

This Discussion Paper examines the linkages between gender and gender inequality in the context of conflict, sexual violence and HIV transmission, and their impact on post-conflict reconstruction in Sierra Leone and Liberia. It makes two critical contributions to a gendered perspective on post-conflict transitions in West Africa. First, it notes that contrary to conventional wisdom, post-war transitions to relative peace have made little difference to women's exposure to chronic sexual violence, with potential implications for increased HIV transmission. Second, the study interrogates those assumptions linking war-related sexual violence to high HIV prevalence in post-conflict contexts, by showing that despite over a decade of armed conflict, Liberia and Sierra Leone had adult HIV prevalence rates among the lowest in West Africa. This paper goes beyond generally held notions of the sexual and gender dimensions of civil wars in Africa and points to a gap in and key challenge for studies and policies on post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.

"Gender Violence and HIV/AIDS in Post-Conflict West Africa: Issues and Responses is based on cutting-edge research that holistically addresses the complex linkages between HIV/AIDS, conflicts and reconstruction of post-conflict societies. Drawing on a range of disciplines, the study addresses the gaps in the discourse on AIDS and conflicts, and opens new vistas in scholarship that will be beneficial to the academic, civil society and policy communities within and outside Africa".

*Professor Obijiofor Aginam, Institute for Sustainability and Peace,
United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan.*

"... a thorough and well-researched piece ..."

*Claudia Garcia-Moreno, MD, Coordinator, Gender, Rights, Sexual Health
and Adolescence, Department of Reproductive Health and Research,
World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.*

Dr. BABATUNDE AHONSI is a Senior Research Associate, at the Women's Health and Action Research Centre, Benin City, Nigeria.

Nordiska Afrikainstitutet

The Nordic Africa Institute

Nordiska Afrikainstitutet
(The Nordic Africa Institute)
P.O. Box 1703
SE- 751 47 Uppsala, Sweden
www.nai.uu.se

ISBN 978-91-7106-665-7



Gender Violence and Hiv/Aids in Post-Conflict West Africa

ISSUES AND RESPONSES

BABATUNDE A. AHONSI