

Ilana J. Seff, DrPH, MPH

407-463-8147 • seff@wustl.edu

EDUCATION

Doctor of Public Health– Leadership in Global Health and Humanitarian Settings Feb. 2021

Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, New York City

- > GPA: 4.0/4.0
- > Dissertation Title: *Quantitative proxies for social norms: Assessing current approaches in intimate partner violence research and developing standards for the future*

Master of Public Health – Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation May 2012

The George Washington University – Washington, D.C.

- > GPA: 3.9/4.0
- > Thesis Title: *Qualitative assessment of gender-based violence against commercial sex workers in Cameroon: Nature of the violence, protection strategies, and impact on HIV transmission*
- > Selected to participate in a 6-week learning collaborative with graduate students at Peking University's School of Public Health; collaborated with three colleagues to perform impact and process evaluations for Chinese Primary Health Care Foundation's women's disease screening program in Inner Mongolia

Bachelor of Arts, Mathematics May 2010

University of Florida – Gainesville, FL

- > GPA: 3.9/4.0
- > Dean's List; Anderson Scholar; Phi Beta Kappa

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

Research Assistant Professor March 2021 – Present

Washington University in St. Louis – St. Louis, MO

- > Co-investigator for the multi-site project: *COVID-19 in humanitarian and refugee host settings: Understanding the impact on women and girls' safety and well-being*
- > Co-investigator for *Sibling Support for Adolescent Girls in Emergencies (SSAGE)*, a pilot evaluation of a synchronized sister-brother intervention aimed at reducing violence against adolescent girls in Borno State, Nigeria
- > Lead manuscript development for various projects
- > Academic advisor for the *Self-Reliance Index*, a tool co-constructed with the Women's Refugee Commission and RefugePoint to measure self-reliance among refugee households
- > Manage data collection and analysis for the *Study of Adolescent Lives after Migration to America (SALAMA)*, a mixed-methods, multi-city study that examines the mental health and psychosocial needs and support systems for adolescents born in the Middle East and North African region

Staff Scientist Feb. 2020 – Feb. 2021

Washington University in St. Louis – St. Louis, MO

- > Support design, management, and analysis of SSAGE, a pilot evaluation of a synchronized sister-brother intervention aimed at reducing violence against adolescent girls in Borno State, Nigeria
- > Develop research tools, oversee data collection training, and analyze data for a rapid assessment of the well-being of women and girls' participating in women and girls' safe spaces in Syria and South Sudan

- > Manage data collection and analysis for the *Study of Adolescent Lives after Migration to America (SALaMA)*, a mixed-methods, multi-city study that examines the mental health and psychosocial needs and support systems for adolescents born in the Middle East and North African region
- > Co-developer and academic advisor for the *Self-Reliance Index*, a tool co-constructed with the Women's Refugee Commission and RefugeePoint to measure self-reliance among refugee households
- > Support manuscript development for various projects

PUBLICATIONS

1. **Seff, I.** & Stark, L. (forthcoming). The Role of social norms: A case study of intimate partner violence among adolescent girls in Nigeria. In M. McKay, F. Ssewamala & O. Sensoy Bahar (Eds.). *Behavioral Child Health in sub-Saharan Africa: Towards Evidence Generation and Policy Development*
2. **Seff, I.** Falb, K., Landis, D. & Stark, L. (forthcoming). Improving education and safety over time for adolescent girls in South Kivu, DRC: a panel analysis from a randomized controlled trial. *PLOS Medicine*.
3. Ibalá, R. M., **Seff, I.**, & Stark, L. (2021). Attitudinal acceptance of intimate partner violence and mental health outcomes for female survivors in Sub-Saharan Africa. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(10), 5099.
4. **Seff, I.** (2021). Social norms sustaining intimate partner violence: A systematic review of methodologies for proxy measures. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*
5. Stark, L., Robinson, M., **Seff, I.**, Gillespie, A., Colarelli, J., Landis, D. (2021). The effectiveness of Women and Girls' Safe Spaces: A systematic review of evidence to address gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*. DOI: 10.1177/1524838021991306
6. **Seff, I.**, Gillespie, A., Bennouna, C., Hassan, W., Robinson, M., Wessells, M., Allaf, C., Stark, L. (2021). Psychosocial well-being, mental health, and available supports in an Arab enclave: Exploring outcomes for foreign-born and U.S.-born adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. [10.3389/fpsyt.2021.632031](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.632031)
7. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, & Reis, C. (2021). Gender-based violence against adolescent girls in humanitarian settings: A review of the evidence. *The Lancet Child and Adolescent Health*.
8. Gandarilla Ocampo, M., Bennouna, C., **Seff, I.**, Wessells, M., Robinson, M., Allaf, C., & Stark, L. (2020). We are here for our kids: Parental involvement in refugee adolescents' educational endeavors in America. *Journal of Refugee Studies*.
9. **Seff, I.**, Steiner, J., & Stark, L. (2020). Early sexual debut: A multi-country, sex stratified analysis in sub-Saharan Africa. *Global Public Health*. DOI: [10.1080/17441692.2020.1814833](https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2020.1814833)
10. Stark, L. **Seff, I.**, Cohen, F., Aldrich, J., & Allaf, C. (2020) Stressful life events and their unique associations with psychosocial outcomes: A gendered analysis among high school adolescents. *Global Social Welfare*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40609-020-00179-z>
11. Stark, L. & **Seff, I.** (2020). The Role of Social Norms, Violence Against Women, and Measurement in the Global Commitment to End Violence Against Children. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pac0000510>
12. Stark, L. **Seff, I.**, Weber, A., Darmstadt, G. (2020). Applying a gender lens to global health and wellbeing: Framing a *Journal of Global Health* special collection. *Journal of Global Health*, 10(1).
13. Cohen, F., **Seff, I.**, Ssewamala, F., Opobo, T., and Stark, L. (2020). Intimate partner violence and mental health: Sex-disaggregated associations among adolescents and young adults in Uganda. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520938508>
14. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Weber, A., & Darmstadt, G. L. (2020). Applying a gender lens to global health and well-being: Framing a *Journal of Global Health* special collection. *Journal of global health*, 10(1), 010103. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.10.01013>
15. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Weber, A., Cislághy, B., Meinhart, M., Bermudez, L., Atuchukwu, V., Onotu, D., and Darmstadt, G. (2020). Perpetration of intimate partner violence and mental health outcomes among adolescents in Nigeria: The role of gender norm. *Journal of Global Health*. 10: 010708

16. Meinhart, M., **Seff, I.**, Darmstadt, G., Weber, A., and Stark, L. (2020). Attitudinal Acceptance of Intimate Partner Violence Among Adolescents and Young Adults in Nigeria and Tanzania: An Exploration Into Target Reference Groups. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 66(1):S3-S8
17. **Seff, I.** and Stark, L. (2019). A sex-disaggregated analysis of how emotional violence relates to suicide ideation in low- and middle-income countries. *Child Abuse and Neglect*. 93, 222-227
18. **Seff, I.**, Williams, A., Hussain, F., Landis, D., Poulton, C., Falb, K., and Stark, L. (2019). Forced sex and early marriage: Understanding the linkages and norms in a humanitarian setting. *Violence against Women*.
19. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Hoover, A., Gordon, R., Ligiero, D., & Massetti, G. (2019). Sex and age effects in past-year experiences of violence amongst adolescents in five countries. *PLoS one*, 14(7).
20. Stark, L. Asghar, K., **Seff, I.**, Gessesse, T., Ward, L., Baysa, A., Neiman, A., and Falb, K. (2018) Preventing Violence Against Refugee Adolescent Girls: Findings from a Cluster-Randomized Control Trial in Ethiopia. *BMJ Global Health*. 3:e000825
21. Stark, L. **Seff, I.**, Asghar, K., Roth, D., Bakamore, T., MacRae, M, D'Andon, C., and Falb, K. (2018) Building Caregivers' Emotional, Parental, and Social Support Skills to Prevent Violence against Adolescent Girls: Findings from a Cluster-Randomized Control Trial in Democratic Republic of Congo. *BMJ Global Health*. 3:e000824.
22. Stark, L., Asghar, K., **Seff, I.**, Cislighi, B., Yu, G., Gessesse, G., Eoomkham, J., Baysa, A., and Falb, K. (2018) How gender- and violence-related norms affect self-esteem among adolescent refugee girls living in Ethiopia. *Global Mental Health*, 5. doi:10.1017/gmh.2017.28
23. **Seff, I.**, Baird, S., and Jolliffe, D. (2018). Dynamics of child malnutrition in Ethiopia. *South African Journal of Economics*. 86(2):127-152
24. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Assezenew, A., Eoomkham, J., Falb, K., and Ssewamala, F. (2018). Effects of an empowerment intervention on economic vulnerability for adolescent refugee girls in Ethiopia. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 62(1):S15-S20

PUBLICATIONS UNDER REVIEW

1. **Seff, I.**, Olaya Rodriguez, D., Meinhart, M., Colarelli, J., Vahedi, L., and Stark, L. Age at first exposure to violence and later mental health outcomes: A sex-disaggregated, multi-country analysis in sub-Saharan Africa (under review)
2. **Seff, I.**, Steven, S., Deitch, J., Akika, A., Puls, C., Okoro, C., Sughrue, S., and Stark, K. Developing ACASI survey questionnaires in a conflict setting during the COVID-19 pandemic: Using data-informed processes to address complexity, sensitivity, and functionality. (under review)
3. **Seff, I.**, Leeson, K., and Stark, L. Developing a Self-Reliance Index for refugee households. *Conflict and Health*, (under review).
4. Cislighi, B., Weber, A., Shakya, H., Abdalla, S., Bhatia, A., Domingue, B., Mejía-Guevara, I., Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Richter, L., Bastista Menezes, B., Victora, C., & Darmstadt, G. Innovative methods to analyse the impact of gender norms on adolescent health using global health survey data, *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* (Under review)
5. Stark, L., **Seff, I.**, Yu, G., Salama, M., Wessells, M., Allaf, C., & Bennouna, C. Predictors of suicide ideation and resilience among native- and foreign-born adolescents in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. (Under review).
6. Seff, I., Cislighi, B., Levtov, R., Vlahovicova, K., & Stark, L. Quantitative proxies for social norms: A proposed approach for interrogating clustering, reference groups, and validity. *Global Health: Science and Practice*. (Under review).

PRESENTATIONS

Gender-based violence Area of Responsibility Community of Practice, June 9, 2021

- > Presentation title: "The experience of adolescent girls in humanitarian settings: a review of the evidence"

National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence 2021, April 30, 2021

- > Presentation title: “Transgression of gender norms and risk of violence for girls and women: Using an innovative method to identify norms in Nigeria”

Comparative and International Education Society 2021 conference, April 29, 2021

- > Presentation title: “Study of Adolescent Lives after Migration to America (SALaMA): Assessing the needs of students resettled from the MENA region”

LINEA webinar, December 8, 2020

- > Presentation title: “Quantitative proxies for social norms: Interrogating clustering, reference groups, and validity”

LINEA Conference 2021, October 13, 2020

- > Presentation title: “Quantitative proxies for social norms: Interrogating clustering, reference groups, and validity”

Gender Equality, Norms and Health Lancet Series Launch in St. Louis, February 27, 2020

- > Presentation title: “Gender norms and health: insights from global survey data”

CPC Network Webinar, July 31, 2019

- > Presentation title: “Gendered attitudes and norms: Impacts on behavior, victimization, and mental health among adolescents in Nigeria”

Brown School of Social Work at the Washington University in St. Louis, February 19, 2019

- > Presentation title: “Gendered attitudes and norms: Impacts on behavior, victimization, and mental health among adolescents in Nigeria”

VOICE conference 2018, December 12 and 13, 2018

- > Presentation title: “Transgression of gender norms and risk of violence for girls and women: Using an innovative method to identify norms in a Nigerian case study”
- > Presentation title: “How gender- and violence-related norms affect self-esteem among adolescent refugee girls living in Ethiopia”

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Senior Research Advisor

May 2018 – Jan. 2020

PUSKAPA – Center on Child Protection and Well-being – Jakarta, Indonesia

- > Provide technical guidance on research design, sampling, implementation protocol, and quantitative data analysis for multiple research and evaluation projects

Consultant

May 2019 – Jan. 2020

Washington University in St. Louis – St. Louis, MO

- > Design and support a program evaluation of women’s and girls’ safe spaces in Syria and Ethiopia. Responsibilities include the development of research tools, data collection training, and statistical analyses.
- > Collect and analyze quantitative data from SALaMA Phase 2, a research project assessing mental health and psychosocial support among U.S. based adolescent refugees from Arab-majority countries

Senior Research Scientist

Aug. 2016 – Jan. 2019

Child Protection in Crisis – CPC Learning Network – New York City, NY

- > Developed, piloted, and ensured reliability and validity of a Women’s Refugee Committee index used to measure and track self-reliance for refugee households

- > Managed and analyzed data from SALaMA, a research project aimed at assessing mental health and psychosocial support among U.S. based adolescent refugees from Arab-majority countries
- > Conducted quantitative analysis to evaluate the impact of the COMPASS intervention - a girls' empowerment program implemented in refugee camps in Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo - on outcomes related to violence, mental health, and economic vulnerability among adolescent girls
- > Investigated relationships between gender inequitable attitudes and peer norms, experiences of intimate partner violence, and mental health outcomes for adolescents, for special issue of *Lancet*
- > Served as technical consultant to UNICEF for the creation, implementation, and analysis of a decentralized survey on child well-being and related social norms in Cote d'Ivoire

Consultant

Dec. 2016 – Aug. 2017

Together for Girls – Washington, D.C.

- > Develop a comprehensive set of policy-focused plans for analytical exploration, with an emphasis on understanding how violence and gender interact across the lifespan
- > Analyze Violence against Children (VAC) Surveys to develop policy recommendations for addressing violence-related risks faced by children and adolescents in low- and middle-income countries

Research Scientist

June 2015 – Aug. 2016

Department of Global Health, George Washington University – Washington, D.C.

- > Managed research project, *The dynamics of wealth and wellbeing in Ethiopia: policy implications from the analysis of panel data on poverty, food security and nutrition*, conducted in collaboration with the World Bank's Research Department. Culminate in six research papers on the linked analysis of the dynamics of poverty, health, and wellbeing of households in Ethiopia by both examining the transitions in and out of these conditions, as well as using fixed effect regression analysis to examine factors associated with reducing the depth and severity of poverty and food insecurity over time.
- > Supervised team of four public health graduate Research Assistants.

Research Analyst

Nov. 2012 – Aug. 2018

The World Bank Group – Washington, D.C.

- > Performed quantitative data analysis and management for the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) in Malawi, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. Utilized Stata to monitor data quality, build data cleaning systems, and analyze changes over time in poverty, inequality, and health.
- > Served as technical specialist and advisor for LSMS' collection of health data and analysis of malnutrition indicators, with a focus on standardization across participating countries.
- > Created monitoring and evaluation system for incoming data from Ethiopia's Socioeconomic Survey (ESS).
- > Led three-week training for 150 ESS enumerators in Hawassa, Ethiopia.
- > Designed Myanmar Poverty and Living Conditions Survey (MPLCS) for purposes of generating country's official poverty estimates. Made multiple field visits to Yangon to train enumerators and develop survey implementation plan.

Public Health Intern

Feb. 2012 – May 2012

U.S. Department of State – Yaoundé, Cameroon

- > Managed two-month assessment of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and the subsequent impact on HIV transmission.
- > Administered focus group discussions, and conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with commercial sex workers. Compiled recommendations report as requested by USAID and CARE International personnel.

- > Founded a collaborative malaria research initiative to evaluate reasons for non-compliance with insecticide-treated bed nets. Managed 5-member team for pilot testing of survey in rural village.

Graduate Research Assistant

Nov. 2011 – March 2012

Schooling, Income, and Health Risk Project – Washington, D.C.

The World Bank and The George Washington University

- > Utilized Stata to determine the strength of more than 30 potential causal relationships between cash transfer programs and health and education outcomes; maintained expansive project database.
- > Maintained expansive project database and created weekly cleaning do-files for quantitative data collected in field.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- > Guest-editor for a special issue on “Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health” in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*
- > Manuscript reviewer for the following journals from 2017 to date: *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, *Global Social Welfare*, *PLOS ONE*, *Social Science and Medicine*, and *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*
- > Co-lead on the Intimate Partner Violence chapter in the Learning Collaborative's *Social Norms Atlas*, to be released in December 2020

SKILLS

- > **Computer:** Stata, Word, PowerPoint, Excel (advanced)
- > **Language:** French (basic) and Hebrew (basic)