

Sexual violence care in Médecins Sans Frontières programs in seven countries in Africa. What about men and boys?



Definition of sexual violence

“Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work, **including SV acts committed against men and women**”

- WHO, 2002

However, sexual violence towards men and boys remains underestimated and often neglected in SV programmes globally

Sexual violence towards males?

Prevalence of sexual abuse of boys up to 17% in non-conflict settings, and in conflict settings up to 24-33% towards adult men¹

- ❑ High levels of fear, stigma, shame, and guilt prevent seeking care
 - Expectations of male invulnerability, and loss of power
 - Fear of being labelled homosexual/bisexual
 - Used as weapon of war (humiliation/feminization)
- ❑ Poor awareness among care providers and health professionals, leading to low referral rates



¹ Barth *et al.*, Int J Public Health. 2013;58: 469–483. Johnson *et al.*, JAMA. 2010;304: 553–562. Johnson *et al.*, JAMA. 2008;300: 676–690.

MSF package of care - multisectoral



Medical history and examination



- HIV & STI prophylaxis
- Emergency contraception



Vaccination



Wound care



Mental health support

Country: _____
Name of the medical structure or project: _____

SEXUAL VIOLENCE MEDICAL CERTIFICATE – ADULT/MINOR
Based on the medical file
Confidential document covered by medical confidentiality

Last name and first name of the patient: _____
Date of birth: _____ Age: _____ Sex: ☐ M ☐ F ☐ Patient code: _____
Address of the patient: _____
Last name, first name of the accompanying person (if the patient is a minor): _____
Relationship to the patient minor and the accompanying person (father, mother, other...): _____

Date of the initial medical examination: _____ (last name, first name), MSF medical staff, certify that the medical file of the aforementioned patient who declared having been victim of sexual assault on _____ includes the following elements:

During the consultation, the patient declared that: The whole story must be transcribed in an appropriate, identical way, then in the medical certificate (same level of detail – using the words of the patient).

(If minor) During the consultation, the accompanying person declared that: The whole story must be transcribed in an appropriate, identical way, then in the medical certificate (same level of detail – using the words of the accompanying person).

(If necessary, continue transcribing the patient's narrative on the accompanying person's one on page 2)

At the time of medical examination, the patient presented the following signs:
– On examination of the general behaviour:

Medical and MH legal certification



Multicentric MSF data, 2011-2017

- **Objectives :**

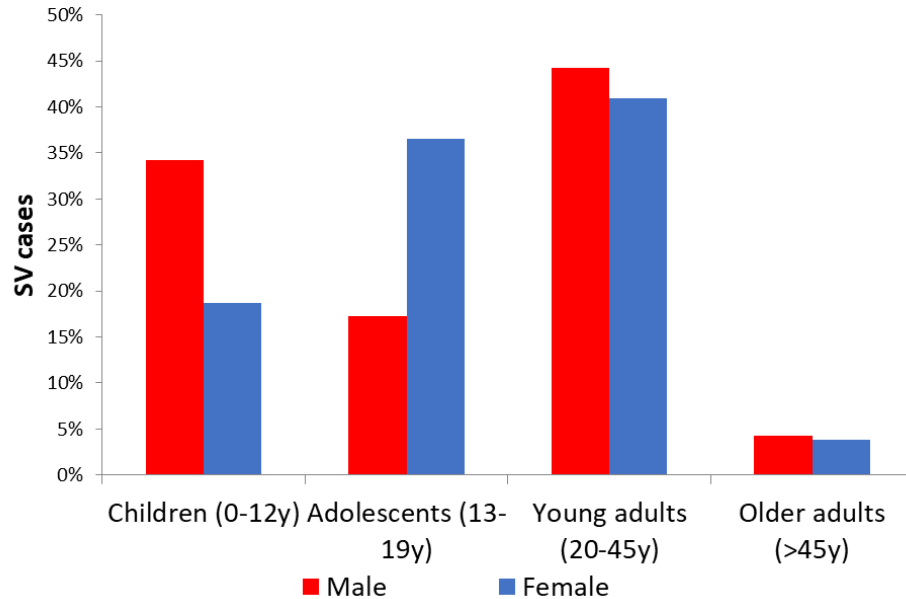
- **Describe male sexual violence victims and assaults' patterns, as compared to females**
- **Investigate factors that could improve male victims' access to care**

- **The study included :**

- **11 MSF projects in 7 African countries providing sexual violence care**
- **A total of 13,550 cases of sexual violence**

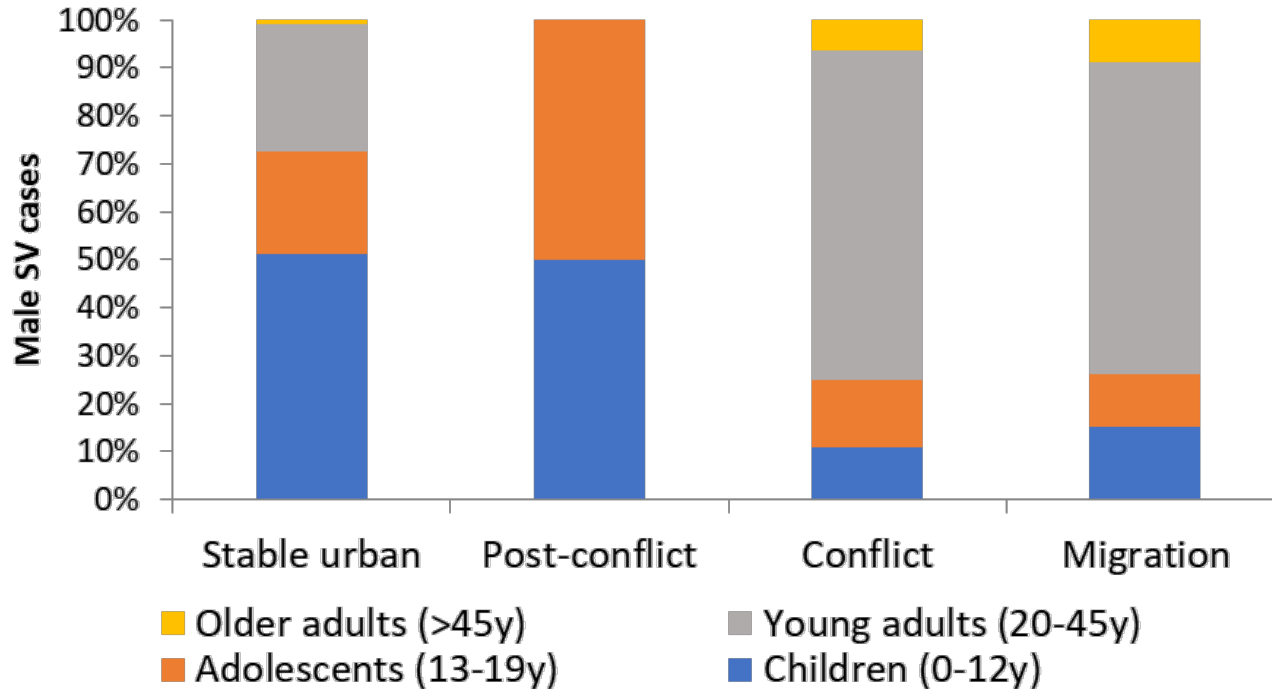
Male victims of sexual violence – who?

- Out of 13,550 cases: 1009 (7.5%) males
- Age profile: more children and young adults among males:



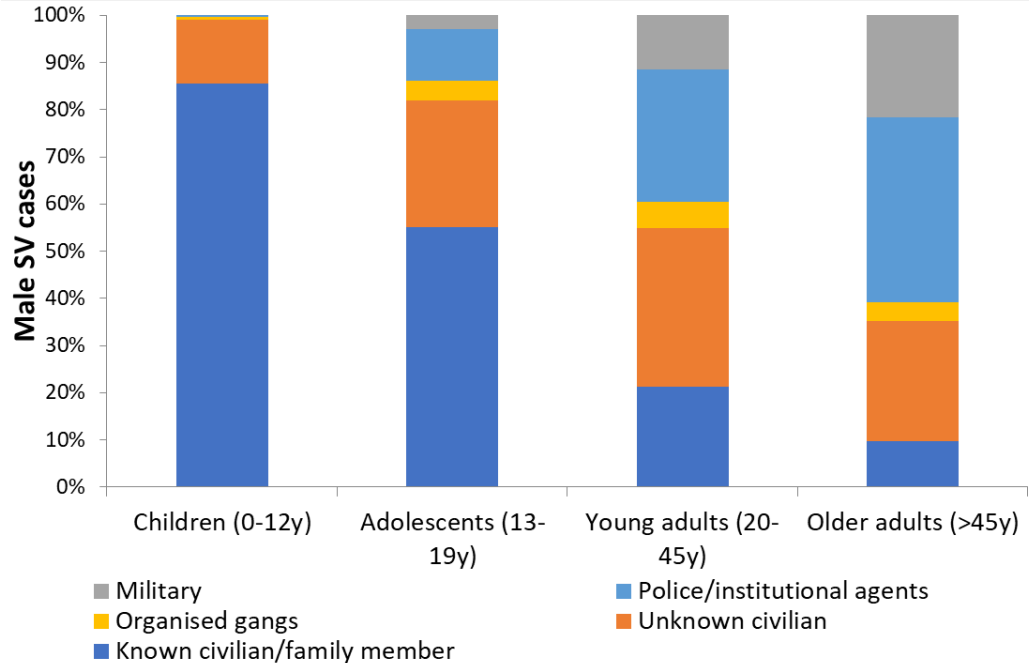
Male victims of sexual violence – who?

- Age profiles are dependent on the context:



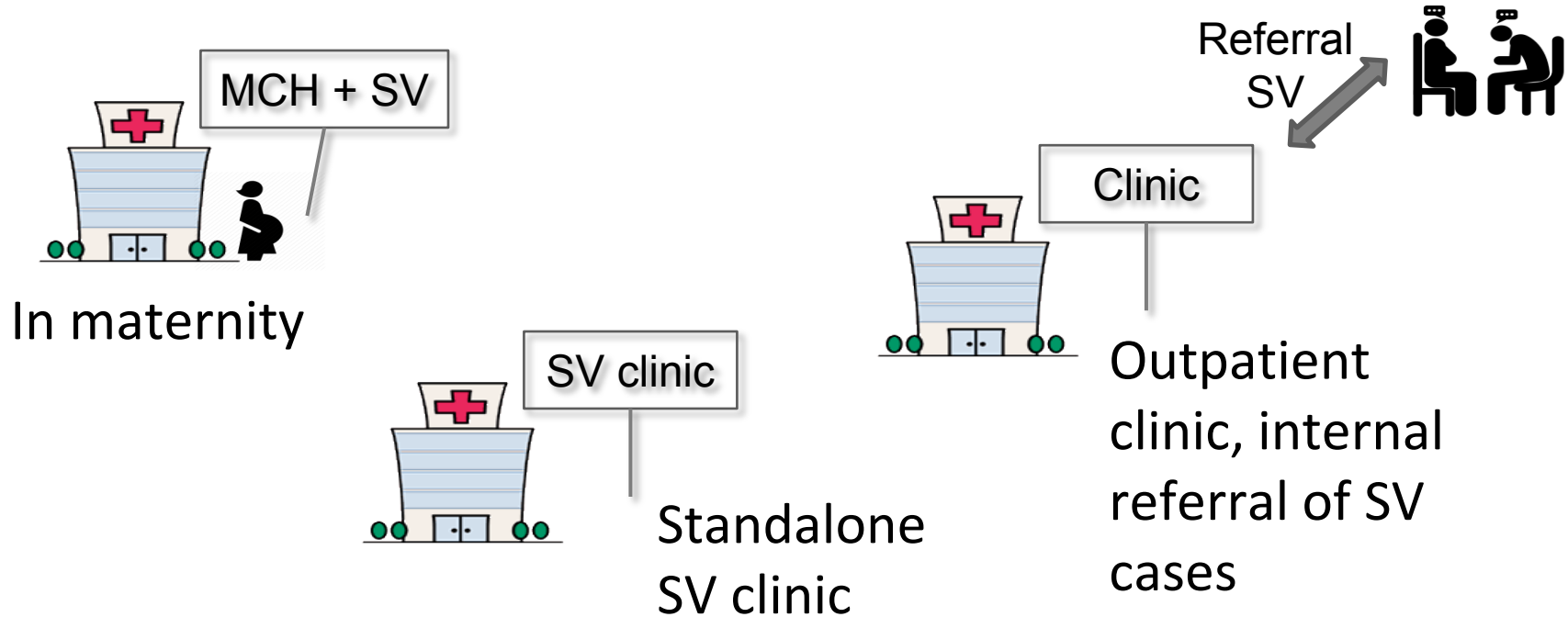
Male victims of sexual violence – incident

- Perpetrator profiles are dependent on the age of the victim
- Males were more likely than women to be forced to rape another person (OR 12.9)
- Male adults more often endured violent assault, perpetrated by authority figures



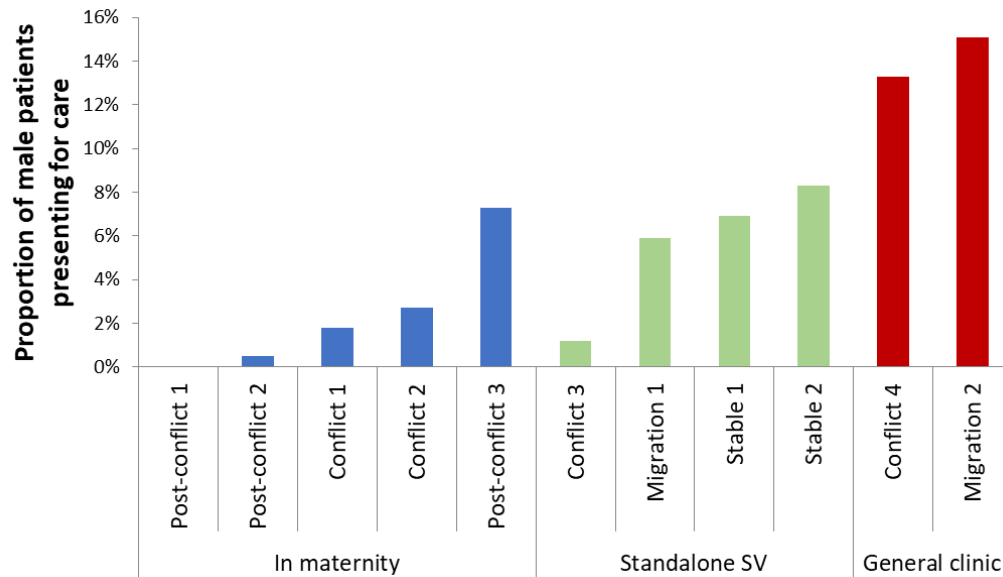
Access to care

- Among the different MSF projects, we defined 3 forms of setup:



Access to care

■ Clinic setup appeared associated with proportion of males seen



■ Once enrolled in care, adherence to care was similar between men and women

Conclusions

- Male victims of sexual violence exist in all our services, **but may often be missed**
 - The **setup of the services** plays a crucial role in influencing access for male victims
 - Profiles of male victims are very diverse. Broad **awareness and training** among care providers is needed to allow identifying signs and symptoms
 - Specific forms of violence (such as being forced to rape) may require **particular care/expertise**, which is not always available in projects
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