

# Preliminary results: Help-seeking behavior among young women experiencing IPV and NSPV in Nairobi, Kenya

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# Background on Cohort: Agile 2.0

- **Nairobi Youth Cohort recruited via respondent-driven sampling (2019); PMA Agile**
- Baseline (n=1357; June-Aug 2019; in person); extensive qualitative
- Focus: sexual/reproductive health, contraception

- **Gender/COVID-19**
- 12-month follow-up (Aug-Oct 2020; phone-based due to the pandemic); extensive qualitative
- 18-month follow-up (April-May 2021; phone-based due to the pandemic)
- Focus: gender dynamics, gender-based violence during Covid-19

- **Agile 2.0 Gender/GBV Evidence to Action**
- ~12-month follow-up (June - August 2023; in-person, with a remote option)
- Participants: 871 young men, 831 young women (total 1702), including replenishment sampling
  - Qualitative (N=30 youth; n=15 women, n=15 men)

# Objectives

Among urban young women in Nairobi, this analysis aimed to:

1. Assess the prevalence of past year physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV) and non-partner sexual violence (NPSV);
2. Evaluate prevailing barriers to help-seeking; and
3. Determine help-seeking patterns of IPV and NPSV survivors

# Study Methods



## Qualitative methods

15 women purposively selected from survey participants

Semi-structured interview guide

Deductive coding with a team of researchers on ATLAS.ti

## Quantitative methods

Cross-sectional study

Research enumerators (28-41 years) conducted data collection

- Analytical sample:
- n=831 young women
  - IPV: n=596 (partnered women in the past 12 months)
  - NPSV: n=831 (all women)

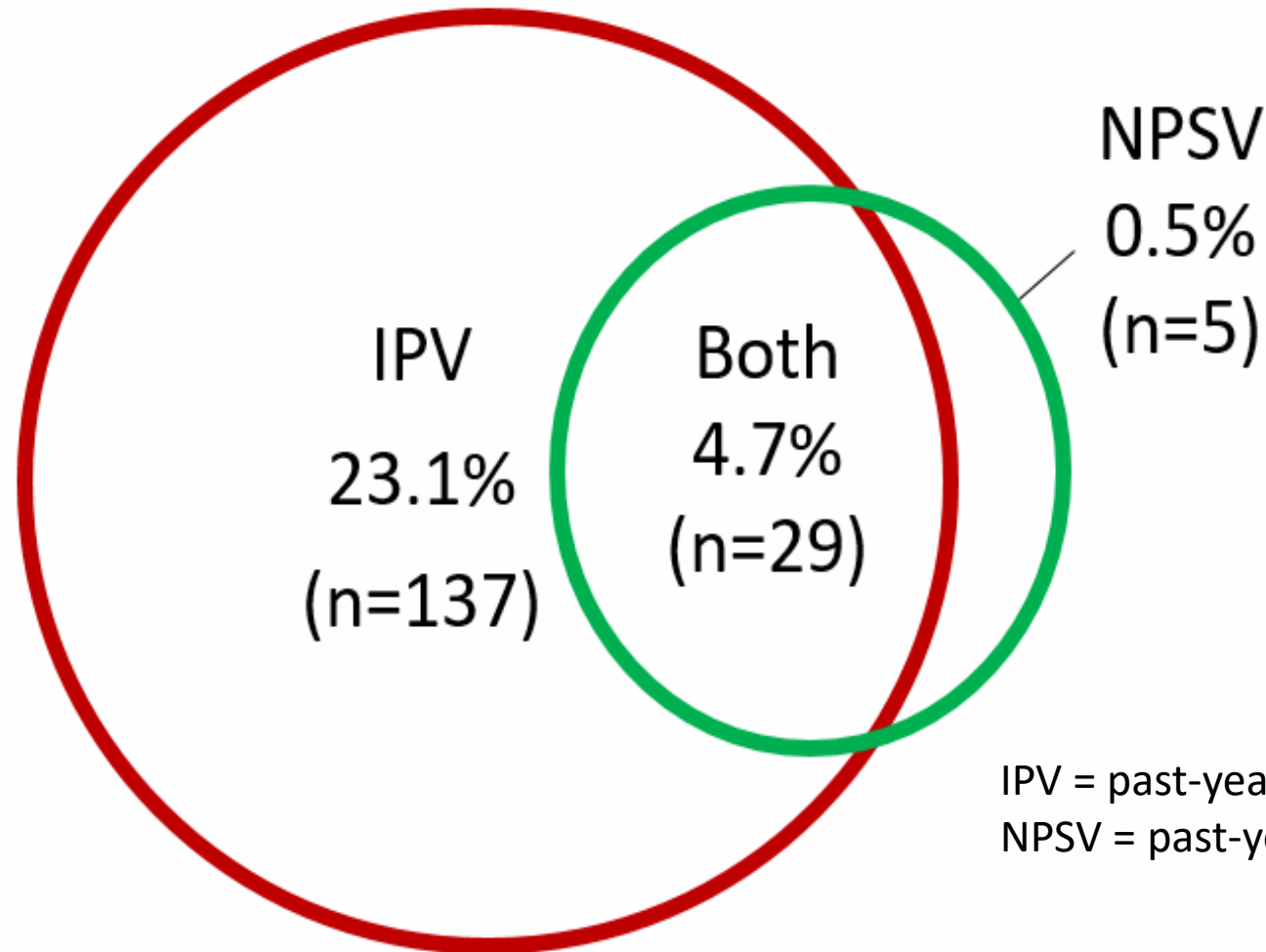
# Study characteristics, weighted

|  | Overall<br>(n=831)<br>%, col | IPV survivors<br>(n=168)<br>%, col | NPSV survivors<br>(n=36)<br>%, col |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Physical and/or sexual IPV, among partnered young women (n=596)</b> | 28.1                         | 100.0                              | 90.2                               |
| <b>Non-partner sexual violence</b>                                     | 4.5                          | 17.0                               | 100.0                              |
| <b>Age</b>   |                              |                                    |                                    |
| 15-22  | 32.8                         | 22.0                               | 30.7                               |
| 23-29  | 67.2                         | 78.0                               | 69.3                               |
| <b>Cohabitation</b>  |                              |                                    |                                    |
| Self   | 18.4                         | 12.0                               | 18.3                               |
| Partner  | 27.2                         | 41.4                               | 29.0                               |
| Other (parents, siblings, non-relatives)                               | 54.4                         | 46.5                               | 52.7                               |
| <b>Ability to meet basic needs</b>                                     |                              |                                    |                                    |
| Able   | 66.4                         | 60.4                               | 46.0                               |
| Not able   | 33.6                         | 39.6                               | 54.1                               |
| <b>Past year sexual/dating partner</b>                                 | 83.5                         | 100.0                              | 98.2                               |
| <b>Number of sexual partners in the past year</b>                      |                              |                                    |                                    |
| 0  | 17.4                         | 4.6                                | 1.3                                |
| 1  | 66.1                         | 58.6                               | 27.9                               |
| More than 1  | 16.4                         | 36.8                               | 70.9                               |
| <b>Secondary education or higher</b>                                   | 37.4                         | 27.1                               | 22.0                               |
| <b>Married</b>   | 33.3                         | 61.5                               | 55.7                               |
| <b>Working for pay</b>   | 68.9                         | 76.2                               | 80.4                               |

**Sub-sample for qualitative component:**  
**(n=15)**

- Above 20 years (n=9)
- Married (n=7)
- Below secondary education (n=12)
- Experienced GBV (n=10)
- Sought help (n=7)

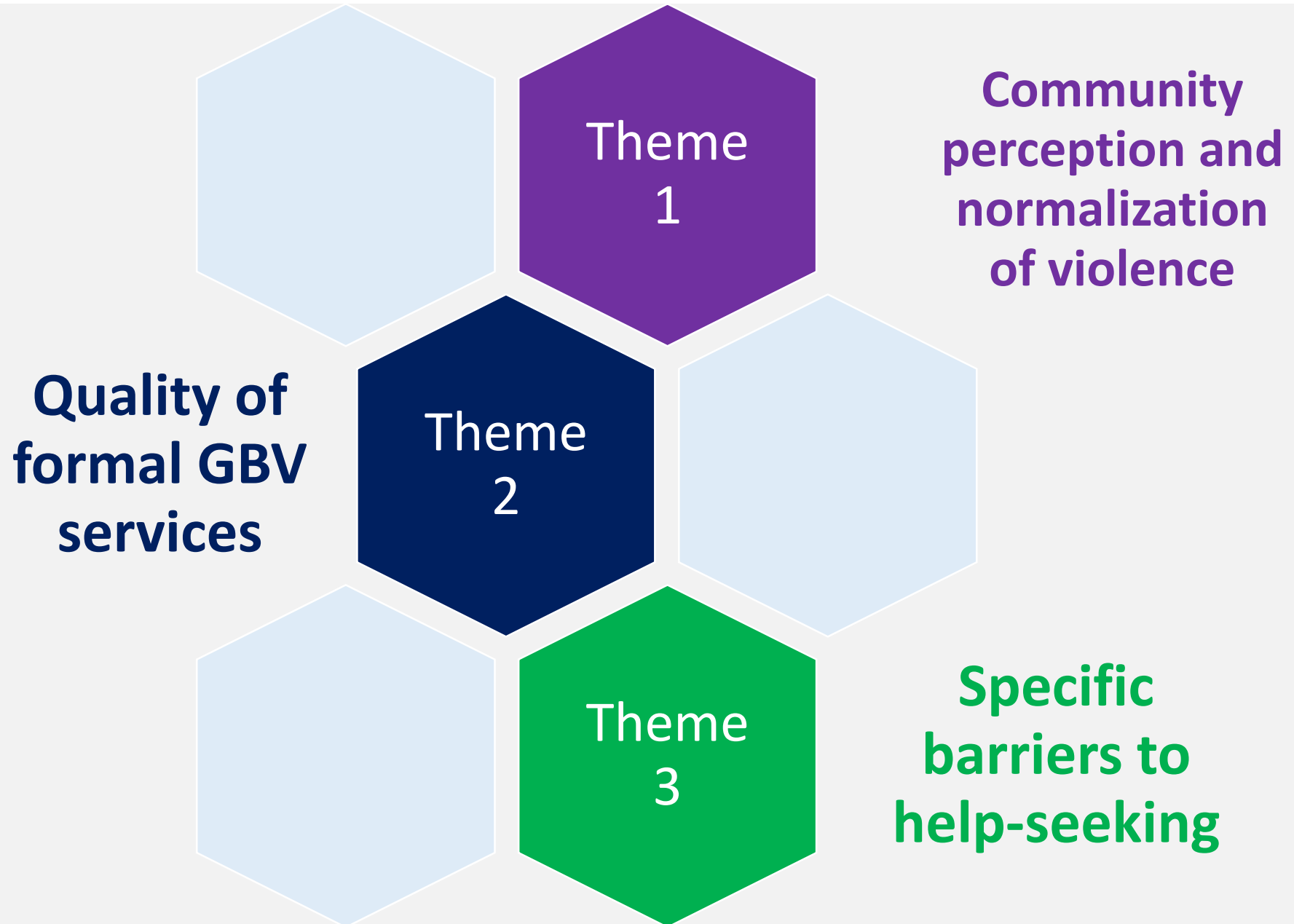
# Prevalence and Overlap of IPV and NPSV, among partnered women (n=596)



**Most women who experienced NPSV also experienced IPV**

IPV = past-year physical and/or sexual intimate partner  
NPSV = past-year non-partner sexual violence

# Qualitative results



**Theme 1:  
Community  
perceptions and  
normalization of  
violence**

*“My cousin was badly beaten by her husband. We talked to her and convinced her to report him to the police. He was arrested, but other people convinced her that it’s not okay to report your husband. Because she is accustomed to these fights, she consented to his release on the court day.”*

17-year-old female IDI respondent (IPV)

*“I had an incident where a boy hit me, so when I went and told an older friend of mine. She told me ‘how are you beaten like a child? You should have also beaten him.’ She blamed me. I was also afraid to speak out because I thought other people would blame me too.”*

19-year-old female IDI respondent (NPSV)



*“Sometimes when you go and report, the police ask you if you had a family conversation, but if he has hurt you, they will tell you to push the case forward. And sometimes when you go there, they refuse to help you, they say 'this is a family issue, go and talk about it at home.’*

*17-year-old female respondent (IPV)*

*“There was another girl who was raped and took a shower before she went to the police station, when she got to the police station, she was told ‘Go back home so that person can rape you first and come back with the evidence’”*

*19-year-old female respondent (NPSV)*

**Theme 2:  
Quality of  
formal GBV  
services**

*“Sometimes I am afraid to speak out because I have a child and if we break up with my husband, who will help me, I don't have a job.”*

*- 19-year-old female IPV survivor*

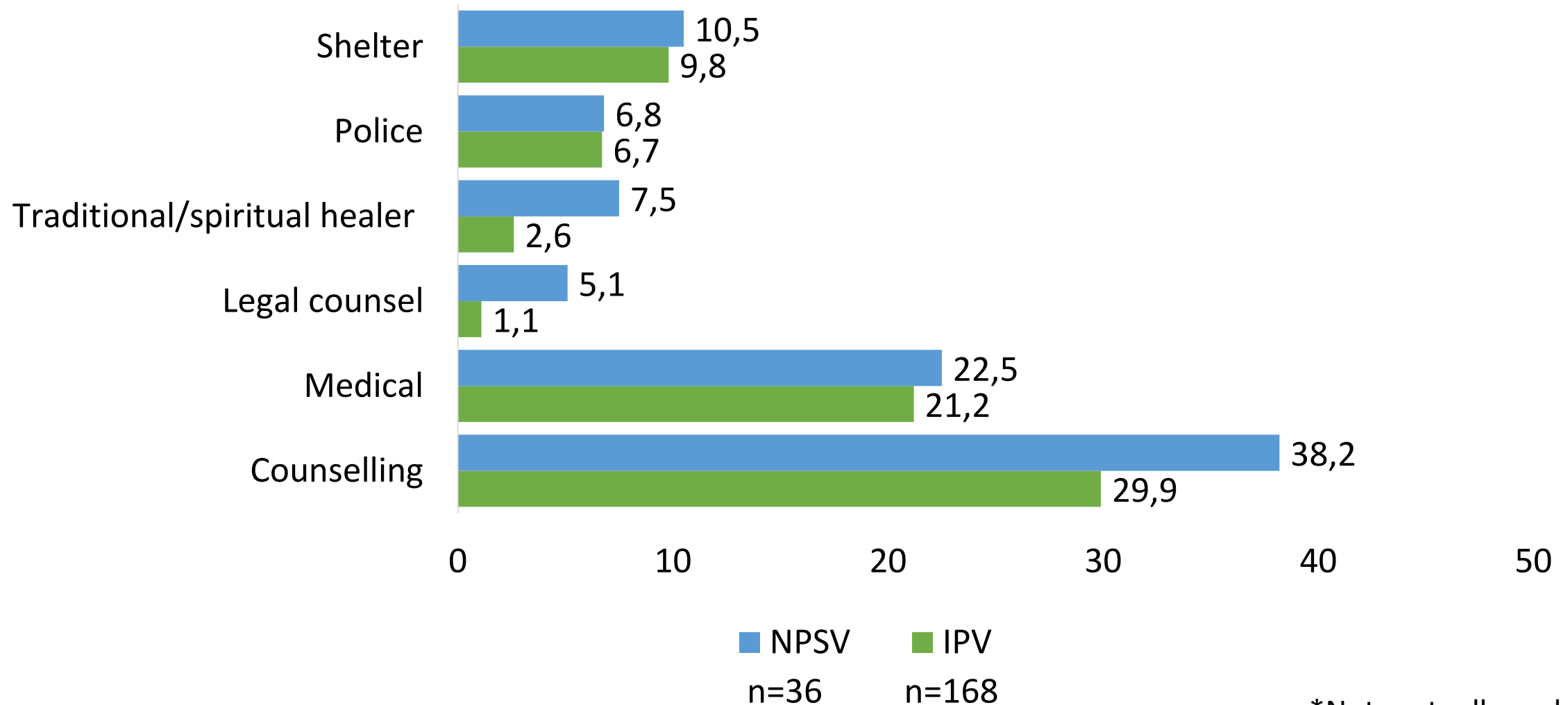
**Theme 3:  
Specific  
barriers to  
help-seeking**

*“It’s somehow difficult to talk about the violence you have experienced, you will find it embarrassing to tell someone. If you go to a male friend's house and he does something bad to you, you will be scared of telling anybody – what will my mother or friends think of me? They will ask what I had gone to do there. Then people will now see that she has been raped by an older man and now it is a shame.*

*- 19-year-old female NPSV survivor*

# Services received, weighted

In total, 48.1% of IPV survivors and 54.1% of NPSV survivors received help from a service below.



\*Not mutually exclusive

## Reasons for not seeking help, among those who experienced any violence and did not seek help, weighted (not mutually exclusive)

|   | IPV survivors<br>(n=117)<br>%, col | NPSV survivors<br>(n=36)<br>%, col |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Didn't know any services                | 22.5                               | <b>34.4</b>                        |
| Too far to services                     | 1.7                                | 0.0                                |
| Did not think it was a problem          | <b>30.6</b>                        | <b>26.9</b>                        |
| Could not afford transport              | 4.9                                | 0.0                                |
| Could not afford service fees           | 6.6                                | 11.3                               |
| Did not want/need services              | 7.8                                | 1.9                                |
| Afraid of getting in trouble            | <b>30.2</b>                        | <b>49.1</b>                        |
| Obstruction by family/community member  | 4.5                                | 8.3                                |
| Embarrassed for self or family          | 23.5                               | <b>53.0</b>                        |
| Did not want abuser to get into trouble | <b>10.6</b>                        | 9.9                                |
| Afraid of being abandoned               | 17.1                               | 23.7                               |
| No one to help                          | 8.0                                | 0.6                                |

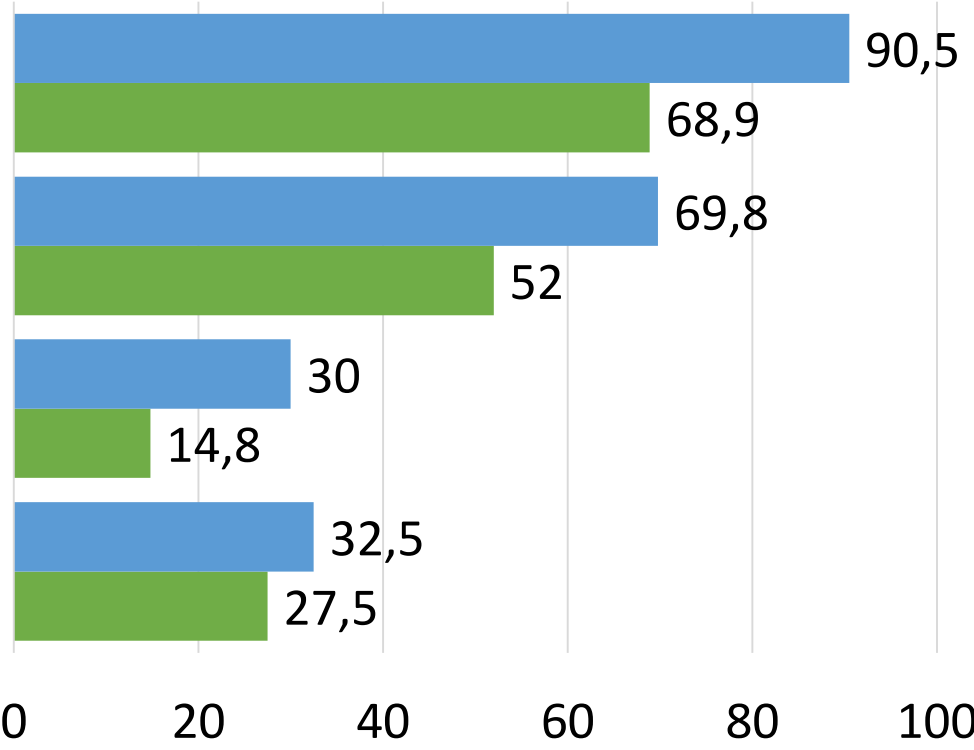
# Self-reported dimensions of stigma, among survivors, weighted

If I told people about the abuse, I was worried that they would think I asked for it

I felt people viewed me as damaged because of the abuse I experienced

I felt like I deserved it

I felt that the abuse was my fault



Percent Agree or Strongly Agree

■ NPSV (n=36) ■ IPV (n=168)

# Summary and implications

1. Community perceptions that normalize young women's violence experiences are common, and they deter help-seeking
  - Other barriers include socio-economic factors, corruption, access-related factors, and negative experiences with formal services
2. Stigma is a major barrier to help-seeking for both IPV and NPSV
  - Many survivors cited internalized or anticipated self-blame
    - 90% of NPSV survivors said they worry people will think they asked for it
  - Almost a third and half of IPV and NPSV survivors, respectively, reported being afraid of getting in trouble if they sought help
3. Counseling was the most sought service, with very few survivors seeking help from police and legal services.

# Study next steps



**Increased precision:  
violence-specific sections  
for IPV and NPSV**



**Analysis Plan:  
Demographic association  
+ help-seeking**



**Desk-review: Regulatory  
and standardization of  
service delivery in Kenya**