

A graphic illustration featuring a blue dove in flight, a green leaf, and a red hand reaching upwards, symbolizing peace, nature, and human support.

FRAGILE LIVES '25



Leibniz-Institut für Gemüse-
und Zierpflanzenbau

HiCN

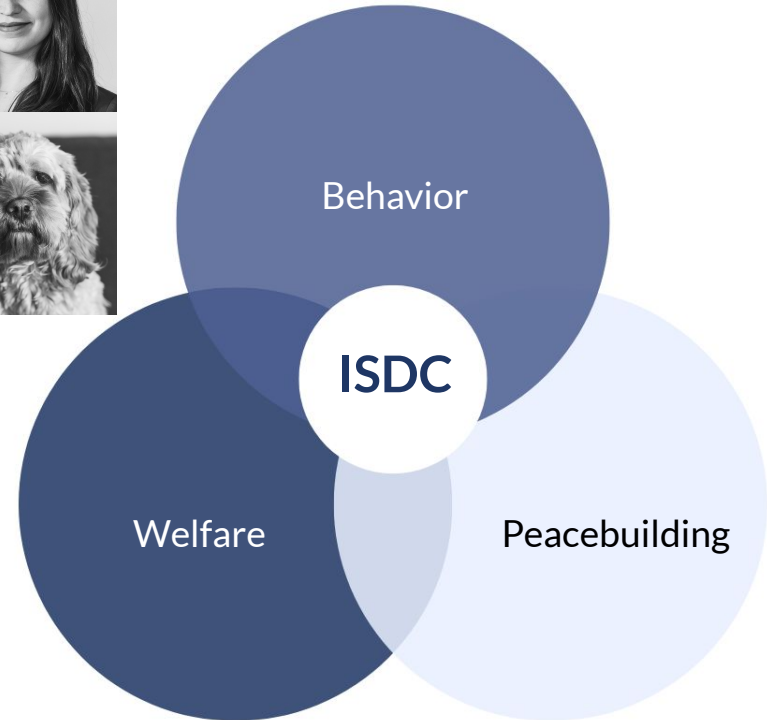
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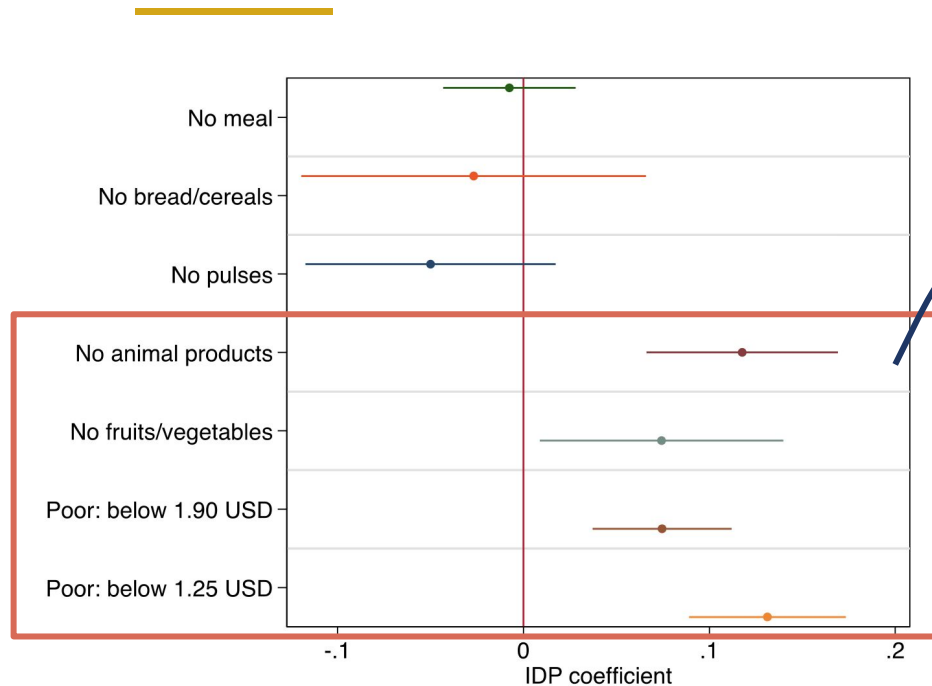
Empowering Women and Girls in Fragile Settings

Second Annual Fragile Lives Conference
30 September 2025

We conduct research to improve lives and livelihoods shaped by violent conflict, fragility, and humanitarian emergencies



In fragile settings, women face multiple, compounding crises



IDP households are significantly more likely to have inadequate nutrition and live in poverty

...but being a woman AND displaced creates even worse outcomes:

- More likely to be poor
- Lower subjective well-being
- More likely to pull children from school

IDP women are more likely to be doing unpaid labor and working in agriculture

(a) Employment status.



(b) Employment outcomes among workers.

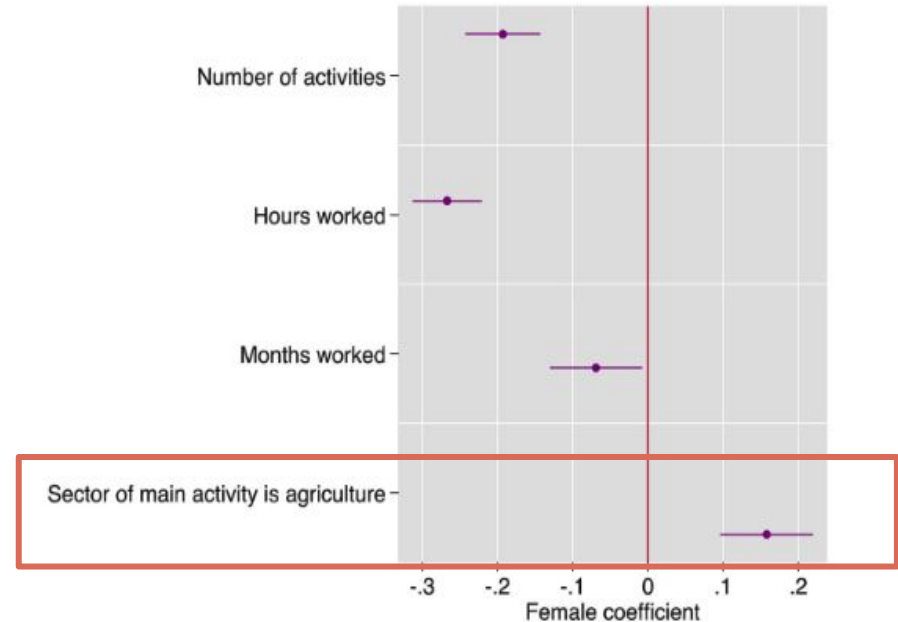
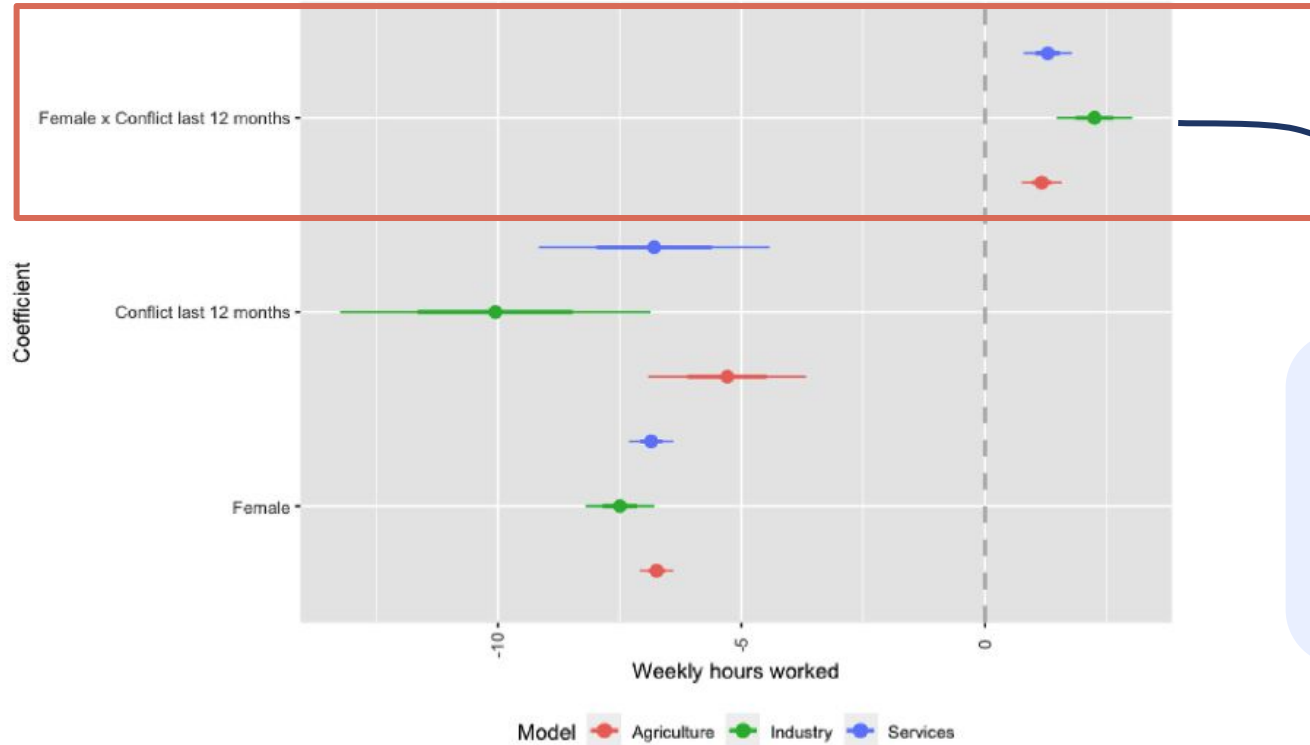


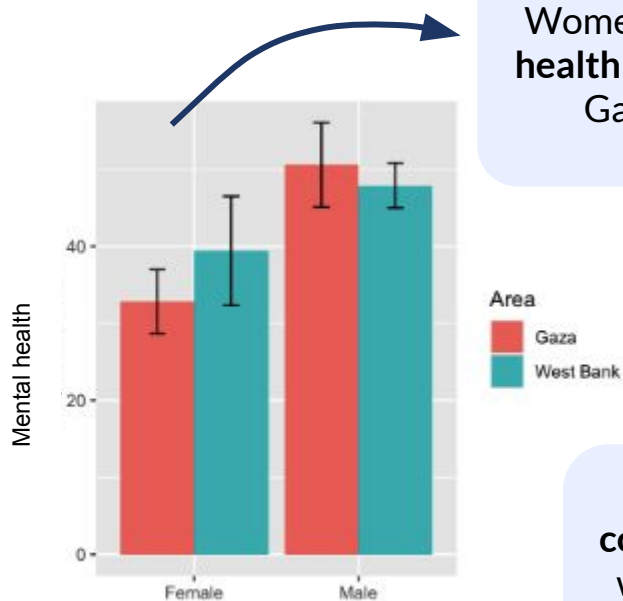
Figure. Conditional differences in employment outcomes between IDP men and women

Women work longer in agriculture and with relatively low monetary returns during conflict all across Africa



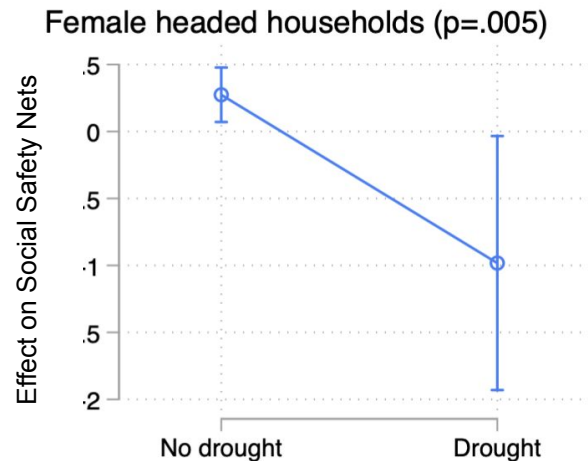
Women work more hours per week, primarily in agriculture. Income gaps also widen in conflict situations.

Women and women-headed households tend to face worse outcomes

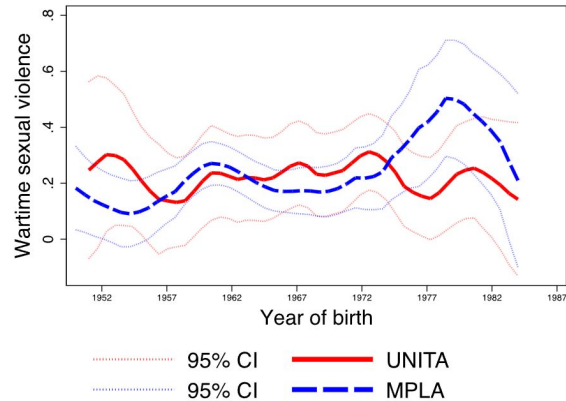


Women reported **worse mental health** levels compared to men in Gaza and the West Bank

In north-east Nigeria, where **conflict and climate shocks collide**, women-headed households were more likely to lose their social safety nets



Wartime violence against women increases IPV

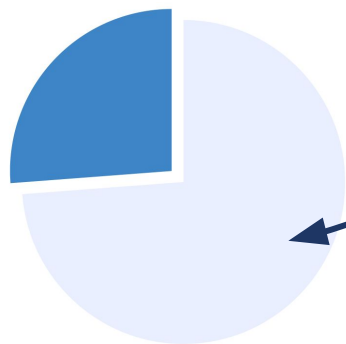


In Angola, young men who were exposed to wartime sexual violence against women were more likely to commit IPV more than a decade after exposure



Source: Stojetz & Brück. (2023). "Exposure to collective gender-based violence causes intimate partner violence." *Journal of Development Economics*

In Syria, three-quarters of women report experiencing some form of IPV



74% women reported experiencing economic, emotional or physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner in the past 12 months in Syria

Women were more than **twice as likely** to report experiencing economic IPV compared to men reporting its perpetration



Source: Preliminary findings from the Impact Evaluation of SRI's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Intervention

In Peru, violence has institutional effects: fewer women elected

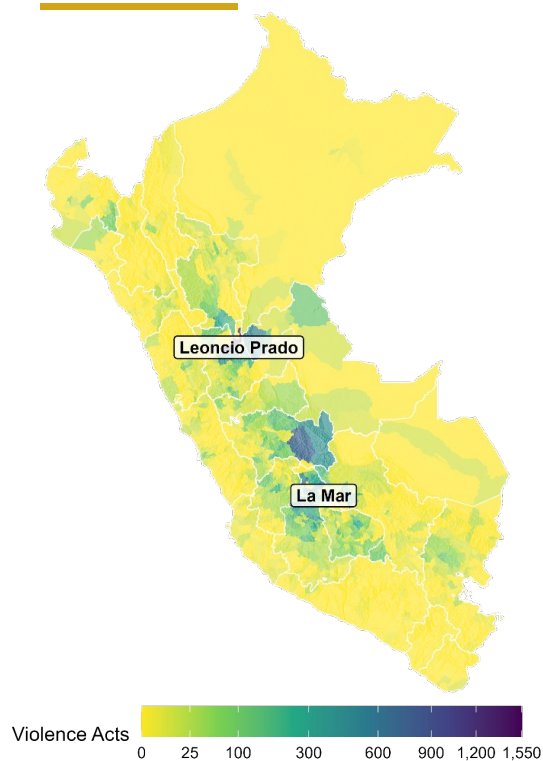
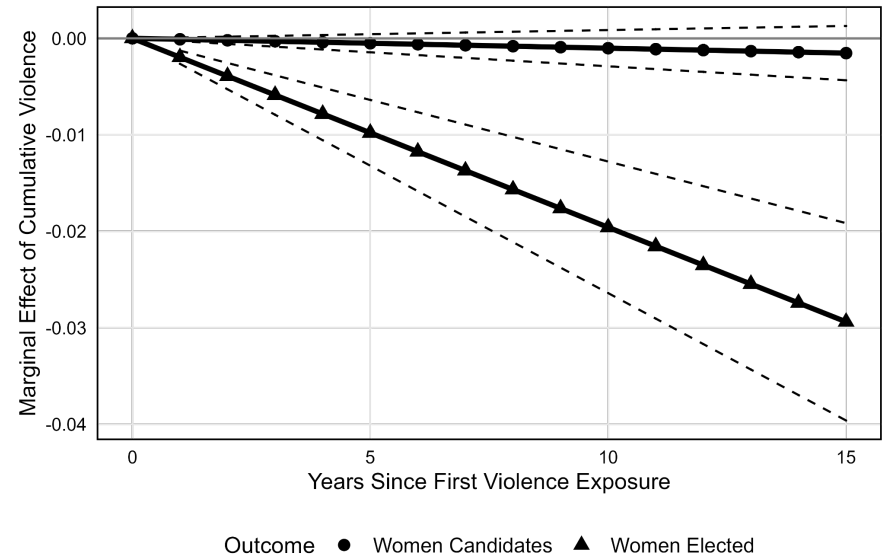


Figure. Temporal Adaptation to Violence in Peru (1980-1995)



...and these effects persist after conflict ends

Source: Castro (2025). "Guerrilla Shadows on Gender: The Lingering Effects of the Peruvian Internal Armed Conflict on Women's Political Aspirations." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* (forthcoming)

Fragile settings disadvantage women through multiple, intersecting pathways

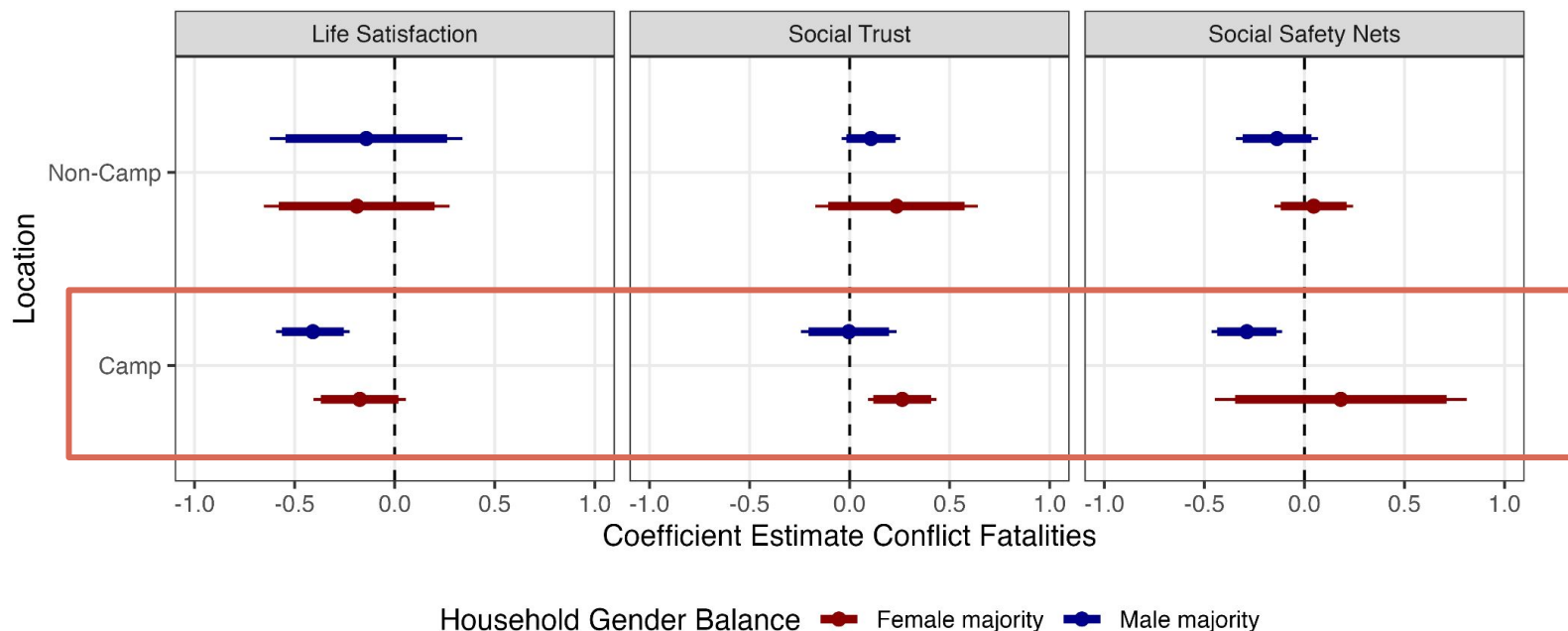
- Intersectionality matters: gender + displacement, conflict, or crises creates multiplicative disadvantages that go far beyond the sum of individual factors
- Effects cascade across time and space: wartime violence creates cycles that persist for decades



Women adapt within constraints

Despite facing multiple constraints, women actively increase their work participation and develop coping strategies during crisis

Female-majority HHs have better social outcomes



Women cultivating community in Sierra Leone



"Cows have eaten my plantations once, I was very upset.

I didn't say a word and just summoned [the herder] to the chiefs. We were able to settle it.

I really wanted to eat those crops as the fruit of my labor.

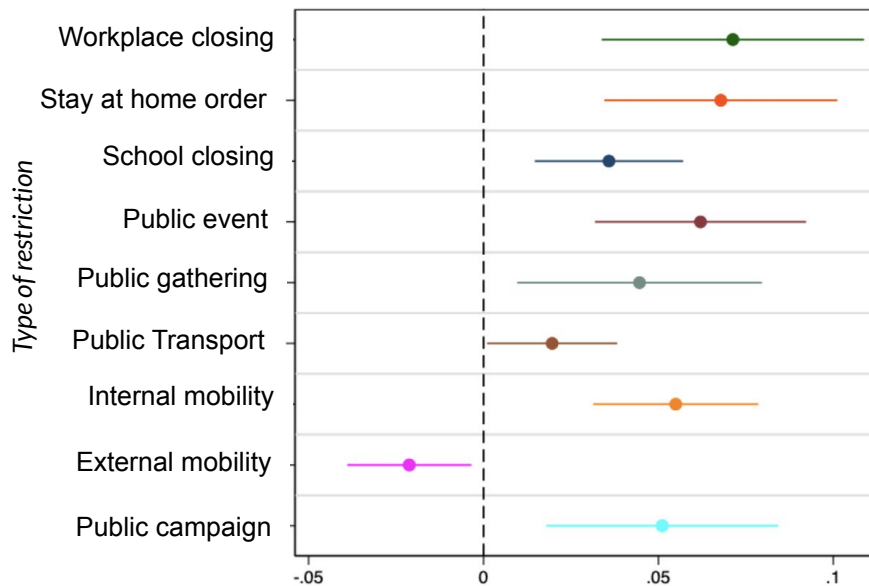
However, peace is what we all want, I didn't want to break that..."

-Female, PBF intervention community

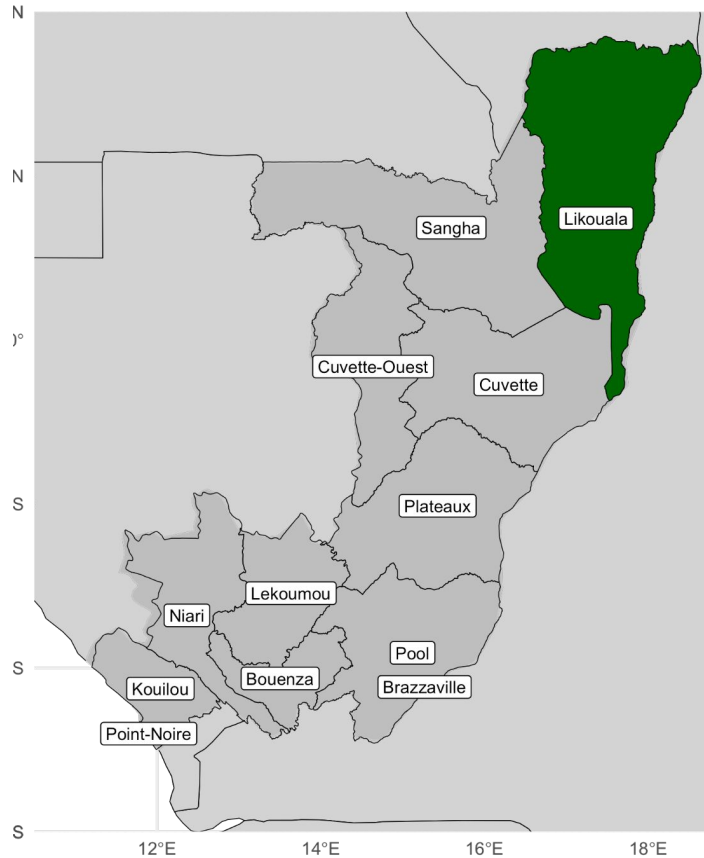
Women's adapt under pandemic pressures across Africa

During the pandemic, women faced heightened emotional and financial stress while also taking on a greater share of unpaid domestic labor — responsibilities that intensified under lockdown conditions.

Figure. Covid-19 stringency index sub-indices and tension at home

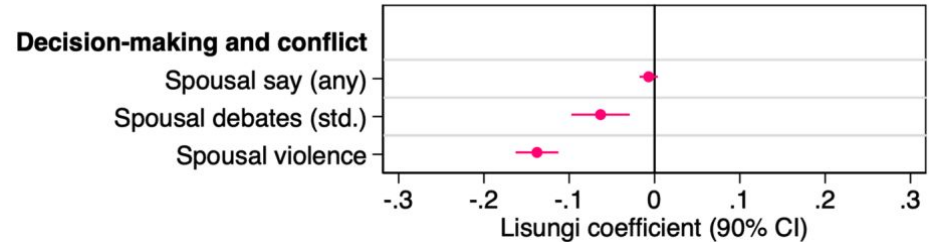


Cash transfers improve joint decision making and decrease spousal violence



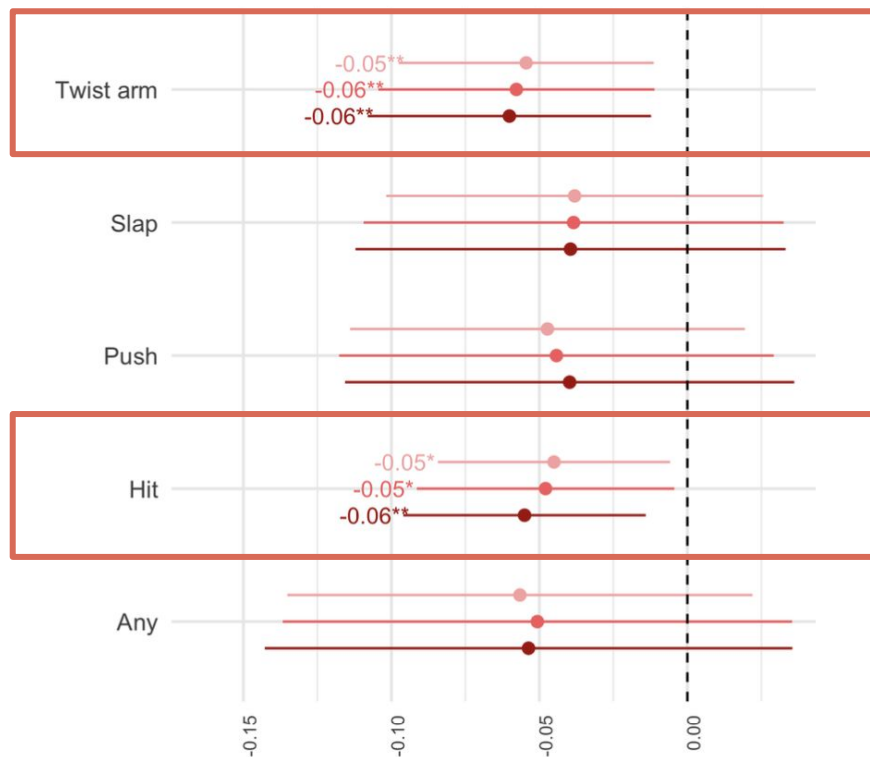
Cash transfers to households improve joint decision-making and decrease spousal violence in the Republic of Congo

Figure. Impact of cash transfers



Source: Stojetz et al. (2024). "Can safety net programs in fragile settings empower women? Evidence from the northern Republic of Congo." *Working Paper*

Engaging women and men together can help reduce IPV in Syria



A couple-based program in Syria reduced some forms of physical IPV and increased women's reported joint decision-making

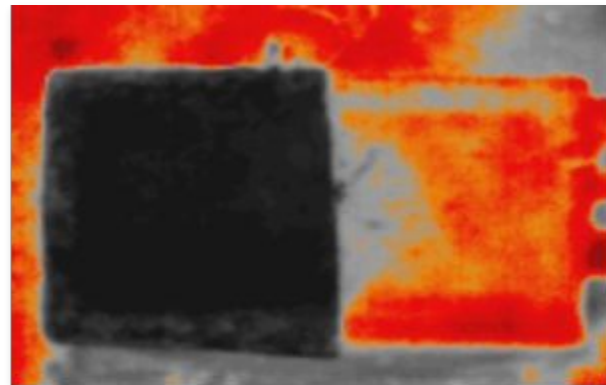
Turning down the heat decreases IPV in Burkina Faso



Application of cool roof coating



Coated (left) Vs. uncoated (right) roof



Thermal image of coated (left) Vs. uncoated roof

Applying coating to roofs to keep households cooler decreased reported IPV



Women as agents for change: were more responsive to peacebuilding intervention in Sierra Leone

Following a PBF-supported project bundling **cash**, **land rehabilitation**, and **social cohesion** elements:

Female farmers were significantly less likely to report involvement in disputes with outgroup, whereas men showed no comparable reduction.

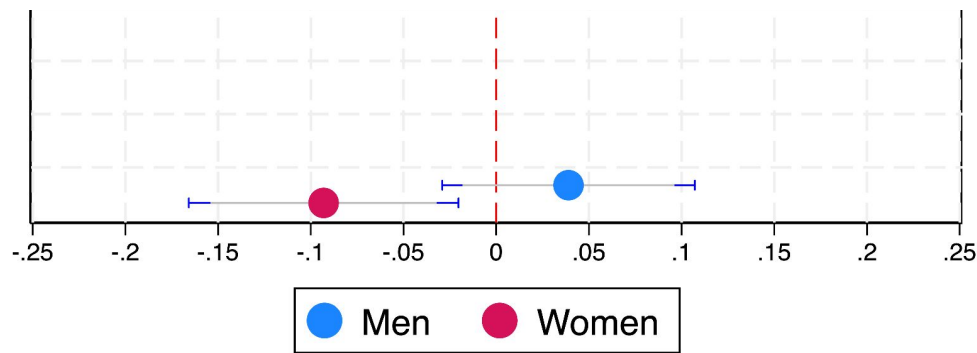


Figure. Effects of peacebuilding intervention on reported farmer-herder conflict

Women are active as civic actors, leaders, and moral anchors in Guatemala



A PBF-supported project promoted women's leadership through female mediators and inclusive dialogue spaces. Women were exceptionally engaged: they attended local meetings, joined dialogue spaces and elections, and were active in social groups.

What's next

