of violence

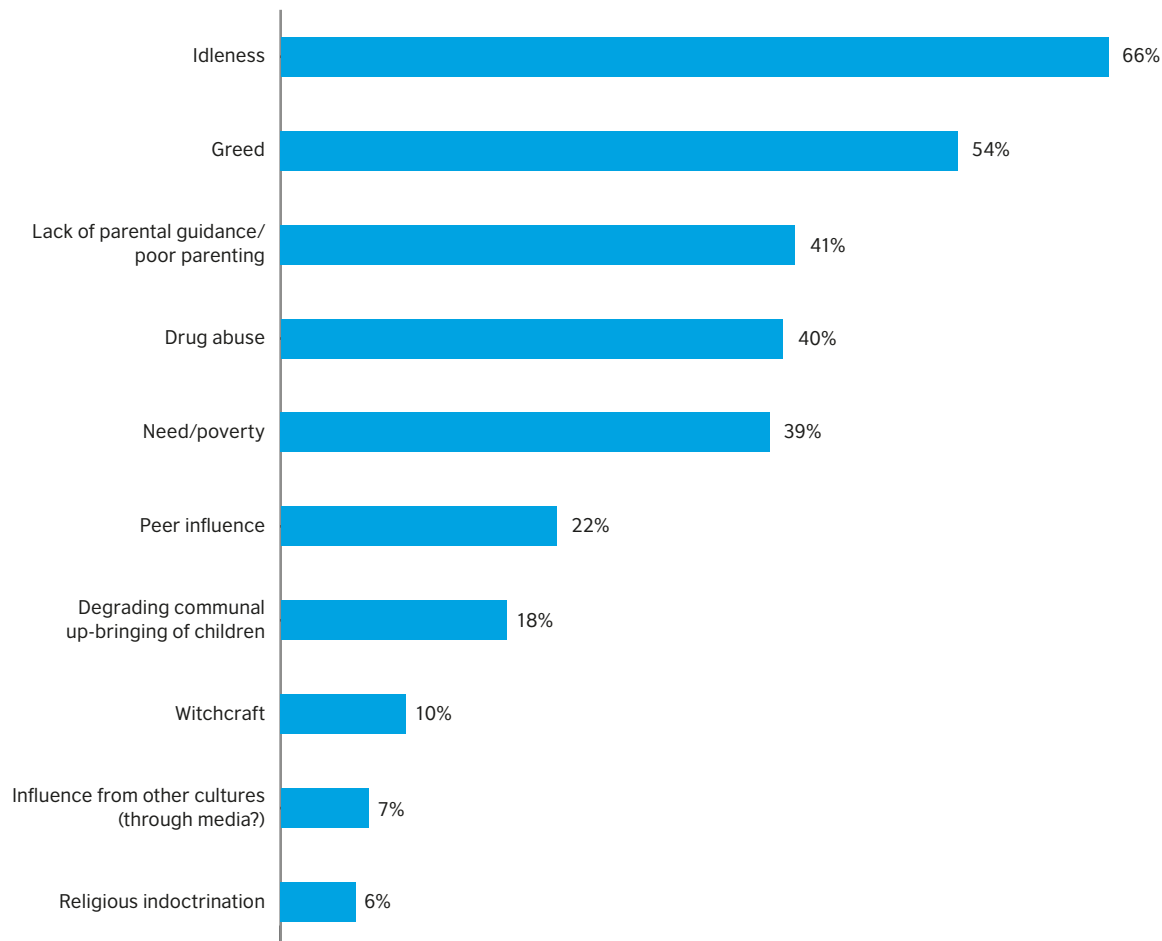
When asked what they perceived as the main causes of violence among young people, most respondents focused on factors related to economics. In the focus groups, unemployed people were identified as the most frequent perpetrators of violence. In the quantitative survey, idleness (66 per cent of respondents), greed (54 per cent) and poverty (39 per cent) were among the major reported causes of youth violence

(see Figure 5). Other important factors were poor parenting (identified by 41 per cent of respondents) and drug abuse (40 per cent).

Eighty-five per cent of respondents to the quantitative survey blamed youth gangs for violence among young people. Focus group participants named some of the gangs, including *Panya Road* in Dar es Salaam, and *Mbwa Mwitw, Ubaya Ubaya* and *Gusa Unase* in Zanzibar. Thirty-one per cent blamed individual

perpetrators, and 16 per cent the media. In Zanzibar, 25 per cent of respondents said the media were responsible for youth violence.

Figure 5: What would you say are the causes of violence among youth?



Seven: Responses to violence

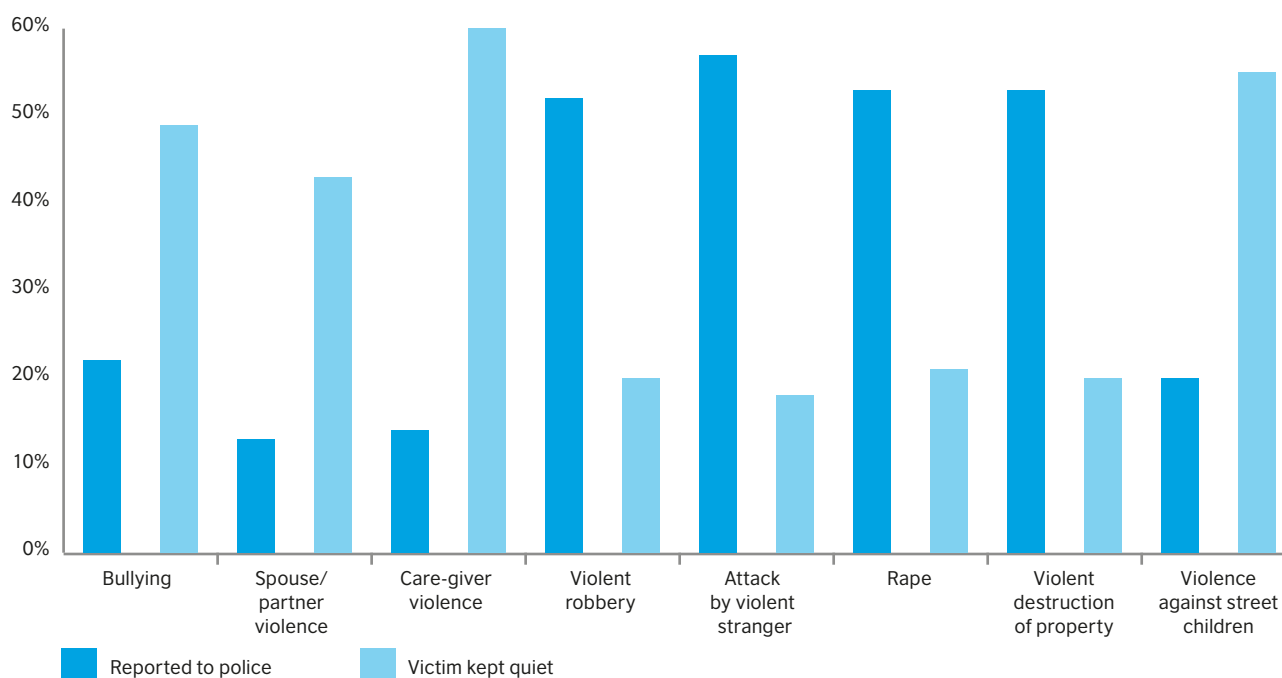
Victims of violence generally do not report incidents to the police. With regard to violence against all members of the community (not only against youth), the only types of violence that more than half of respondents believe were reported were attacks by a violent stranger, violent destruction of property, violent robbery and rape.² For domestic violence incidents by older family

members, spouses or partners, just 13 per cent believe the police were informed. Only one in five of those who recalled violence against street children, moreover, believe the cases were reported.

Although some incidents that were not reported to the police were reported instead to community leaders (such as religious leaders, teachers, parents or local administrators), in most cases the alternative was to keep quiet. Sixty per

cent of those who reported violence by an older care-giver believe the victims kept quiet and took no action, as do around half of those who reported bullying, violence against street children, or violent demands for sex, and 43 per cent of those who reported spousal or partner violence (Figure 6). For nearly all types of violence, reporting to the police was much more common in urban than in rural areas.

Figure 6: What action, if any, was taken by the victim of this violence?



The main reasons for not reporting violence were either that the victim decided to forgive the perpetrator, the fear of worsening the situation, shyness or embarrassment, or a feeling that no action would be taken (see Figure 7):

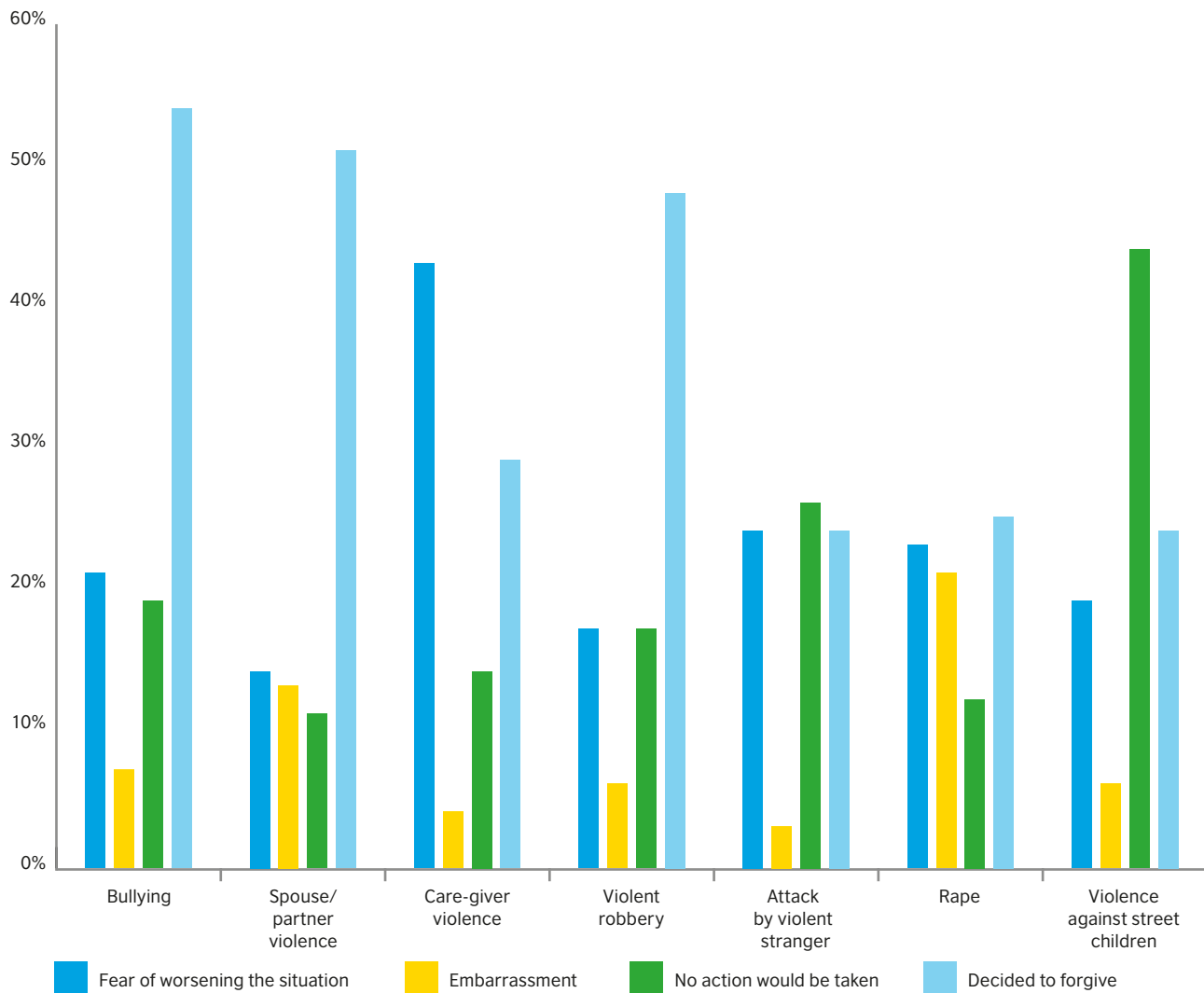
- forgiveness was most likely in cases of bullying, spousal or partner violence, violent robbery or destruction of property, and rape

- the fear of making matters worse was strongest with regard to violence by an older care-giver, attack by a violent stranger, and rape
- embarrassment and shyness were felt most strongly in cases of rape, violent demands for sex, emotional violence, and spousal or partner violence
- the feeling that no action would be taken was particularly strong in cases of violence against street children.

Young people in the focus groups suggested that violence often goes unreported because the perpetrator is known to the victim. In some instances, perpetrators are in a position of power which enables them to prevent victims of their families from taking action. They also reported cases where the community as a whole frowns on those who stand up to violence.

² > Terrorism is also generally reported, although the sample of respondents – 38 – who said they knew of someone who had been a victim of terrorism in the past six months was too small for robust conclusions to be drawn.

Figure 7: Why did the victim not report to the police?



When they were asked about the actions taken by communities to reduce youth violence, young people replied that the main responses were punitive. Two-thirds mentioned 'involving the police' and just over half mentioned 'apprehending perpetrators'. Thirty-seven per cent said that actions had been taken to protect victims from further harm.

A large minority of young people also reported that community initiatives had been implemented to tackle youth violence:

- forty-one per cent said that community mentorship sessions had taken place in their communities
- thirty-five per cent said *nyumba kumi* community security initiatives had taken place. These were more common in urban than rural areas, and particularly in Arusha and Dar es Salaam

- seventeen per cent said youth *barazas* had been implemented. These were most commonly reported in Zanzibar and Arusha
- fifteen per cent reported that youth recreation centres had been set up to help reduce violence.

Eight: Key findings and recommendations

The headline findings from the violence research are as follows.

- Thirty-nine per cent of young people surveyed agree with the statement that 'violence is a growing concern in the area where I live'.
- Twenty per cent feel that their communities see violence against youth as 'part and parcel of growing up'.
- Forty-eight per cent of those who are still in or have completed school report being subjected to severe punishment at some point during their school careers. Twelve per cent experienced this very often.
- Seventeen per cent of girls and 14 per cent of boys report being sexually harassed by school staff.
- Twenty per cent of girls and 16 per cent of boys say they have been sexually harassed by their fellow students.
- Of those in wage employment, one-quarter report mistreatment or victimisation as a major challenge they face at work. Eighteen per cent report bullying or verbal abuse.
- Twenty-four per cent of urban respondents say they know someone who has been the victim of a violent robbery in the past six months, compared with 14 per cent of their rural counterparts.
- Thirteen per cent of respondents say they know of someone who has experienced physical violence by a spouse or partner in the past six months. Seven per cent say they know of someone who has been raped.

- Eighty-five per cent of respondents to the quantitative survey blame youth gangs for violence among young people.
- The reporting of violence to the police is far from widespread. For all types of violence except terrorism, this occurs in less than 60 per cent of cases.
- Only 13 per cent of those who are aware of incidents of violence by older family members, spouses or partners believe the police were informed.
- A large minority of young people report that community initiatives – mentorship sessions, *nyumba kumi* and youth *baraza* programmes, and youth recreation centres – have been implemented to tackle youth violence.

Focus group participants had several suggestions for helping to combat violence. These ideas tally with the key themes that emerged from Phase I of Next Generation Tanzania for improving the lot of young people in general.

The first is education. Some violence – for example violence against people with albinism or people suspected of witchcraft – is caused by false beliefs and ignorance. Many people, moreover, do not know how to protect themselves against violence, whether that be through physical self-defence or through negotiation and communication skills. Improved education, focus group participants suggested, can help to combat misguided beliefs and help equip vulnerable individuals to protect themselves.

The second tool the focus groups identified for addressing violence is giving young people a voice in their communities. Allowing young people to speak out against violence, listening to their reports of violence and respecting their views on the topic will help individuals and, ultimately, whole communities to take a more proactive stance against the various forms of violence.

The third tool is the creation of employment opportunities. Young people believe that most violence is perpetrated by the unemployed, and that poverty is a major motivation for violence. If more jobs were available, they argue, people would be too busy to engage in acts of violence.

Young people also believe the government has a role to play. Although there are institutions and laws that discourage violence, they are often ineffective. In particular, the police are often not trusted by communities, and many cases of violence therefore go unreported and unaddressed. Training and incentives should be provided for the police to engage more constructively with communities and to be sensitised to the issues that surround different forms of violence. Human rights organisations, too, should be supported to raise awareness of violence and to roll out programmes to address it.



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