

Demystifying Research Data for Advocacy Purposes

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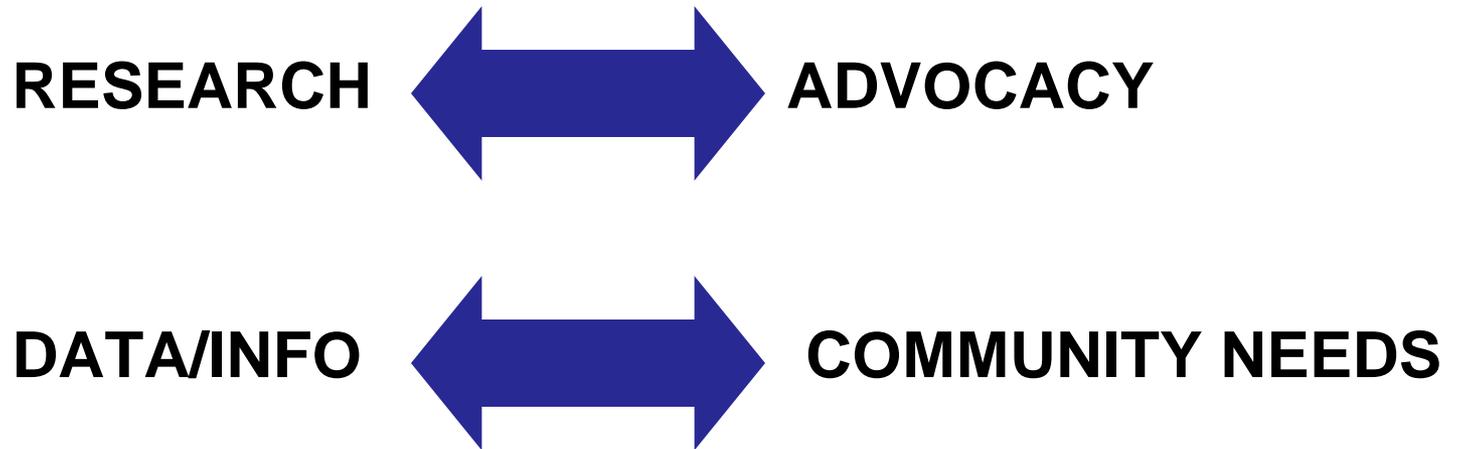


Introduction

- Objectives: To engage in a dialogue on how to use research to strengthen advocacy initiatives
- Interactive discussion encouraging participation and contributions from researchers and activists in the group
- Drawing on experiences from Latin America South Africa and other regions



Merging research agenda with advocacy goals/ community needs



What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy is an organized process of mobilizing support for a cause to bring about change favorable to that cause
- Advocacy can take place on a variety of different levels with a range of objectives

AWARENESS + ACTION = ADVOCACY



What kind of advocacy efforts are being conducted?

1. International level

International legal framework and policies

2. National level

Laws, policies and resource allocation

3. Strengthening services (national and local level)

4. Community level

Changing practices and norms

Each has different data needs and strategies



How do we merge research & advocacy?

- Successful advocacy depends on meaningful data: need to ensure advocates have access to the information they need
- The benefits of clearly presented data are immeasurable to advocacy: collected data must be presented in way that advocates can utilize for effecting change
- Any kind of data can be misused or misinterpreted – Data is also political



Examples of Data Use: Sexual Violence in Conflicts

- Sierra Leone (PHR) Study – comprehensive quantitative and qualitative population based assessment of sexual violence – including large number of IDPs – prevalence of sexual violence against women = 8% and against men 0.1%.
- PHR used their data to launch advocacy campaigns and change laws in Sierra Leone.
- DRC info primarily estimates – references to thousands of women and girls raped with little specificity. Qualitative testimonials.
- Types of data used: Qualitative vs. Quantitative



U.N. Security Council Resolutions: Using data to address sexual violence

- In 2002, when Resolution 1325 was passed, a lack of statistical data held back efforts to address sexual violence
- “A lack of credible data will bedevil advocacy efforts”
- “Facts from the ground have a vital role to play in advocacy . . . data are essential to creating a sense that the phenomenon is widespread, that the current efforts to combat it are insufficient, and that enough is known about the situation to allow for effective action.”
– Donald Steinberg, Deputy President, International Crisis Group



U.N. Security Council Resolutions: Using data to address sexual violence

- In 2008 the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1820, addressing problems of sexual violence in conflict situations
- Data played a vital role in passing the resolution: victim testimonials and statistics were used to meet the “threshold of credibility” and convince the U.N. Security Council, all men, to pass the resolution
- This resolution called for “an analysis of prevalence and trends” and a clearer picture of the situation on the ground

-Steinberg



“Gender against men”

- Documentary by the Refugee Law Project, Uganda
- “A study in Liberia showed that as many as 30% of male combatants in that country were victims of sexual abuse.
- Why is SGBV a women’s issue in the eyes of policy makers and international community”
- Men are victims too”

-Chris Dolan, Refugee Law Project



“Widespread rape does not appear to increase overall HIV prevalence rate in conflict-ridden countries – So now what?”

- UNHCR study: even in the most extreme situations, widespread rape only increased absolute HIV prevalence 0.023%
- Widespread rape in conflict affected areas in SSA has not incurred major direct population level change in HIV prevalence, as generally accepted
 - Anema, Joffres, Mills, Spiegel – UNHCR – Emerging Themes in Epidemiology 2 April 2008
- But, mass rape in conflict affected areas in SSA could substantially increase *incidence* of HIV
 - Supervie, Halima, Blower – TBP 2009 – using the same data in same countries, *incidence* increased by 8%



“So now what?” indeed!

- “It is worth publishing data and conclusions that would be misconstrued and may not make much of a programmatic difference in the field.
- Data, if collected, analyzed and interpreted carefully, help to improve our understanding of complicated and nuanced situations.”

-Paul Spiegel, UNHCR



(MRC) Study on Rape/ Sexual violence in South Africa

- More than 1 in 4 men (28%) admitted to ever committing rape
- ½ of respondents said they had raped more than once
- 73% raped for the first time when they were <20 yrs
- 10% said their first experience with coerced sex was <10yrs.
- Study highlighted rape of non-partners, gang rape, HIV risk
- Rachel Jewkes (MRC) “key drivers of the problem . . . include ideas of masculinity, predicted on marked hierarchy and sexual entitlement of men. Efforts to change these require interventions on structural dimensions of men’s lives, notably education and opportunities for employment and advancement.”



National VAW Study in SA

- A national VAW study was conducted by the Foundation for Human Rights in 2006
- The Study was funded by the EU - requested the Research Report be peer reviewed before the study was placed in the public domain
- The prevalence estimates which the study found was lower than previous prevalence estimates: Demographic Health Survey, MRC 3 province study
- Under-reporting can be damaging, particularly if it is to be used as advocacy messages.



Assessing validity of findings

- Examine sample and questionnaire
- Problem identified with methodology
 - SA has 11 official languages, the questionnaire was not translated into all languages
 - Numerous problems were identified with how violence was measured
 - This could have impacted in reports of experience of VAW
 - Did not follow the WHO ethical guidelines on Research on VAW
- It was recommended that the research should not be made public although a lot of money was invested in conducting this survey
- Publicizing the findings could have had a damaging effect on the gains made in advocacy around violence against women



Campaigns in Latin America

- The “Defensoría del Pueblo” launched a campaign in Peru against sexual violence against children and adolescents which uses various methods to diffuse information like posters, radio spots, and television spots to initiate a response from the community and national levels to fight sexual abuse.
- “Ver y Atender”
 - A practical guide for evaluating and improving health services for female victims and survivors of sexual violence was created to strengthen health services
 - Research into health care-based interventions for women who experiences sexual violence has found that healthcare providers are not always trained in providing sexual assault care and more comprehensive treatment is needed



“Every Six Hours” : Placing Femicide on the Agenda

- Key stakeholders were identified and their support were solicited at the start of the study
- A phased approach to engaging stakeholders with the research findings was adopted
- Timing is critical – consider what is happening in the environment will the issue be overshadowed by other issues

Phase One: Getting the message out

- Preliminary findings were fed back to stakeholders
- A Policy Brief was produced and distributed to all stakeholders
- A press release was developed and distributed via national TV, radio & print

Phase Two: Engaging civil society organizations

- Presentations were made to various GBV organizations, networks



Phase Three: Placing intimate femicide on the agenda of decision-makers

- Letters were written to targeted parliamentary committees
- The researcher was invited to deliver submissions in parliament
 - Joint Monitoring Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women
 - Portfolio Committee on Safety and Security



Phase Four: Forming Partnerships

- The Commission on Gender Equality took up the issue
- The commission partnered the Gender & Health Research Unit in the hosting of a day seminar on “Intimate Femicide”.
- The seminar acted as a means to bring together all the stakeholders to discuss and debate the issue of intimate femicide and to develop a way forward
- The Commission on Gender Equality adopted a national campaign in the period leading up to the 16 days of activism on no violence against women in 2005.



Using the Femicide Findings: Case of the Gun Control Lobby

- The Firearms Control Amendment Bill was being heard in parliament during July 2006
- SA has a very active pro-gun lobby group calling for easier access to legal guns
- Civil society organisations organised themselves as a Anti Gun lobby
- Submissions were made to parliament showing that firearm homicide is a leading cause of mortality in SA
- Key findings from the femicide study was used to call for stricter control over licensing and competency certificates
- The lobby was successful in ensuring that key clauses were included in the legislation



Steps in developing an advocacy strategy

- Develop your message
- Consider your timing
- Identify and engage your stakeholders
- Build and maintain support
- Let others take on the message
- Celebrate successes!!



Translating research data

Victim Age and BAC at time of death

	Median BAC Level g/100ml	0.00-0.04 %	≥0.05 %	OR (CI)	<i>p</i> -value
14-29yrs	0.05	49.0	51/0	ref	
30-39yrs	0.22	32.2	67.8	2.02(0.93-4.39)	0.074
40-49yrs	0.08	47.1	52.9	1.08(0.36-3.25)	0.668
50+yrs	0.00	65.2	34.8	0.51(0.19-1.42)	0.199

Domestic violence compared to other risk factors for LBW

	Adjusted OR (95%CI)	Population Attributable risk
Poverty	2.3 (1.6-4.7)	26%
Smoking	8.7 (2.1-35.1)	6%
Bleeding	2.9 (1.3-6.3)	12%
Pre-eclampsia	2.2 (1.1-4.1)	14%
Violence	4.0 (1.7-9.3)	16%



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