Background

- People in informal settlements face disproportionately high risk of ill-health, including HIV & intimate partner violence (IPV).*
- Shocks, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant economic and social lockdowns, interrupt existing services and worsen health status of vulnerable populations.

Aim

To assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on IPV & HIV risk among women and men in a Nairobi informal settlement.

Methods

- **FOCUS & DESIGN**
  - Intersection of IPV & HIV
  - Community-based participatory study
- **PARTICIPANTS**
  - 56 women & 32 men from marginalised groups
  - 4 female & 6 male key informants
- **DATA COLLECTION**
  - 11 focus group discussions, 8 interviews
  - Adapted ALIV{H]E guiding questions
- **DATA ANALYSIS**
  - DEPICT model for participatory data analysis

Results

- Slum dwellers face high risk of IPV – with men experiencing emotional and physical IPV and women experiencing physical and sexual IPV.
- IPV and HIV intersection occurs as a result of power differences and the use of ‘power over’ by those advantaged by gender, age, income, status, education, ability etc.
- As summarised in Figure 1, the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects amplified risk of IPV and HIV among female and male slum dwellers.
- Infection control measures triggered a cascade of reinforcing issues in informal settlements: limited access to income and services, aggravated hardship, and common – but high-risk – coping practices.

Conclusions

- Through marginalisation and hardship, female and male slum dwellers were at increased risk of IPV and HIV during COVID-19.
- Intersecting inequalities, including female gender, young age, disability, sex work, unemployment, amplified IPV and HIV risk.
- As a result, long-term impact on physical and mental health, economic and social well-being of slum dwellers is expected.

Recommendations

- Adapt services safely to ensure continuous access to services and information during shocks, like the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provide equitable social protection mechanisms.
- Strengthen social accountability mechanisms for aid delivery, including the involvement of representatives of beneficiary groups in selection procedures and provision of services.

Background

- **IPV Definition**
  - IPV is any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual, economic, or emotional harm. The intimate relationships include marital, dating, extra-marital, or cohabiting partners.

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More about the study

For additional information, please visit the ALIV{H]E website: https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/alivhe

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Links:

- [AIDS] (https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dat093)
- [ARISE Hub](https://www.arisehub.org)
- [DEPICT](https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dat093)
- [ALIV{H}E](https://salamandertrust.net/resources/alivhe)
- [https://lvcthealth.org/](https://lvcthealth.org/)

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**Figure 1. Summary of findings on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic HIV and IPV among women and men in an informal settlement in Nairobi.**

Slum dwellers are at increased risk of intimate partner violence and HIV as they cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects.