Conflict and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in South Sudan: Findings from a mixed-methods study

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Research questions

• What are the forms, trends and prevalence of different forms of VAWG in South Sudan?

• What are the direct and indirect drivers of VAWG, and how are they influenced by the different conflicts that have taken place in South Sudan?
Mixed methods study

- **Population-based household survey:**
  Women and men ages 15-64.

- **Qualitative research:**
  Participatory FGDs and In-depth Interviews with Key stakeholders, survivors and community members.
Three diverse settings

Juba City (n=477)

Rumbek (n=804)

POC Juba (n=963)
Three Conflicts

- Civil War 1983-2005
- Crisis 2013 - 2017
- Intercommunal attacks
VAWG and Conflict

**Directly Conflict Related**
- Non Partner Sexual Assault
- Abduction
- Killing

**Indirectly Related**
- IPV
- Non Partner Sexual Assault
- Abuse in the community
- Physical violence by family members
- Discriminatory Practices (e.g. early marriage, polygamy, wife inheritance)

**Drivers**
- Women incidentally affected as part of armed attacks on villages/places of residence
- Specific targeting of women and girls (for marriage, revenge, abduction, drawing men out, dehumanization, etc.) by an armed group or rival community

**Gender Inequitable Norms and Practices**
- Socio-economic status
- Opportunistic Crime/Criminality
- Displacement
- Normalization of violence
- Breakdown of rule of law
Marriage experiences of respondents

- Brideprice paid:
  - Juba: 88%
  - Rumbek: 84%
  - Juba PoCs: 58%

- Forced marriage:
  - Juba: 10%
  - Rumbek: 24%
  - Juba PoCs: 17%

- Polygamous marriage:
  - Juba: 42%
  - Rumbek: 56%
  - Juba PoCs: 38%
Experiences of Displacement

- Juba: 36%
- Rumbek: 50%
- Juba PoC: 100%

Juba  Rumbek  Juba PoC
Has experienced an attack on her village/community of residence

- Juba (n = 477)
- Rumbek (n = 804)
- Juba PoCs (n = 963)
Experience of sexual violence by a non-partner

- **Juba**
  - Count: 173
  - % within loc: 40.1%

- **Rumbek**
  - Count: 182
  - % within loc: 26.9%

- **PoC**
  - Count: 156
  - % within loc: 42.2%

**Total**
- Count: 511
- % within loc: 34.6%

More than 40% experienced non-partner SV more than once.

- **Juba PoCs**
  - Count: 258
  - % within loc: 59.9%

- **Juba**
  - Count: 431
  - % within loc: 100.0%

- **Rumbek**
  - Count: 676
  - % within loc: 100.0%

60% < 19 years old
Prevalence of non-partner sexual violence

- Rape: 6%, 17%, 22%
- Other sexual violence: 22%, 25%, 26%
- Sexual exploitation: 22%, 10%, 21%

Legend:
- Juba
- Rumbek
- Juba POCs
Experience of Rape or Sexual Assault - during an raid/attack, abduction, or during displacement

- Juba (n = 169)
- Rumbek (n = 277)
- Juba PoCs (n = 333)
Perpetrators of Non-Partner Sexual Violence

**Juba PoC**
- Family members: 11
- Other known: 6
- Police or armed actors: 29
- From another community: 23
- Humanitarian actors: 1
- Stranger: 3

**Rumbek**
- Family members: 32
- Other known: 19
- Police or armed actors: 10
- From another community: 25
- Humanitarian actors: 1
- Stranger: 31

**Juba**
- Family members: 7
- Other known: 48
- Police or armed actors: 6
- From another community: 10
- Humanitarian actors: 3
- Stranger: 28
It is common in our custom to beat a woman when she has made a mistake - not to the extent of killing her completely, but to discipline her.

Male chief
Prevalence of intimate partner violence

Ever physical/sexual IPV
- Juba: 60%
- Rumbek: 73%
- Juba POCs: 54%

12 month IPV
- Juba: 43%
- Rumbek: 63%
- Juba POCs: 47%
Perceived change in IPV among women who have experienced IPV since the start of the 2013 Crisis

- IPV Increased since start of Crisis:
  - Juba (n = 106): 10%
  - Rumbek (n = 225): 38%
  - Juba PoCs (n = 233): 27%

- Stayed the Same:
  - Juba (n = 106): 63%
  - Rumbek (n = 225): 55%
  - Juba PoCs (n = 233): 43%

- IPV decreased since start of Crisis:
  - Juba (n = 106): 26%
  - Rumbek (n = 225): 7%
  - Juba PoCs (n = 233): 29%
Increased risk of IPV if respondent experienced attack on her village

- Juba: 1.74 (1.07 – 2.83)*
- Rumbek: OR 2.53 (1.79-3.57)***
- Juba PoCs: 2.82 (2.06 – 3.88)***
Conclusions

- Nearly 1 in 3 women in the study experienced non-partner sexual violence, mostly conflict-related, although the context and drivers varied greatly by site.

- Despite the high levels of NPSV, intimate partner violence is the most common type of violence experienced by women and girls in all sites (53-73%).

- Experiences of conflict increase the risk of IPV in all three sites.

- VAWG is rooted in patriarchal norms and practices.
“For the women of South Sudan, nothing will change unless our government tells people not to fight...

We (women) are vulnerable - we have no one to support us.... “

Woman from Rumbek
THANK YOU

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