

**Emergency  
Contraception**  
for Rape Survivors

If you've been raped  
or defiled, emergency  
contraception can  
help prevent  
pregnancy

# A Rapid Assessment of Sexual Assault in Zambia's Copperbelt Province

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# Background

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- Growing awareness of sexual assault across Africa
- Dimensions of the problem largely unknown
- How to best mitigate negative health consequences of assaults?



## Study Objectives

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- Reduce unwanted pregnancy from sexual assault
- Provide EC to survivors through first points of institutional contact (police)
- Strengthen the capacity of the institutional support system as a whole

# 1<sup>st</sup> Stage: Rapid Assessment

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- Retrospective review of police and health facility records
- Examined all sexual assault cases over 4 year period (2001-2004)
- Community focus groups

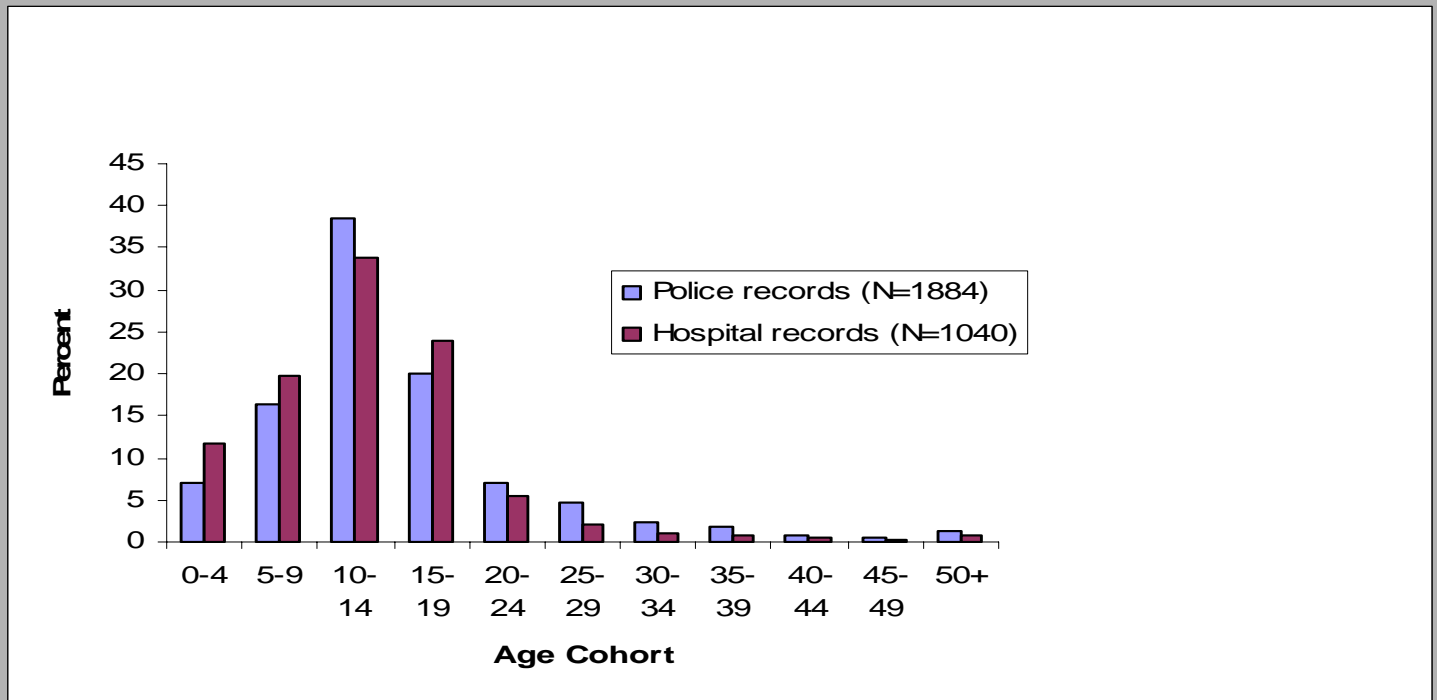


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# Findings

# Most victims are young

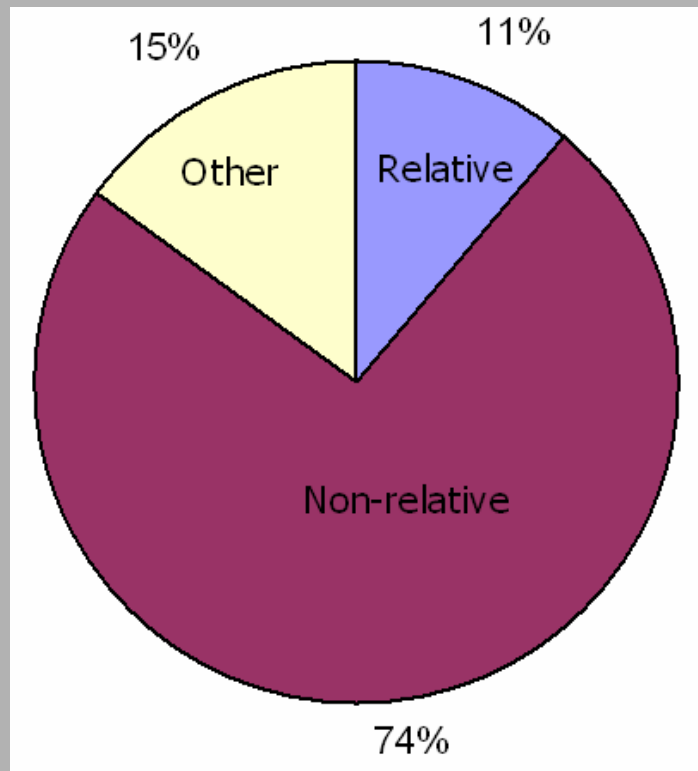
Age Distribution of Sexual Assault Victims in Police and Health Facility Surveys

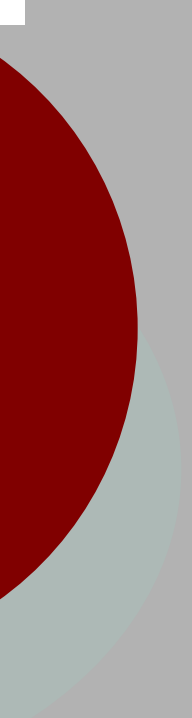


# Most who reported to the police knew their attacker...

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Relationship of Attacker to Victim





...but sexual assault, especially within families, is most likely underreported

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*“The prevalence of sexual assault in the community is very high although we believe that most cases are not reported for various reasons.”*

*“...when a family member is involved the family will try to prevent division in the family by not reporting the case.”*

# Zambian police are often the first– and only– point of institutional contact

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- 91% of all victims reported to police first
- Less than half as many cases reported to hospital (1077) as police (2203)
- 904 returned to police to open docket

# At the health facility, survivors do not routinely receive the services they require

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- Nearly 80% of victims arrived at health facility <72 hours
- 37% eligible women received EC
- 24% eligible women received PEP

# High conviction rates may discourage reporting

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- 43% of all dockets taken to court
- 60% of those cases settled in favor of victim
- "...they fear that their husbands will be arrested, the breadwinner will be gone, and the marriage will fail."

# Other barriers to seeking institutional support

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- "Society says that if you report the assault you will be deemed as an outcast..."
- "Most people don't go to the hospital because they cannot afford the hospital charges..."
- "Sometimes the police are corrupt."

# Conclusions

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- The desire for justice appears to be an important motivation for seeking institutional support
- Zambian police are well-positioned to meet the immediate needs of survivors
  - Administer EC
  - Refer to hospitals
  - Trauma counseling



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage: The Intervention

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- Police providing EC, counseling
- Developing better linkages between criminal, health, and legal sectors
- Raising community awareness of institutional support options

# Contacts

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