Working with men to prevent violence against women in a conflict-affected setting:

A cluster RCT of a male-focused IPV prevention intervention in rural Cote d'Ivoire

Mazeda Hossain

Gender Violence & Health Centre
Social and Mathematical Epidemiology
Faculty of Public Health & Policy
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

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Email: Mazeda.Hossain@lshtm.ac.uk

Background: IPV prevention in conflict settings

- Women and men likely to have been exposed to a variety of violent and traumatic acts in conflict-affected settings.
- Increasing recognition that post-conflict reconstruction activities need to address rape, IPV and other violence exposures.
- IPV prevention is still in its infancy and there are few well-designed or established prevention programmes.
- Few prevention programmes directly engage with men.
- Little published evidence on the impact, or acceptability, of implementing a male-focused intervention in a conflict-affected setting.

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IRC Intervention: Men's Discussion Groups

INTERVENTION OBJECTIVES

To reduce violence against women and girls through:

- Improving men's knowledge about impact of GBV on women, men and children;
- Shift towards gender equitable beliefs and behaviors within the relationship and household;
- Provide men with conflict management techniques

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES

- Men's-only discussion group, approx. 30 men;
- Recruitment among all adult men in intervention communities;
- Focus on individual-level behaviour change;
- Trained male IRC facilitator;
- 16 sessions + review sessions

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Research questions

PRIOR TO THE INTERVENTION:

- In the study communities, what are the characteristics of intimate and non-partner violence? What are the attitudes towards IPV?

1-YEAR POST-INTERVENTION:

- What is the impact and added value of a male-focused intervention among intervention participant to prevent VAWG?

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Cote d'Ivoire: Political context

1960: Independence granted, Houphouet-Boigny holds power until his death in 1993
1993: Bedie becomes president

1999: Coup d'état
2000: Gbagbo declared President; clashes between north and south 2001: Attempted coup d'état
2002: Rebels seize control of western and northern towns
2003: Peace deal brokered with power-sharing government & ceasefire; UN peacekeepers arrive
2005: Massacres in western towns
2006: Violent demonstrations, peace talks, UN extends transitional govt mandate

2007: **Power-sharing deal**
2008: Disarmament begins; elections postponed
2010: Run-off election; pre- and post-electoral violence

2011: Post-electoral violence continues; opposition party gains control;
2012: Power transfer process on-going

BEFORE the *Crisis* *(Pre-1999)*

DURING the *Crisis* *(2000-2006)*

STUDY PERIOD

AFTER the *Crisis* *(2007-2008)*

Post-electoral violence / Transition period *(2010-2011)*

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Overview of research design

- **Mixed methods study:**
  - Community cross-sectional survey
  - Cluster randomised controlled trial (CRT)
  - Complementary qualitative research
- **Community selection:**
  - 12 clusters: 6 intervention & 6 control sites across 6 administrative districts
  - Communities pair-matched based on SES + geographical buffer
  - All communities receive IRC community-level GBV programme
  - Random allocation of men's discussion groups to intervention clusters
- **Time period:** 2008-2012

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Research design overview

	Description	Date	Population	TOTAL COMPLETED
Quantitative	(1) **Community survey** to inform intervention design	Nov 2008	*12 villages:* All women or all men in randomly selected households	Total: 2,684 *Men: 1.419* *Women:* 1,265
	(2) **Baseline** survey before start of intervention activities	Aug 2010	*6 Intervention villages*: Intervention participants & partners (couples) *6 Control villages:* IRC-GBV committee members (couples) and age-matched men & female partners	Total: 601 (baseline) *Men: 346* *Women: 316*
	(3) **Follow-up** survey, 1 year after intervention	Feb 2012		Total: 560 (follow-up) *Men: 316* *Women: 244*
Qualitative	(1) **Key informant** interviews	Aug 2010 Feb 2012	*3 intervention & 3 control villages:* Intervention participants, females partners, IRC-GBV committee members, village leaders	Total: 30 (2010) 98 (2012)
	(2) IRC **facilitator debriefings** at end of intervention	Jun 2011	IRC intervention facilitators & supervisors	Total: 8 *(men only)*
Complementary Activities	(1) **Community mapping** for sampling frame	Oct 2008	*12 villages:* Community maps and household lists in all study sites	Households: 2,077 Individuals: 13,986
	(2) **Attendance monitoring** of intervention participation by session	Aug 2010 - Mar 2011	*6 intervention villages:* Male intervention participants	Total: 166

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Fieldwork procedures

- **Local interviewer training**
  - 3 wks in 2008; 2 wks in 2010 and 2011
- **Translations of quantitative questionnaires**
  - French and 7 local languages
- **Face-to-face interviews using direct questions on violence**
  - e.g., slapped, pushed, choked, etc.
- **Standardized quality control** at data collection and data entry phases
- **Strict ethical and safety procedures**:
  - Private interviews; informed consent; information on sources of support; referrals offered; follow-up by IRC staff
- Other considerations in conflict-affected or politically unstable settings:
  - Questionnaires avoided politically charged questions as probes may pose danger to participants and interviewers.
  - Safety of respondents and data collection team paramount. Aware of political situation at all times during the data collection period.

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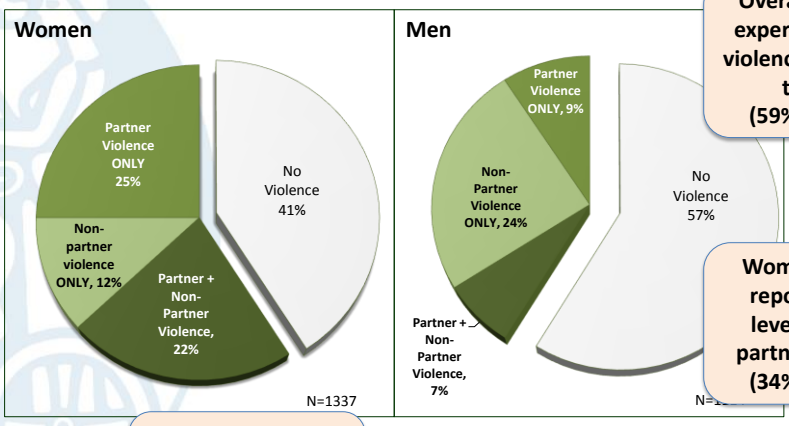
Lifetime levels of violence exposure high among women & men



Lifetime experien… …sical and/or sexual violence) by perpetrator type and overlap, among w… …in study sites, 2008.

Overall, women experience more violence compared to men (59% vs. 43%)

Women & men report similar levels of non-partner violence (34% vs. 31%)

Women report more partner violence than men (47% vs. 16%)

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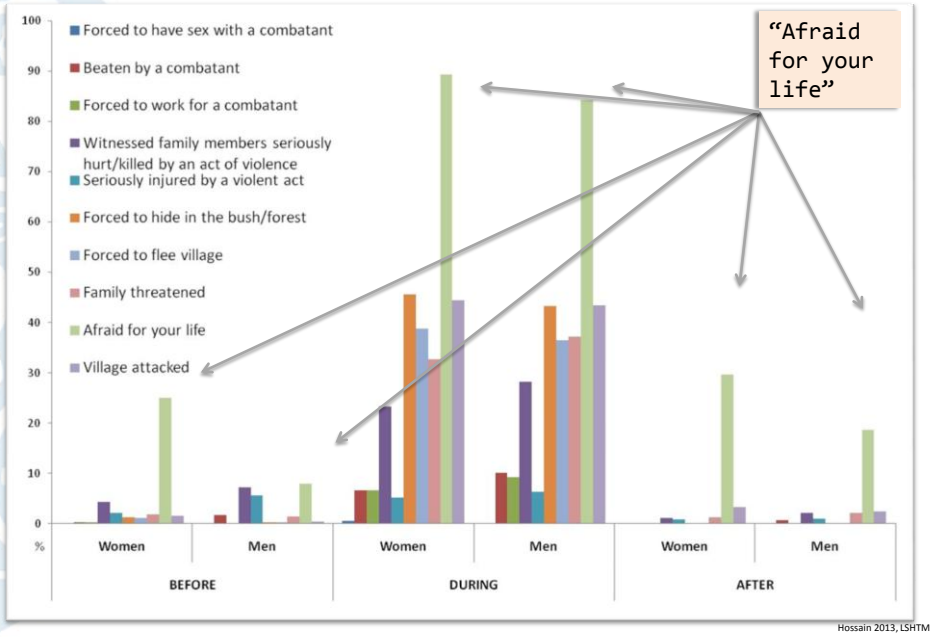
What were traumatic experiences levels in the communities?



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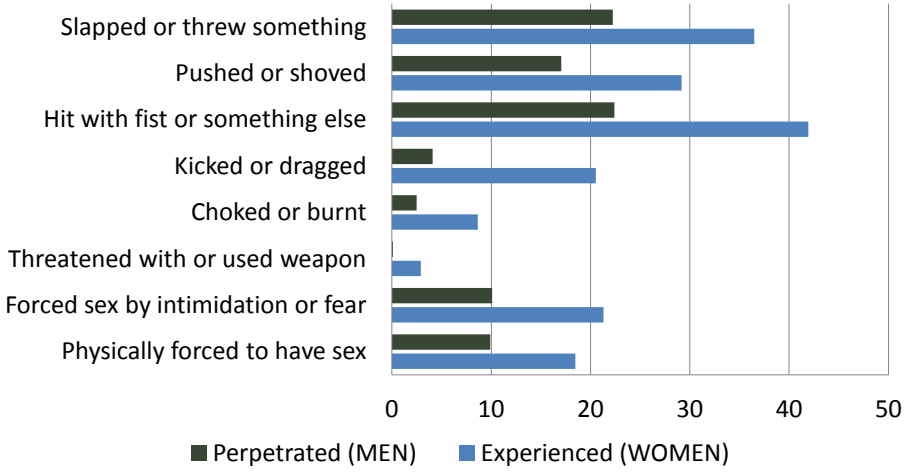
Discrepancies between women's reports of experiencing violence & men's reports of perpetration



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Promising outcomes at follow-up: consistent direction of effect

Trial outcomes (past year)	Direction of effect
Woman's experience of physical and/or sexual IPV	↓
Men's intention to use physical IPV	↓
Men's attitudes towards the unacceptability of sexual IPV	↑
Men's use of positive conflict management techniques & women report no threats from partner	↑*
Men's involvement with at least 2 household tasks	↑*

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Summary

- High levels of violence exposure in study communities among women & men - before, during & post conflict.
- Women are vulnerable to multiple forms of violence from conflict, partner and family. Family & acquaintances reported as perpetrators more often than combatants.
- IPV prevention programming can be done in conflict-affected setting. Men were very receptive to participating in IRC intervention.
- Promising impacts on men's behaviour in relationship & household
- Declines in physical and/or sexual IPV between baseline & follow-up in intervention & control communities
  - Declines in sexual IPV only seen in intervention community
- Findings support the continued implementation of women's programming plus potential added value of men's programming to IPV prevention activities.
- Reconstruction efforts should consider IPV prevention programming.

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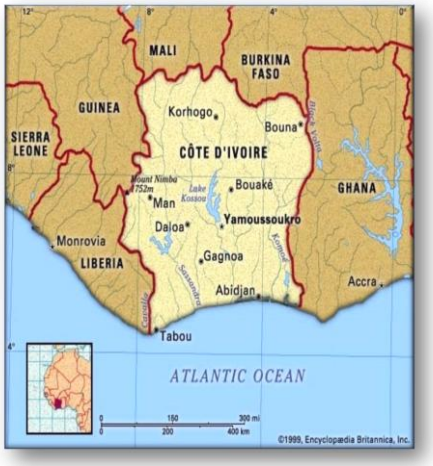
Study Partners (2008-2012)

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

- Mazeda Hossain
- Cathy Zimmerman
- Ligia Kiss
- Tanya Abramsky
- Tammy Maclean
- Charlotte Watts

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

- Heidi Lehman
- Jeannie Annan
- Monika Bakayoko-Topolska
- Drissa Kone
- Virginie Tanou
- Tia Gogbeu
- Plus many others...



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