

Sexual violence and other human rights violations in Darfur

Alexander Tsai

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Collaborators

- Mohammed Eisa, Physicians for Human Rights
- Sondra Crosby, Boston University
- Susannah Sirkin, PHR
- Michele Heisler, University of Michigan
- Jennifer Leaning, Harvard School of Public Health
- Vincent Iacopino, PHR

Data on atrocities in Darfur

- U.S. *Atrocities Documentation Survey*, 2004
 - Hagan et al., *ASR* (2008), *AJPH* (2009)
- Physicians for Human Rights, 2004-05
 - *Darfur: Assault on Survival* (2006)
 - VanRooyen et al., *J Genocide Res* (2008)
- Physicians for Human Rights, 2008
 - *Nowhere to Turn* (2009)

Study aims

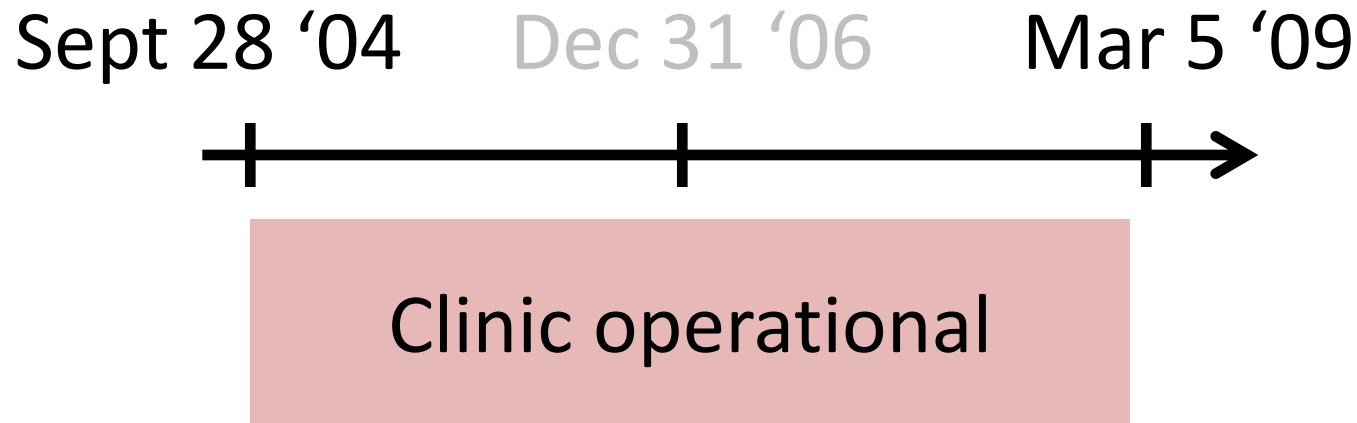
- To characterize the nature and geographic scope of sexual violence and other human rights violations allegedly perpetrated against civilians in Darfur
- To substantiate the allegations with forensic review and analysis of the evidence

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- Initial visits of all 325 patients seen at the Amel Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture in Nyala, South Darfur



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opening

Sept 28 '04

Dec 31 '06

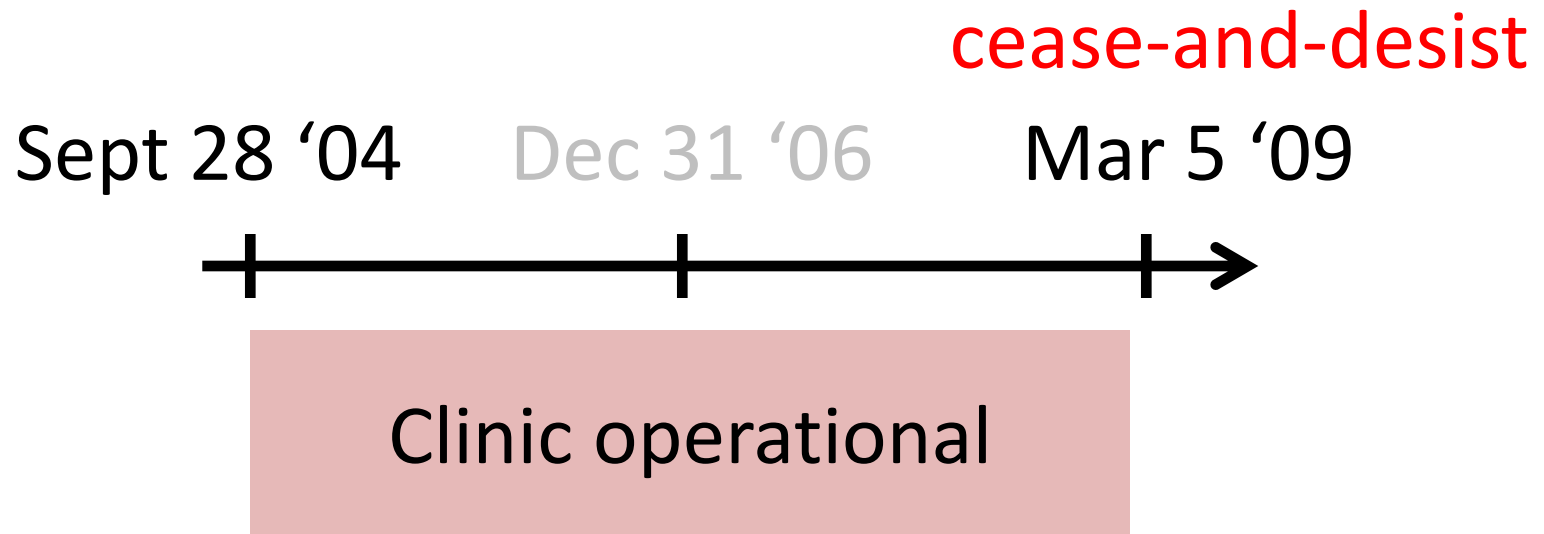
Mar 5 '09



Clinic operational

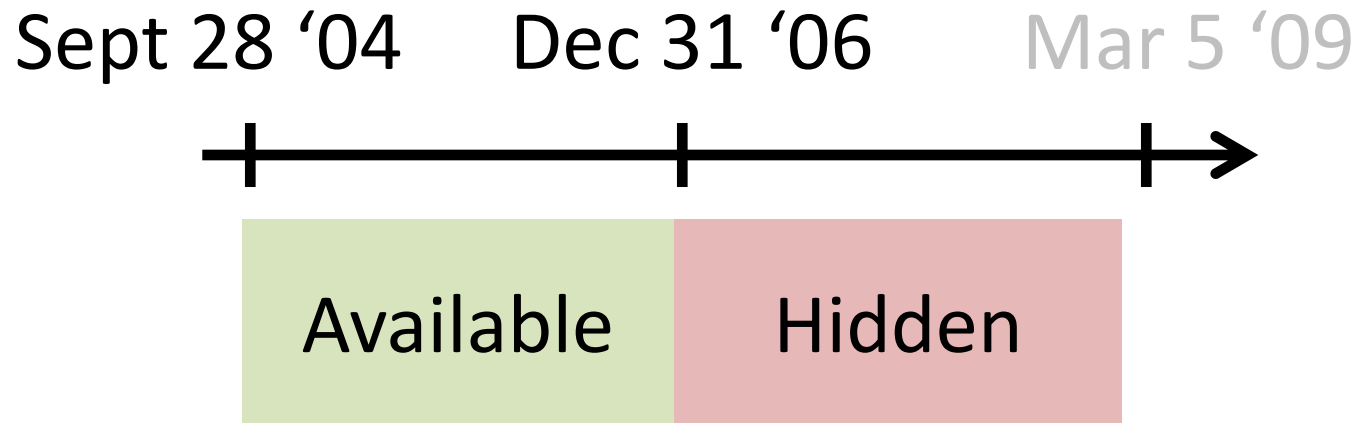
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Data abstraction

- Structured abstraction tool
 - To record details about victims and perpetrators for quantitative assessments
- Forensic expert review
 - To assess (a) *whether* the records contained sufficient detail, and, if so, (b) the *extent to which* the signs and symptoms were consistent with the alleged attack
[NR/NCW/CW/HCW/VDO]

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Characteristics of patients (N=325)

	% or median
Brought in by relative	55%
Days elapsed since attack	101 (22-365)
Age	35 (4-82)
Male	78%
Residence in South Darfur	85%
Married	76%

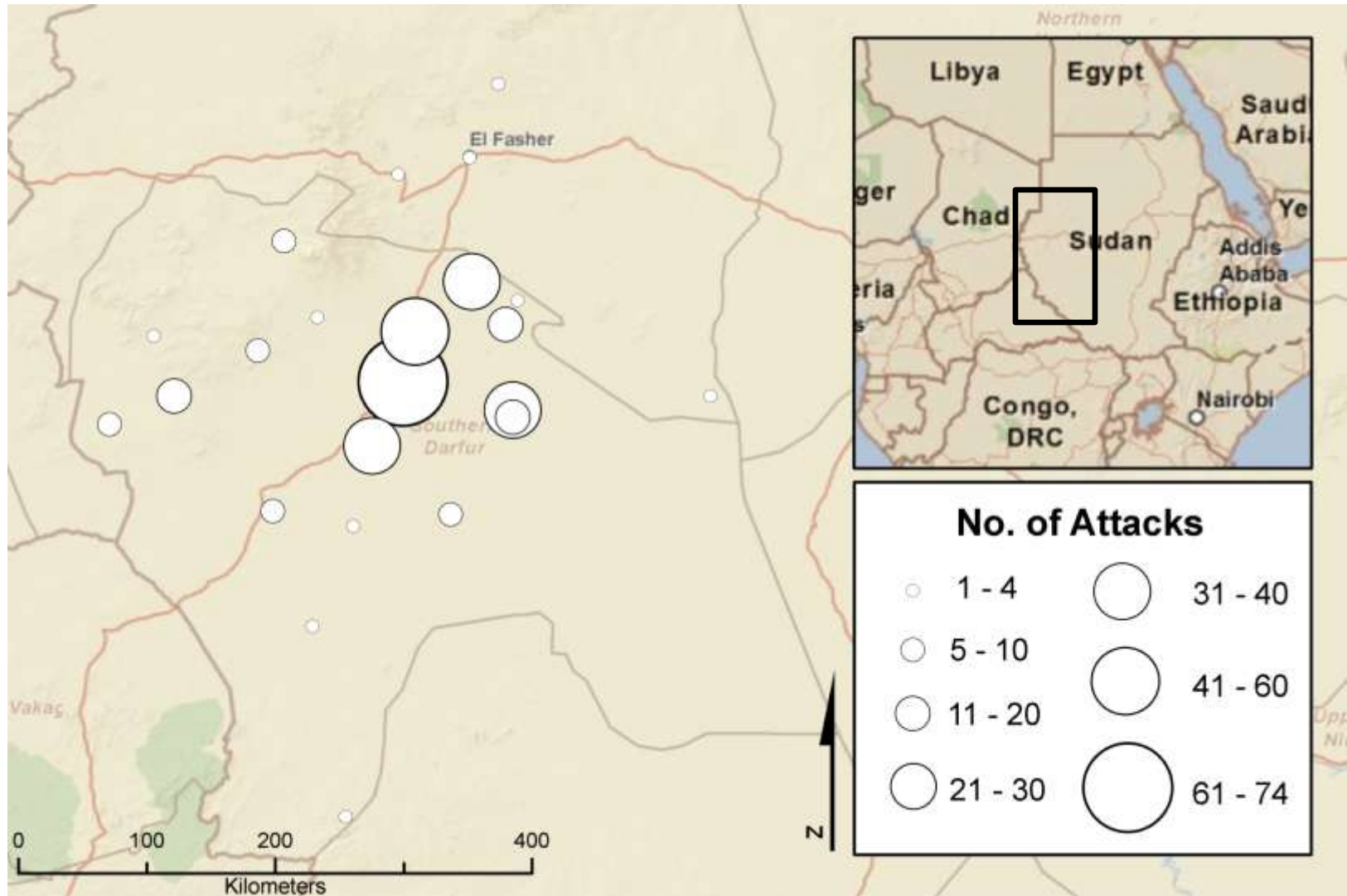
Characteristics of perpetrators

	% or median
Affiliation of perpetrator(s)	
Janjaweed	51%
Government of Sudan (GoS)	24%
Both	15%
Other (e.g., bandit, rebel)	10%
Number of perpetrators	5 (2-20)

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Geographic distribution of attacks



Sexual assault data (N=45)

	JJ-GoS	Other
Sexual assault	<u>39</u>	<u>6</u>
Forced undressing	12	1
Insertion of objects	3	
Attempted rape	5	
Rape	15	1
Rape by >1 perpetrator	12	4

Sexual assault data (N=45)

- 36 women had been sexually assaulted
 - 18 (50%) in close proximity to an IDP camp
 - 31 (86%) raped by one or more perpetrators
 - 5 (16%) became pregnant, and other pregnancy outcomes were unknown
- 9 men had been sexually assaulted
 - Typically during the context of detention

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Characteristics of other attacks

	JJ-GoS	Other
Physical assault	264	28
Heavy weapons	33	2
Humiliation/psychological	70	3
Custody-related	95	7
Property theft/destruction	115	6

Forensic review of all cases (N=325)

- 96% agreement ($\kappa=0.92$) on whether records contained sufficient detail for evaluation
- 198 (61%) records sufficiently detailed
 - 0 unrelated to alleged abuses (0%)
 - 0 not consistent with (0%)
 - 101 consistent with (51%)
 - 81 highly consistent with (41%)
 - 5 virtually diagnostic of (3%)

- 11 cases of disagreement ($\kappa=0.89$)

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Review of sexual assaults (N=45)

- Sexual assault cases triggered referral to outside gynecologist for evaluation – **only general clinic records available for analysis**
- 25 (56%) records sufficiently detailed
 - 0 unrelated to or not consistent with (0%)
 - 14 consistent with (56%)
 - 9 highly consistent with (36%)
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Limitations

- Likely under-documentation of signs/symptoms
- No data on victims who did not survive
 - May underestimate severity of atrocities
- Lack of access to gynecologic records
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Conclusions

- Widespread and sustained attacks by GoS and *Janjaweed* forces upon non-Arab civilians living in Darfur
 - Sexual assaults near IDP camps raise specific questions about security provided to IDPs
- Allegations substantiated by review of medical records by forensic experts
 - High inter-rater agreement increases our confidence in their opinions

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Acknowledgments

- Patients, for courage in coming forth
- Amel Centre staff, for courage in service
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- Long list of funders

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- Scholar Rescue Fund of the Institute for International Education
- Physicians for Human Rights
- Open Society Institute/Eastern Africa
- RWJ Health & Society Scholars Program
- RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights

Narrative detail

- 19 year-old man captured by *Janjaweed* forces and detained. He reported being kept in a hole in the ground for 3 weeks, severely beaten, raped, and forced to witness the killing of 7 other detainees.
- 17 year-old girl who fled to Kalma IDP camp was attacked by *Janjaweed* forces when she and 9 other women ventured outside the camp to collect hay. She was beaten and raped until she lost consciousness.

Representativeness of the data

- Medical services entangled with criminal procedure documentation requirements
 - Victims required to fill out a “Form 8” prior to receiving medical care, even in cases of sexual assault
- Amel Center was the only dedicated local NGO provider of free clinical and legal services to civilian victims of torture or other human rights abuses

Tribes represented (N=325)

	% or median
Fur	53%
Zaghawa	23%
Dago	12%
Bargo	2%
8 other tribes (Masalit, etc.)	10%