Sexual and physical partner and non-partner violence in a conflict-affected setting: *Preliminary findings from Cote d’Ivoire*

Mazeda Hossain


Gender, Violence & Health Centre
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)
&
Gender Based Violence - International Rescue Committee (IRC)

*SVRI Forum 2009 – South Africa*
Study partners

- **London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)**
  - Mazeda Hossain
  - Cathy Zimmerman
  - Tanya Abramsky
  - Ligia Kiss
  - Charlotte Watts (PI)

- **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**
  - Monika Bakayoko-Topoloska
  - Virgine Tanou
  - Heidi Lehman
  - Jodi Nelson
  - K.A. David Manan
  - Drissa Kone
  - Plus many, many IRC-CI field staff
Describe sexual and physical partner and non-partner violence reported by women and men in Cote d’Ivoire
Presentation Outline

I. Research Context
   - Overview of conflict in Cote d’Ivoire
   - Scope of the study
   - Methodology

II. Results
   1. Experiences: Physical violence
   2. Experiences: Sexual violence
   3. Perpetration: Partner violence

III. Summary & Conclusions
I. RESEARCH CONTEXT
Overview of conflict

- **Conflict period:**
  - 1999: coup d'état marked start of the ‘Crisis’ period
  - 2002: Civil war erupted, splitting country between rebel-held north, government-held south and foreign-held buffer zone
  - 2007: Tentative peace agreement between rebels and government

- **Human rights abuses:**
  - Reports of sexual and physical violence against civilian population
Preliminary baseline results from a cluster randomized controlled trial (RCT) to assess the impact of an IRC community focused partner violence prevention intervention on gender relations in 12 rural communities in Cote d’Ivoire.
Evaluation design overview

- Cluster randomised controlled trial (RCT)
  - 6 intervention and 6 control communities
- Community surveys
  - Baseline (Dec 2008) and Follow-up survey (2012)
- Ongoing monitoring of intervention activities (2009-2012)
- Separate teams lead intervention (IRC) and evaluation work (LSHTM)
Methodology

- Community household mapping
- Interviewer training (3 weeks)
- Quantitative baseline survey
  - Measurement of partner & non-partner violence:
    - Violence modules adapted from WHO Multi-Country Study on Domestic Violence
  - Representative sampling:
    - Random allocation of households to female or male interviews in each community; all eligible females or all males in household interviewed by same sex interviewer
  - Questionnaire: French and 8 local language translations
  - Standardized quality control
  - Eligibility: 15-49 years old, resident for 1+ year in community
  - Ethical and safety recommendations:
    - Participants were provided with information about sources of support; follow-up support and referrals offered
- Completion:
  - 1,417 women & 1,268 men face-to-face interviews between Nov-Dec 2008
Measuring Intimate Partner Violence

- **Physical violence** by an intimate partner
  - **MODERATE ACTS**
    - Slapped or had something thrown that could hurt her/him
    - Pushed or shoved
  - **SEVERE ACTS**
    - Hit with fist or something else that could hurt
    - Kicked, dragged or beaten up
    - Choked or burnt on purpose
    - Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon
- **Sexual violence** by an intimate partner (women only)
  - Physically forced to have sexual intercourse
  - Forced sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what partner might do

- **Two time periods:** Last 12 months, Before the last 12 months
- **Experiences & Perpetration:** All women & men were asked the same questions
Measuring Non-Partner Violence

- **Physical violence** by someone other than a partner
  - ADULT (>15 years old)
    - Beaten up or physically mistreated

- **Sexual violence** by someone other than a partner
  - ADULT (>15 years old)
    - Forced to have sex or perform a sexual act that s/he did not want to
  - CHILD (<15 years old)
    - Touched sexually or made to do something sexual that s/he did not want to

- **Three time periods**: Before the coup d'état, During the Crisis, In the last 12 months
RESULTS
Results

SEXUAL VIOLENCE: PARTNER & NON-PARTNER
Both women and men report experiences of sexual violence

Fig 1. Lifetime experiences of partner & non-partner sexual violence, among women and men.
Women report more non-partner sexual violence experiences in all time periods.

Fig 2. Non-partner sexual violence by time period, among women and men.
Results

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:
PARTNER & NON-PARTNER
Both women and men report experiences of physical partner violence.

Fig 3. Prevalence of lifetime experiences of partner physical violence, among ever-partnered women and men.
Women report experiencing severe acts of partner violence twice as often as men.

Fig 4. Prevalence of lifetime experiences of partner physical violence, according to severity, among ever-partnered women and men.
High levels of past and current partner physical violence are reported by women.

Fig 5. Prevalence of lifetime experiences of partner physical violence, according to time period, among ever-partnered women and men.
Among women, partner physical violence may be part of a long-term pattern of abuse.

Fig 6. Women’s reported experiences of partner physical violence by act, among ever-partnered.
Men report a higher proportion of experiencing moderate partner physical violence acts.

Fig 7. Men’s reported experiences of partner physical violence by act, among ever-partnered.
Men report experiencing more non-partner physical violence than women.

Fig 8. Non-partner physical violence ever experienced (overall) and by time period, among women and men.
Results

PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE
Men may be under-reporting perpetration of partner physical violence

Fig 9. Comparison of women’s experiences and men’s reports of partner violence perpetration.
Women’s reported perpetration is close to men’s reported experiences of partner physical violence.

Fig 10. Comparison of men’s experiences and women’s reports of partner violence perpetration.
III. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Summary: Lifetime experiences of violence

Fig 11. Lifetime experiences of violence by partner and violence type.
General conclusions

• Women and men living in conflict-affected areas are likely to have experienced partner-related violence, in addition to conflict-related violence.

• Women are particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual partner abuse.

• Men may also be vulnerable to sexual abuse in certain contexts.
Programmes in conflict-affected settings need to incorporate measures to address partner violence, sexual violence and their effects on women and men.

Reconstruction and aid programmes in particular, should aim to prevent and address the harm associated with partner violence and sexual abuse, as well as conflict-related violence.

Interventions to reduce partner violence in conflict-affected areas require greater attention in violence prevention programming.

Research is needed to understand some of the determinants of sexual vulnerability and explore how interventions in conflict-affected areas might reduce different forms of abuse.