

# Supportive home environments are correlated with greater nutritional intake during Liberian women's pregnancies.

## The Role of Supportive Home Environments for Maternal Nutrition in Liberia

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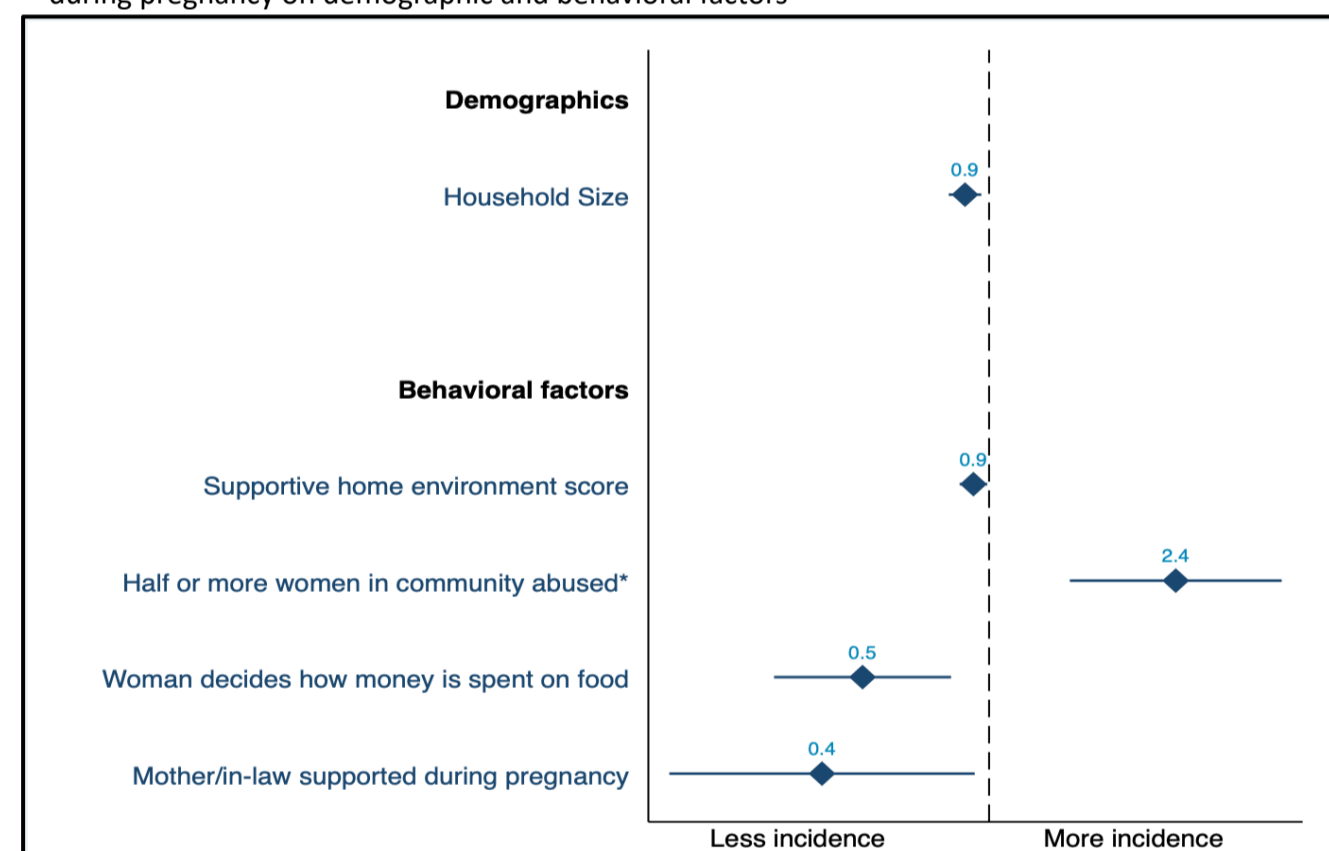
### INTRODUCTION

- While much is known about the benefits of facility-based interventions for maternal nutrition, little is known about the effect of household, social, and behavioral factors.
- This study examined potential household, social, and behavioral determinants of maternal nutrition during Liberian women's most recent pregnancies.

### METHODS

- Cross-sectional study conducted in Bong, Bomi, and Gbarpolu.
- Included 2,161 adult female respondents.
- 860 women had a child in the last 2 years and used for this analysis.
- Liberian proportional piling scale.
- Supportive home environment score was scaled from 0-10.
- Negative binomial regression used to correct for Poisson overdispersion.

Results (IRR) of negative binomial regression for number of days without adequate food during pregnancy on demographic and behavioral factors



VARIABLE	INTERVENTION			CONTROL	ANC 4+ ATTENDED	
	Bomi n=232 %	Bong n=392 %	Total n=624 %	Gbarpolu n=236 %	Yes n=772 %	No n=88 %
Proportion of women with the same or reduced food intake during pregnancy	54.7	36	43	45.3	43.7	43.2
Proportion of women with the same or reduced food intake during last trimester	52.2	43.6	46.8	37.7	43.4	52.3
Mean (sd) number of days spent without enough food during last pregnancy	1.6 (0.21)	1.3 (0.18)	1.4 (0.14)	2.0 (0.36)	1.6 (0.15)	1.3 (0.41)

### RESULTS

- **Household size:** Each additional member in a woman's household was correlated with a 10% reduction in days without adequate maternal nutrition.
- **Supportive home environments:** A one-point increase in a woman's supportive home environment score was correlated with a 10% reduction in the number of days women spent without enough food.
- **Decision-making:** Women being the primary decision-makers for household food purchase was correlated a 50% reduction in days without adequate maternal nutrition.
- **Partner violence norms:** Perceptions that ½ or more women in the community have been abused by their partner was associated with a more than two-fold increase in days women spent without enough food.

### DISCUSSION



This research does not suggest that facility-based interventions, such as IFA administration and ANC, should be replaced. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of cohesion between these efforts. Community health workers may be an avenue to spread messaging about supportive home environments for women during pregnancy.



SBC can help address gender equity, particularly by targeting both the household and the community as areas of intervention.



Further research should be undertaken to understand which support systems within a woman's house and community may be most beneficial during her pregnancy.

