



Dual Contraceptive Use by Female Sex Workers in Gulu, Northern Uganda

Background

Female sex workers in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Gulu, northern Uganda, a conflict-affected area, face a high burden of HIV, gender-based violence, and unintended pregnancy, and have little access to sexual and reproductive health services.

The Question

What characteristics are associated with dual contraceptive use (non-barrier contraceptives and male condoms for pregnancy prevention) among female sex workers in Gulu, northern Uganda?

The Study

This analysis drew on data from the Gender & Sexual Health Initiatives' Gulu Sexual Health Project, a community-based cross-sectional study in Gulu District, northern Uganda (May 2011-January 2012). **400 female sex workers were recruited through peer/sex worker-led and community outreach.** The study was conducted by Canadian and Ugandan researchers in partnership with The AIDS Support Organization (TASO) and other local community partners.

The Results

45% of female sex workers interviewed reported lifetime dual contraceptive use. These women were older, and more likely to:

- Have had HIV testing,
- Report unintended pregnancies,
- Work in non-entertainment indoor establishments such as brothels, lodges, hotels and rented rooms,
- **Report that police presence resulted in rushed negotiations with clients.**

Over 1/3 of participants reported that police being nearby impacted where they worked, and resulted in rushed negotiations with clients, increasing their risk.

The Policy Implications

- Our findings show how many different structural risks, including negative interactions with police, reduce uptake of sexual and reproductive health services for female sex workers living in Gulu, northern Uganda.
- **Integrated HIV and sexual and reproductive health services developed in partnership with sex workers should be considered to reduce barriers to contraceptive uptake and promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.**

Margaret Erickson, Shira M. Goldenberg, Miriam Ajok, Katherine A. Muldoon, Godfrey Muzaaya, Kate Shannon. Structural determinants of dual contraceptive use among female sex workers in conflict-affected Gulu, northern Uganda. *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*, 2015.