Podcasts to Prevent Intimate Partner Violence

Leveraging Low-cost Technology in a Refugee Setting

LOCATION: Dollo Ado, Ethiopia

TIMELINE: 2017-2019

PARTNERS: WAHA Ethiopia, Addis Ababa University, Harvard Medical School, Fondation Hirondelle

PROJECT TEAM: Dr. Vandana Sharma, Dr. Jennifer Scott, Anne Bennett, Dr. Negussie Deyessa, Theodros Woldegiorgios, Machrine Birungi

PRESENTATION: Vandana Sharma, MD, MPH, April 7, 2020
BOKOLMAYO REFUGEE CAMP:
40,000 Somali refugees

IPV IN EMERGENCIES:
Evidence suggests that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the most common form of gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts

IPV PREVENTION:
There is limited evidence on effective IPV prevention interventions for displaced populations

FUNDING:
0.12% of humanitarian funding is for Gender Based Violence (GBV) programming

IPV Prevention Evidence Gaps
OBJECTIVE:
To develop & test an innovative approach to prevent intimate partner violence (IPV), using low-cost technology to empower refugees to create & disseminate local solutions, building on the Somali tradition of storytelling.

UNITE FOR A BETTER LIFE (UBL) PODCAST SERIES
16 podcasts have been co-created by Somali refugees on gender, healthy sexuality, conflict resolution, household task-sharing, khat use, & sexual harassment. Each podcast includes dramas, interviews, debates.
Refugees are trained in digital storytelling, interviewing & editing

Refugees are mentored to create a series of podcasts on IPV, targeting underlying gender norms & risk factors

Podcasts are broadcast at listening centers in the camp

*If effective during piloting, they may also be available for downloading & peer-to-peer sharing

Data are collected pre- and post-intervention delivery to assess changes in knowledge & attitudes

Contact: Dr. Vandana Sharma, vsharma@povertyactionlab.org
Building on & Generating Evidence

UBL
Rural Ethiopia

- A gender transformative IPV prevention program
- 14 participatory group sessions on gender, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, HIV
- Delivered in context of traditional coffee ceremony
- Tested via randomized controlled trial including 6,770 households in 4 districts in rural, Ethiopia (2014-2018)

UBL
Humanitarian Context

- Adapted for refugee context & Somali culture
- 16 participatory group sessions (includes khat use, harassment and stress)
- Delivered within Somali tea talks
- Piloted in Bokolmayo refugee camp (2016-2018)

UBL
Podcast Series

- Targets harder-to-reach populations
- Similar topics but content co-created by refugees
- 16 episodes use storytelling & dramas to convey key messages
- Broadcast & group discussion at Listening Centers
- Piloted in Bokolmayo refugee camp (2017-2019)
**UBL Podcast Project Timeline**

01
Formative qualitative & quantitative research was analyzed to inform podcast episodes. Podcast structure & scripts were developed.

02
Eight refugees were recruited & trained in digital storytelling, interviewing & podcast production.

03
Refugee podcasters generated content, recorded dialogue, skits & UBL jingle, & edited content to create 16 podcast episodes.

04
A pilot study was carried out to assess the UBL podcasts. Randomly selected individuals were invited to Listening Centers where they either listened individually or in groups. Baseline & endline data were collected.
UBL Formative Research

1. High risk of GBV for women and girls in Bokolmayo & IPV is the most common form of violence women face

2. Displacement-related changes increase GBV risk

3. Loss of livelihoods, increased substance use, poor mental health contribute to IPV

4. Access to education identified as both harmful and protective factor for GBV

80% of women in Bokolmayo experience physical IPV in their lifetime

69% of women in Bokolmayo experience sexual IPV in their lifetime
There was a great transformation for me. In the beginning I didn’t even know about podcasts. I remember on the day of the interview, I was asked what a podcast is and I looked around the room and I told them I have never heard of it.

Now I can go with my mic, I can record the voices, I can edit, I can produce very fantastic audios,

now I am a great podcaster.”
UBL Podcast Testing

1. > 90% who participated listened to all 16 episodes

   Reported behavior change included: strengthened communication with partner, using listening skills, equitable household task sharing, healthy conflict resolution.

2. Listeners shared with an average of 14 people

3. 90% would listen to podcasts again

4. 85% Changed their behaviors due to UBL podcasts

Patterns of Information Sharing by UBL Podcast Listeners:

- Male UBL Listener
  - 12 individuals
- Female UBL Listener
  - 16 individuals

Information Sharing:
- My Children
- Neighbor
- Friend
- Relative
- Spouse

Percentage (%)
“By listening independently, people can listen to the UBL podcasts any time they need and can have privacy.”
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<tr>
<th>Good Practices</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Ensuring safety</td>
<td>1 Using technology in a low-technology setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Measuring unintended consequences</td>
<td>2 Sensitivity of topics (Sexual relationships, religion)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Using a participatory, user-driven approach</td>
<td>3 Ensuring safety &amp; minimizing potential harms</td>
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<td>4 Building on and generating evidence</td>
<td>4 Displaced populations</td>
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<td>5 Test, learn, adapt</td>
<td>5 Lack of electricity</td>
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Looking to the Future

- Evidence-based programming is the most effective way to achieve sustainable and meaningful changes
- Prioritize funding programs to address IPV in humanitarian settings & research to understand what works

For the UBL Podcast Intervention:

1. Conduct rigorous evaluation of the UBL Podcast intervention to assess long-term outcomes
2. Develop field-friendly tools to facilitate implementation
3. Scale up in Dollo Ado & other sites
Thank You

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Special thanks to the women, men, community members and partners who took part in the project.

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