

# Risk factors of adolescent exposure to violence in Burkina Faso

## BACKGROUND

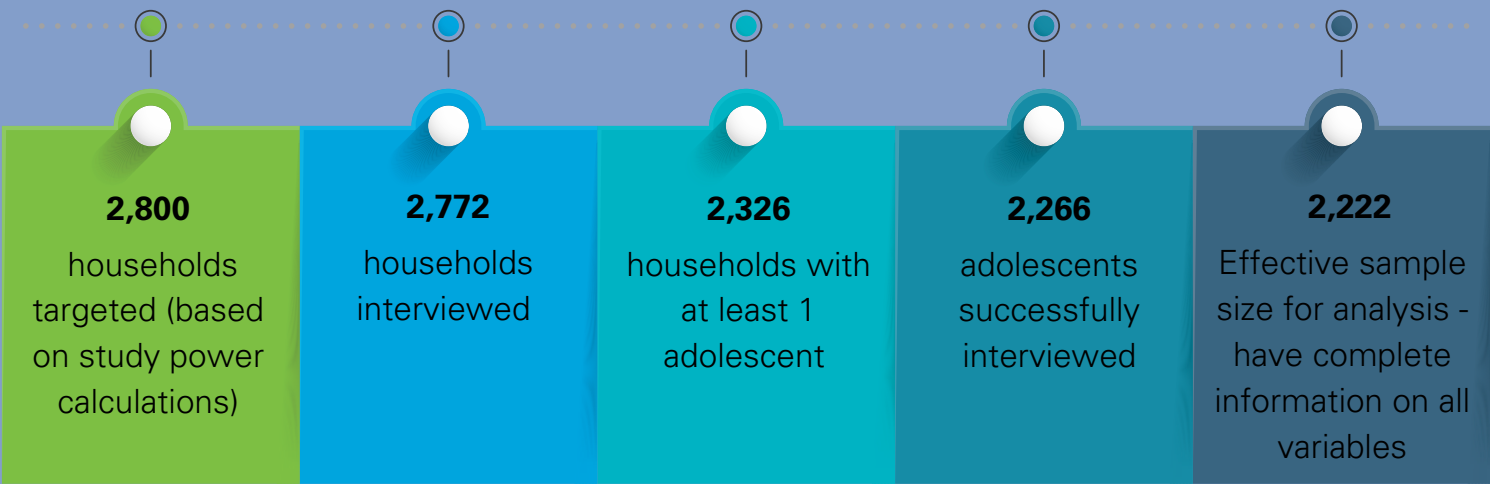
- Violence against children (VAC) and adolescents is a global public health and human rights problem – Globally 1 billion children and adolescents between 2-17 years of age (about 40%) experience violence or neglect each year.
- VAC includes physical, sexual, and psychological violence perpetrated against, or witnessed by, children within and outside the family.
- Exposure to violence, results in negative lifelong impacts on adolescents’ health and well-being such as psychological harm, risky behaviours, poor health outcomes, educational outcomes, and involvement in crime.
- Violence against children and adolescents can be prevented, and its impact reduced, if we understand the pre-disposing risk factors well enough, and invest in prevention strategies.

## STUDY OBJECTIVE

- This study examines the risk and protective factors associated with adolescents’ exposure to violence at home and how these differ by gender in Burkina Faso.

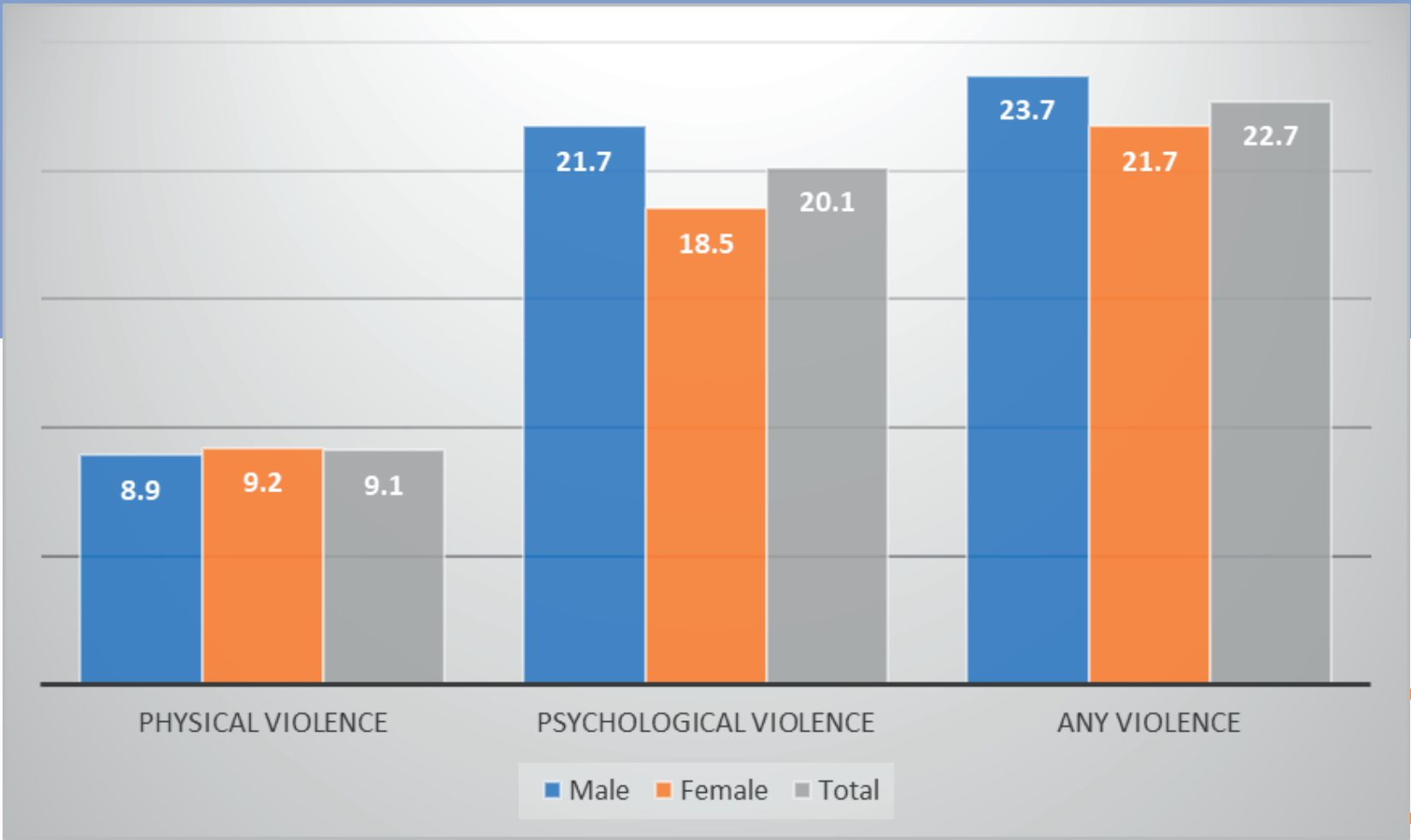
## DATA AND METHODS:

- We used data from the baseline survey of the Child-Sensitive Social Protection Programme (CSSPP) conducted in eight municipalities in 4 regions of Burkina Faso: Boucle Du Mouhoun, East, North, and Centre-North.
- Data for this study were collected through three research instruments (household, community, and adolescent questionnaires), capturing information on childhood adverse experiences, household, and community living conditions. The study is based on interviews with 2,222 children (see Figure 1 for the summary)



## RESULTS

- Sample characteristics:
  - Mean age of adolescents was 13.6 years, evenly distributed between males and females.
  - School attendance was moderately high with over half (55.9%) of the children attending school.
  - Functional disability was low (1.0%). Most children were living in households with 7 or more members (73%).
- Violence experience in the past 12 months



- Significant risk factors associated with the likelihood of exposure to violence among girls are orphanhood, living in a household receiving safety nets and living in a Muslim-majority community. Among boys, age, school attendance, disability, a household receiving safety nets, sharing a household with a depressed individual, and living in a Muslim-majority community, were associated with exposure to violence.

## CONCLUSION

- The gender-specific findings emphasize the significance of family background characteristics in informing and enhancing targeted interventions to reduce violence exposure among vulnerable children and adolescents.
- Efforts to address and prevent violence against children and adolescents should prioritize the implementation of effective programs and interventions, with particular attention to vulnerable individuals such as orphans and those with disabilities who may face reporting barriers.
- Prevention and response programs can sensitize public service personnel and establish reporting mechanisms, while poverty alleviation initiatives (e.g. cash transfers) can link vulnerable children with case management services.
- Reducing violence against children and adolescents remains critical, especially in the context of socio-economic vulnerabilities caused by COVID-19, climate change and conflict-induced food price crises.
- Further research in fragile and conflict-affected settings is crucial for addressing violence in vulnerable populations.

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