

TACKLING THE PERVASIVE SOCIAL ISSUE OF VAWG: A COMMUNITY- BASED APPROACH

LESSONS LEARNT IN INTERVENTION
MODEL

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BACKGROUND

- The intervention model developed by GSHRDC undergoing impact assessment by SPH, University of Ghana
- Impact assessment designed to use unmatched randomized control trial
- Intervention arm receives the model
- Control arm, no intervention

Intervention goals and objectives

- The overall goal of the project is to reduce the incidence of violence against women and girls in Ghana and protect women's rights through state and community based structures.
- The intervention seeks to change community attitudes, norms and behaviours that result in gender inequality.
- Addressing the complex societal and institutional factors recognises that intimate partner violence results from the complex interplay of factors which operate at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels,
- and that if effective change is to be achieved, it is important for interventions to systematically work with a broad range of stakeholders within the community.

- General confusion about what constitutes violence and ignorance about the causes, consequences and mechanisms that perpetuate VAW, and
- Isolation of rural women and women's expressed dissatisfaction at the assistance and support they received when they reported

Intervention description

- The Rural Response System uses the strategy of training community members known as Community-based action team, COMBAT to undertake awareness-raising on gender-based violence as well as provide support to victims of violence to access justice and services

Intervention description contd.

- the intervention model was developed to respond to the following problem areas prioritized from our 1998 research findings.
- Poor state/institutional response to VAW, with frequent patterns of victim blaming, referring reported cases back to family and state agency personnel and society in general trivializing the issue;
- High degree of tolerance of VAW in Ghanaian society, perpetuated by strong perceptions that domestic violence is a private/family matter and not a serious crime;

- General confusion about what constitutes violence and ignorance about the causes, consequences and mechanisms that perpetuate VAW, and
- Isolation of rural women and women's expressed dissatisfaction at the assistance and support they received when they reported

Intervention principles

- The RRS operates on the following key principles:
- That violence against women is a violation of their human rights;
- That violence is unacceptable and should be condemned;
- That the woman experiencing violence has a right to be protected from such violence

Intervention principles contd.

- That the state and its agencies have a duty to protect the woman experiencing violence
- That perpetrators need to be sanctioned to serve as deterrent to others
- That a violent free relationship, one based on equality of the partners inures to the benefit of not only the partners, but their family, the community and society as a whole.

Intervention activities

- Training of COMBAT on VAW, counselling and gender.
- They are also trained on the various elements of the RRS including reporting and support to victims.
- Laws that deal with violence as well as laws on property rights, testate and intestate succession, parental roles and responsibilities

Activities continued

- Training of staff of some staff agency personnel from police, health, social welfare, CHRAJ and NCCE
- Training of other CSOs
- Meetings with community traditional and religious leadership and other stakeholders

Combat at work



17/08/2017

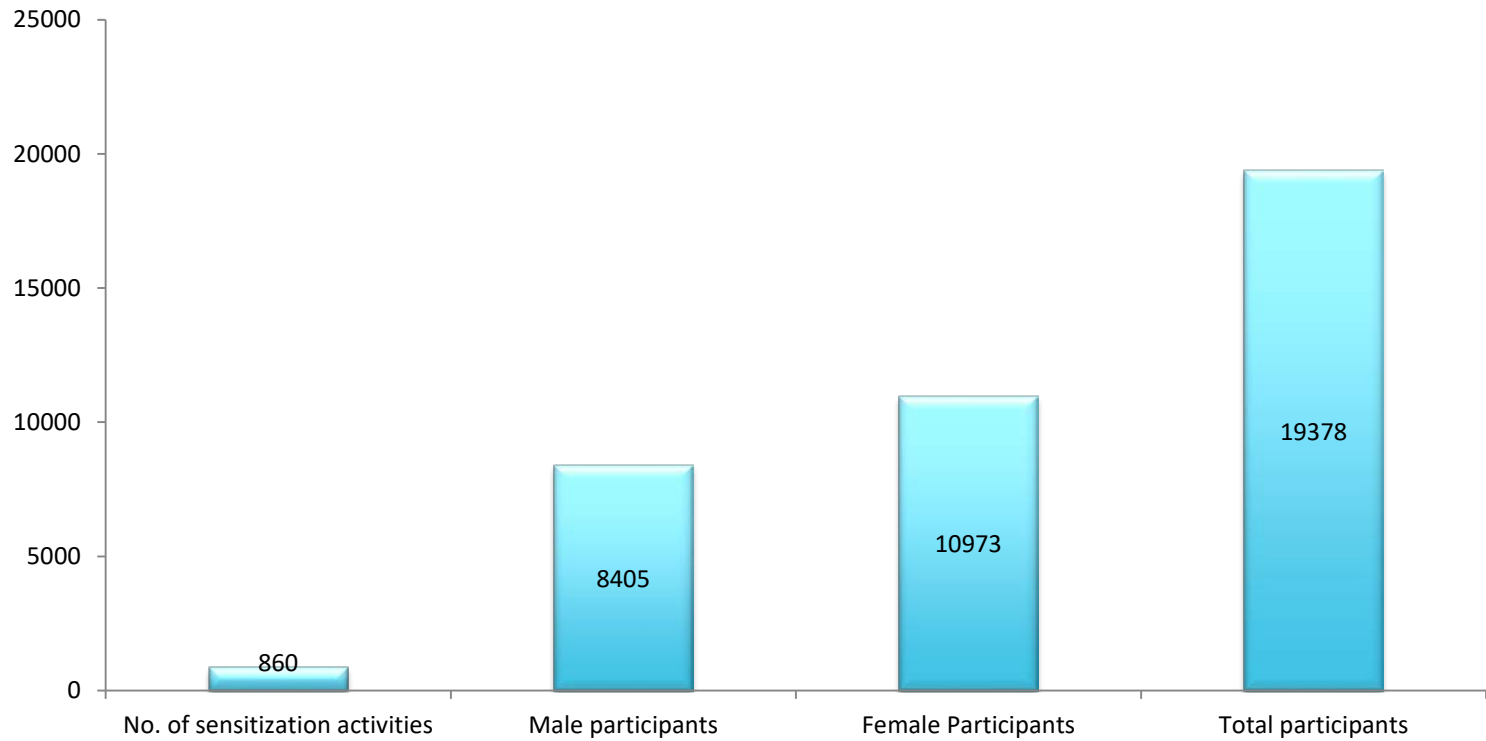
Combat Work

- **Community interventions**
- COMBAT use any and every opportunity to undertake its core activity of sensitisation and awareness-raising.
- The COMBAT organise public meetings, in churches, during community festivals, association or group meetings and through radio programmes.
- Various strategies such as role plays are used to introduce the topic to be discussed.
- Opportunity given for questions

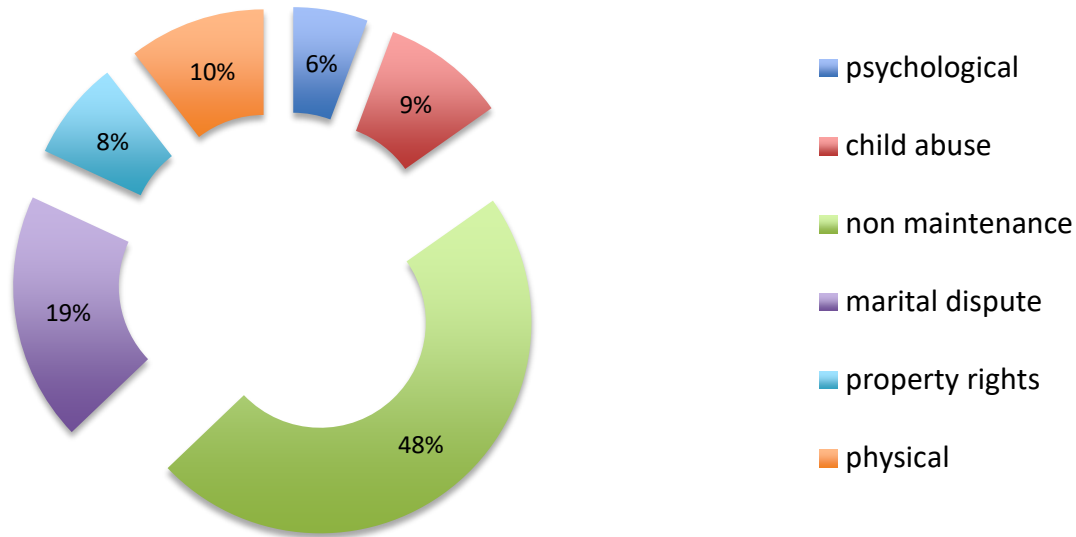
- Individual sessions with community member for counselling
- Where required by a victim, a COMBAT member may accompany a victim to report to an agency, to support the victim who is engaging with the service for the first time and might be nervous about doing so.
- Follow-up on cases that have been referred to service provider and also the victim.

Results of Combat sensitization Activities in Project & surrounding communities July 2016 – July 2017

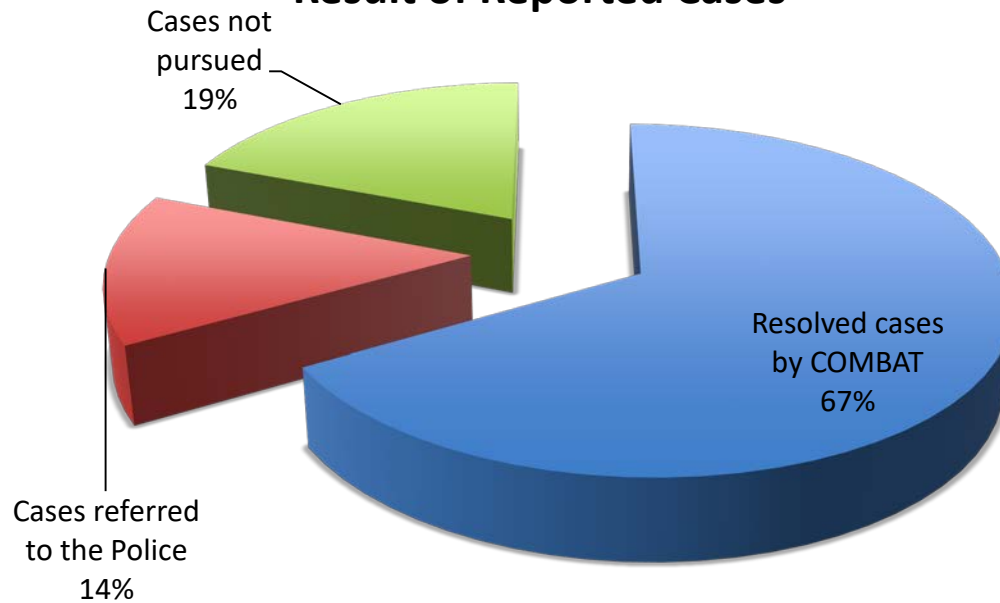
Result of COMBAT Activities in 20 Communities



Violence Cases Reported



Result of Reported Cases



Lessons learnt

- When people have access to information, they are able to use it.
- *“the training has made me realise that I have been cheating my wife all these years and I have apologized to her. I have promised to change and help her at home” (Combat member)*

Lessons learnt contd.

- Economic and social factors drive IPV
- *“I am a man and I married you. I have a right to have sex with you anytime I want” (male community member)*
- *“So long as you don’t provide my needs, I will not allow you” (female)*
- *“Is it right for my wife to charge me before having sex with me?”*
- *Male response: NO!!!!*
- *Female response: YES!!!!*

Lessons learnt contd.

- Combat acquire status in community
- Challenges with volunteerism
- Safety and security risks for Combat members and staff.
- Good communication among partners is critical to reducing IPV

- Recognition of complex interplay of factors affecting IPV
- Need to address all factors
- Support of community leadership is important
- Community involvement in development process and implementation ensures buy-in and sustainability

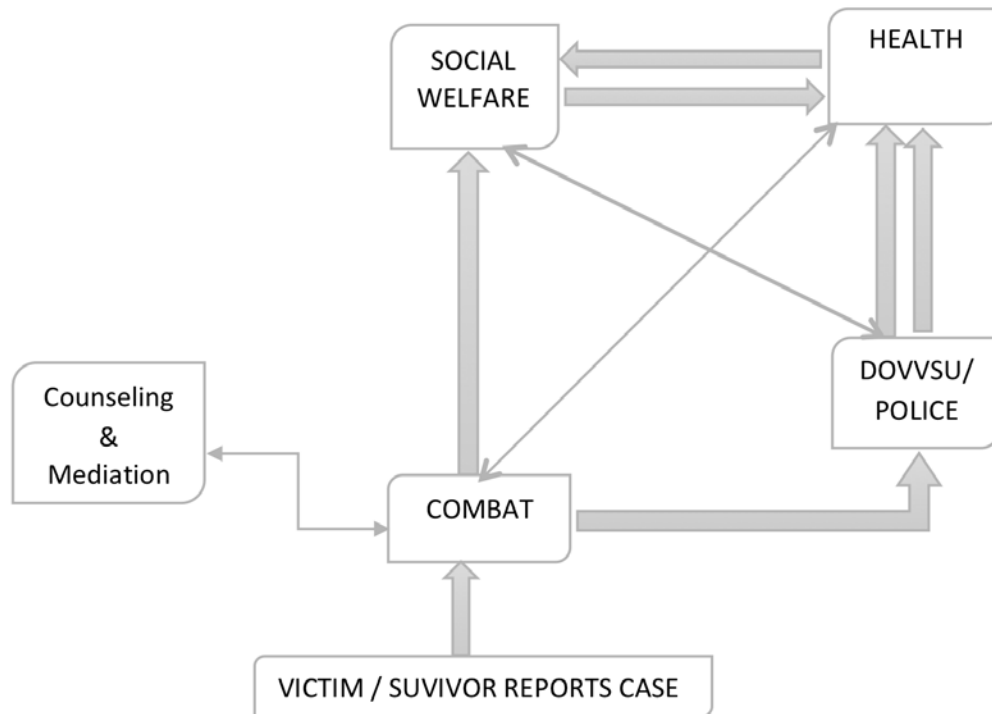
Lessons learnt contd.

- Need for continuous capacity building and backstopping



Lessons learnt contd.

Creating opportunities for inter-agency co-operation



Inter-agency collaboration

- Creating opportunity for agencies to meet through training and quarterly stakeholder meetings
- Sharing of institutional practice and challenges
- Developing inter-agency protocols
- Effective response to cases



- THANK YOU