Civil Conflict, Sex Ratio and Intimate Partner Violence in Rwanda

Giulia La Mattina§
University of South Florida
Department of Economics

First draft: January 2012; this draft: December 2014

Abstract
This paper examines the long-term impact of civil conflict on intimate partner violence and women’s decision-making power using post-genocide data from Rwanda. Household survey data collected 11 years after the genocide show that women who became married after the genocide experienced significantly increased intimate partner violence and decreased decision-making power relative to women who became married before. The effect was greater for women in localities with high genocide intensity. I find that variation in the marriage market sex ratio across localities and over time explains part of the effect of the genocide on intimate partner violence.

§University of South Florida, Department of Economics. Contact e-mail: glamattina@usf.edu.
I am grateful to Daniele Paserman, Claudia Olivetti and Dilip Mookherjee for support and guidance throughout this project. I thank Jorge Aguero, Kehinde Ajayi, Abel Brodeur, Willa Friedman, Carola Frydman, Rania Gihleb, Michael Jetter, Kevin Lang, Jeanne Lafortune, Melanie Lefevre, Megan MacGarvie, Hani Mansour, Stephan Mechoulan, Amalia Miller, Andy Newman, Dana Rotz, Olga Shemyakina, Kati Schindler, Johannes Schmieder, Marijke Verpoorten, Joshua Wilde and Wes Yin for their helpful feedback. I am also thankful to various seminar and conference participants for comments and suggestions. I would like to thank the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda for making available the data used in this study. I am grateful to Clara Burgert for assistance with the Demographic and Health Survey data, and to Richard McKensie from the GIS division at the USF library for research support. Many thanks to Marijke Verpoorten for sharing sector-level population counts from the 2002 Rwanda Census and to Willa Friedman for sharing geographic data and code. Yingying Gu and Matthew Summers provided excellent research assistance through the IED sponsored RA-Mentor program. A previous version of this paper was titled “When All the Good Men are Gone: Sex Ratio and Domestic Violence in Post-Genocide Rwanda,” (January 2012) and was awarded the Rosenstein-Rodan prize at Boston University. This paper was also previously circulated as “Armed Conflict and Domestic Violence: Evidence from Rwanda” (November 2012) and is part of my Ph.D. dissertation at Boston University.