


Towards an understanding of how Ebola and Ebola Response affected Liberia

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Why EVD Crisis Affectedness?

- NGOs support “highly affected” groups
 - How is this defined?
 - Which support makes sense?
- Need for understanding and evidence
 - For helpful programming
 - For avoiding harm doing

Methodology

- Various mixed method Surveys / Interviews
 - 41 community & ETU workers
 - 167 heads of household under quarantine
 - 67 Heads of households with children who were directly affected
 - 47 community members in Bong
 - 16 persons from highly affected community
- Observations, informal encounters, reflections

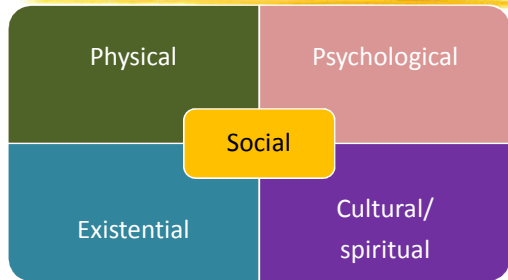
During Ebola Times in Communities

EVD	EVD response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People got sick • People died / survived • Everywhere: danger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NO caring for the sick ! ■ NO proper burials! ■ NO touching! ■ Restricted movement ■ Destruction of property
↓	↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fear ■ Despair ■ helplessness ■ Grief ■ Staying away from others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shame, Guilt ■ Norms-violating behavior ■ Anger, Blame, Conflict ■ Social disconnect ■ Loss of income/property

Associations with “Ebola”

Association with Ebola	Frequency	Percentage
Bad sickness	25	27.5
Death	16	17.6
Division	10	11.0
Fear	9	9.9
Bad feeling	8	9.0
Hatred	4	4.4
Frustration	4	4.4
Worries	4	4.4
Cureless disease	3	3.3
Anger	2	2.2

Dimensions of EVD crisis impact

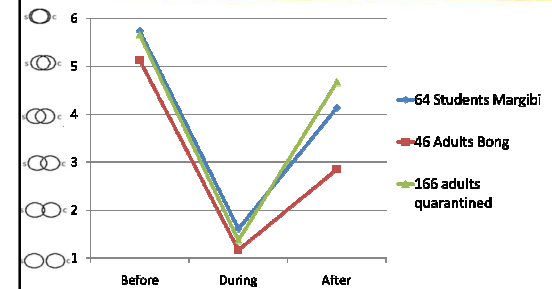


EVD crisis affectedness

Group	Physical		Social		Psych.		Existential		NGO help	
	EVD care	sick/no care	Restricted	Excluded	Social distance	Fear	Nightmares	No education		Income Loss
Infected ETU	X	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X	X
Infected com	X	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X	-
Family in community	-	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X	(X)
Family elsewhere	-	X	-	-	X	X	?	X	X	-
Community affected	-	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X	-
Community Elsewhere	-	(X)	-	-	X	X	?	X	(X)	-

Is past or present more relevant?

Connection Self and Community



Blaming persons for having...

- Called ambulance**
 "community dwellers gave address when they started getting sick. Up to now the family members are not talking with them, because they had called."
- Not helped sick person**
 "health workers said they felt the friends were not given good treatment by the co-workers"
- killed/sacrificed persons**
 "ambulance drivers, sprayers, they put chemicals in it, and killed the patients"
- brought Ebola to family/community**
 "Her little sister is number one enemy, ...was the cause for the family to perish"

Blaming for infecting others

47 community members in Bong

- 32 feel towards those who infected others : bad feelings (24) anger (6) blame (2) rejection (2)
- 60.5%: almost all/many people they know blame someone for infecting others
- 42 (89.4 %) : people are angry with someone who has brought Ebola to their communities.
- 6 (12.8%) thought those who blame others will NOT come to forgiveness

Conclusions – Need for research

- Most persons in Liberia have been affected by the Ebola crisis
 - on physical, psychological, existential, spiritual and social dimension
 - how many have recovered?
 - how many need support for recovery?
- Social (Re)Connection might be crucial for recovery
- For psychosocial support, current needs should be considered, not the artificial category "survivor"



Positive Impact of Ebola & Response

- Focus on what matters most: people
- Volunteering
- Caring
- Hand washing
- Support from abroad: Liberia is not alone
- Work and career opportunities in EVD response

Psychological

- Forgetting, lack of concentration
- Avoidance
- Not able to work
- Crying a lot
- Pain in the body
- Sadness, Anger, Despair
- people “dying in their hearts”
- Identity problems

Existential

- Economic
 - Loss of Bread winner / children to take care of old
 - Loss of crops/income
- Education
 - 7 months break
 - Lack of money to continue
- Living space
 - Excluded from community/neighbourhood
 - Orphaned children moving in
- Break down of health facilities

Cultural / Spiritual

- Disconnect with the dead – unsatisfied spirits
- Loss of faith / increased faith
- Norm changes for greetings / burials?
- Self blame for not respecting the dead
- Changes in social structure/ power dynamics

Social

- Conflicts / Blaming
- Lack of social support
- Envy
- Change in social structure
- Changed way of interacting
- More distance
- Exclusion
- Broken relationships

Physical

- Persons who died are not there
- Post-Ebola syndrome: problems with eyes, concentration, hearing, joints...
- Untreated sicknesses: health system
- Teenage pregnancies
- Psychosomatic problems (Pain), people “dying in their hearts”