Take home insights:
A first approximation

❖ Attitudes are the property of an individual. By contrast, norms are interdependent and represent shared social expectations.

❖ The relative importance of norms in the genesis or maintenance of a behaviour varies by issue.

❖ Addressing shared social expectations is only one part of a comprehensive social change agenda

❖ Building a new positive norm can be more strategic than dismantling a negative one.

Srilatha Batiwala, Changing their World, Assoc. Women in Development, 2012

❖Gaining greater clarity about whether norms are at play (and which ones) can suggest how important a norms-based component may be as part of an overall change strategy

❖Where norms are operative, changing knowledge or attitudes has not proven sufficient to shift behaviour

❖Evidence suggests that norms (shared expectations about what others do and think you should do) correlate more strongly with behaviour change than do attitudes - and may provide a better "leading indicator" of whether a programme is on track

❖A deliberative process to clarify values and build consensus appears critical to the success of many norms-based strategies

❖Empirical evidence suggests that if you break one norm, it is easier to shift related norms

❖Consider opportunities to build strategies around "meta norms" that help drive multiple behaviours (e.g. promoting non-violent conflict resolution, challenging the notion of violence as a legitimate form of discipline).

❖Thoughtful consideration of whose opinion matters most to different individuals or groups (i.e. identifying their most salient reference group) can help effect change. But don't get hung up on reference groups – they can be an approximation

❖As change begins to take root (i.e. norms and behavior begins to shift in an initial core group) it becomes increasingly important to make visible this change and amplify it through testimony, organized diffusion, pledges, etc.