



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION

REGIONAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL ISSUES

**SUB-PROGRAMME 2: RESUMPTION OF BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES, PROVISION OF
HEALTH CARE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT TO GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

PROJECT No. 4.2.2

**PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND ASSISTANCE TO THE VICTIMS**

August 2006

A. Contextual Analysis

The real magnitude and impact of sexual exploitation, abuse and gender-based violence on women and children in the Great Lakes region will never be known. What is well known however, are the horrifying experiences told by the victims, their families and friends. Sexual exploitation and violence know no boundaries. This evidence indicates that perpetrators are found in both conflict and non-conflict situations, within families and among those mandated with the protection of the vulnerable, such as the police or the military, or the UN Peace Keepers etc. The Great Lakes region suffers from a high prevalence of sexual violence against women, girls and young boys as a weapon for projecting the motives of armed conflict. A devastating consequence of this for the region is that women, girls and young boys are not only victims of armed conflict, but have also become the objects of the accompanying means by which armed conflict is fought by opposing armed groups and armed forces.

The definition of sexual violence against women and children is covered under the related protocol.

Statistics paint a horrifying picture of the social consequences of violence against women in both conflict and non-conflict situations. Violence against women is a public health emergency and a major cause of death and disability for women between 16-44 years of age. A World Bank report estimates that violence against women was as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.

Despite the seriousness of sexual violence, exploitation and abuse, prevention measures and protection and support for survivors is woefully inadequate. Access to social services, protection, legal remedies, medical resources, places of refuge etc. is limited, despite the efforts of some NGOs. In many societies, the legal system and community attitudes add to the trauma of survivors. Women, girls and young boys are often held responsible for the violence perpetrated against them, while the perpetrators go unpunished and remain free to continue their acts of violence.

It is glaringly evident that urgent action is needed from the States in order to prevent any form of sexual exploitation, abuse and gender-based violence. Procedures and mechanisms need to be put in place or strengthened in order to promote the investigation, reporting, prosecution and to help find a remedy for violence against women, girls and young boys. It is encouraging to note that international human rights instruments are gradually addressing the issue of sexual violence and exploitation sometimes within the overall context of human rights. The relevant legal instruments are listed under National Activities.

Voices from the grassroots 'The reality on the ground'

Rape used once again as a weapon in the DRC – MSF website article

'On Sunday morning (July 3rd 2005) a group of 80-100 military personnel from a local transit centre in Mbandaka (Capital of Equateur, Western Province of the DRC) stole weapons from a warehouse and attacked the local inhabitants. They accused the locals of having murdered one of their colleagues. The military personnel were based in a transit centre awaiting integration into the national army. 46 persons were wounded by gunshots and 6 were killed. 29 people had been raped. An awareness campaign was quickly launched to encourage victims of sexual violence to seek medical care within 72 hours. During this crucial time-frame, proper treatment can reduce the risks that wounds and bleeding caused by forced penetration will result in HIV/AIDS transmission. These are the problems faced during upheavals in a country where peace remains fragile. Although security has improved in many locations, the situation remains precarious and events like these can occur at any moment. In addition, despite what people say, victims of sexual violence often don't receive treatment. In fact, few victims really have access to appropriate medical care, even though this violence is a calamity that calls for quick intervention. In addition to ARV treatment to prevent HIV/AIDS, victims must take the 'from morning after' pill as soon as possible to avoid unwanted pregnancies. They must also be given vaccines and antibiotics against sexually transmitted infections. Mbandaka is once again quiet, but victims must live with the long-lasting memories of their traumas and the fear that it may happen again...'

Poor girls' life saved – The Standard Newspaper – July 12, 2005

'One gloomy morning in November last year, residents of Gatamaiyu Village, Kiambu, Kenya, woke up to a shocking discovery. On an open field overgrown with Napier grass lay a four-year old girl in a comma. Her eyes blank and blood spattered all over her dress, she lay motionless, unconscious. She had been raped, brutalized and left for dead. Her internal organs had ruptured to almost an irreparable extent. Perhaps too young to understand why she had to go through such a grotesque ordeal, the minor was in a state of shock. She was cold and breathing was labored. Her relatives and villagers did not know what step to take next. Then someone suggested that the Nairobi Women's Hospital would take in such a case for specialized treatment. The hospital's management said last week that this was the toughest and probably the worst case of sexual abuse the institution has handled so far. A day after she was admitted to the hospital, gender activists, senior government officials and well-wishers flocked to the institution to console her. Politicians and other leaders also came in droves and cursed the perpetrators of the heinous act. The leaders wept openly as Press cameras clicked and rolled. Some talked tough, but the hospital did the most practical and logical thing – to heal the wounds for no fee. The girl underwent three major operations, which cost Kshs 600,000 (US\$ 8000)'



In article 6 of the Dar es Salaam Declaration, the Heads of State and Government expressed deep concern about the humanitarian and social consequences of crises and armed conflicts. They especially noted violations of human rights of women, children...and the sexual violence and exploitation of girls and women and their use as sexual slaves'. In articles 27, 67 and 70 they committed themselves to:

- protect women and children and address issues of sexual violence;
- set up regional mechanisms, including relevant traditional support mechanisms, aimed at providing psychosocial support, medical and legal assistance to women and girls who are victims of rape as well as other acts of sexual violence and exploitation and
- to allocate funds from debt cancellation with priority given to programmes of rehabilitation and reconstruction of social and educational infrastructure as well as rural development.

This project proposes measures to operationalize the timely commitment of the Heads of State and Government to halt any further sexual violence and exploitation of women, girls and young boys in the region.

B. Overall Objective

To prevent, eradicate and punish all forms of sexual violence, exploitation and abuse of women, girls and young boys, including gender-based violence in the region. In so doing, offer assistance to surviving victims.

C. Specific Objectives

1. Protect women, girls and young boys and address issues of sexual and gender-based violence.
2. Provide legal and psychosocial support and material assistance to victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
3. Provide funding for sexual and gender based violence programmes

D. Strategies

1. Commit all Member States to adopt and operationalize legal instruments relating to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, particularly against women and children and young boys.
2. Set up national mechanisms for psychosocial support and assistance for victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
3. Formulate prevention and assistance policies and undertake constitutional amendments to address sexual and gender-based violence issues.

E. Activities

Regional level

1. Undertake advocacy for the adoption and operationalization of the Protocol on Sexual Violence Against Women and related legal instruments by the Member States.

2. Institute an effective regional system of deferral to national criminal courts as well as to the international Criminal Court for fugitive perpetrators.
3. Create a regional fund for undertaking prevention measures and providing assistance to survivors, providing social and legal assistance, treatment, counseling and the rehabilitation of survivors. The fund should also cover training for police units dealing with sexual violence and support to sensitization programmes that benefit the local communities and initiatives at the national level.
4. Put in place a mechanism for the dissemination and exchange of information and positive initiatives on the fight against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.
5. Provide technical assistance to Member States in order to strengthen their capacities to prevent, eradicate and punish all forms of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

National level

1. Sign, ratify, domesticate and operationalize legal instruments relating to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) namely:
 - Proposed Protocol on Sexual Violence against Women
 - UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on special needs of women and girls (2000)
 - Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981) and its optional Protocol.
 - Convention on the Rights of Children
 - African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
 - The African Charter on human and peoples' rights and the Protocol on Women's Rights (2003)
 - Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000)
 - Protocol Against Smuggling (2000)
2. Allocate funds from national budget and debt cancellation to support programmes geared towards the prevention of SGBV and assistance to survivors and strengthen capacities of various institutions to enable them deal with SGBV, including: National gender machineries, Police, Judiciary, NGOs and CBOs.
3. Simplify procedures for lodging complaints related to SGBV, strengthen medical structures to facilitate the obtaining of medical certificate and ensure timely hearing and confidentiality of related cases.
4. Set-up gender desks at all police stations with a policewoman to deal with SGBV related issues. Sensitize and train all Police Officers in trauma management of victims of SGBV as well as Peace-Keepers and other military personnel.
5. Assess and document the extent of and experiences of SGBV especially on women, girls and young boys and identify existing assistance and gaps and

coordinate with NGOs and CBOs (Community Based-Organizations) that are working on SGBV and related issues.

6. Put in place preventive measures against SGBV and assistance for survivors and Reform Penal codes to provide for sanctions and stiff punishment for crimes related to SGBV.
7. Undertake an extensive and sustained public awareness campaign to sensitize women and children on their rights through existing legal instruments on human rights, women rights and children's rights, in languages and formats that are easily understood, especially at the grassroots level. Strengthen the Civil Society and include men to actively participate in this campaign.
8. Undertake an extensive and sustained public awareness campaign (especially at the grassroots) providing information on existing and planned assistance for victims of SGBV.
9. Set up 'one-stop' centres (especially at the grassroots) for SGBV victims and their families where they can receive free assistance such as: legal, medical assistance including the morning-after-pill (PEP), counseling to overcome trauma, food & shelter, ARVs and HIV/AIDS related assistance etc
10. Develop and implement behavioural change programmes specifically designed for imprisoned perpetrators of sexual violence.
11. Facilitate re-integration of victims through training and the identification of economic opportunities. Provide for the re-insertion and re-socialization of victims of sexual violence to ensure acceptance by their communities.

F. Opportunities

- Commitment by States through the Dar es Salaam Declaration
- The proposed Protocol on Sexual Violence against
- Countries which have signed and ratified relevant legal instruments
- Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action
- Existing initiatives, institutions and NGOs dealing with SGBV in the region
- Support from the International Community

G. Risks

- Countries which have not signed and ratified relevant legal instruments
- Entrenched customs and traditions discriminating women and girls
- Stigmatization of defiled persons especially children
- Culture of silence on issues and problems related to SGBV
- Lack of knowledge by women and children on availability and procedures for reporting SGBV
- Lack of human and financial resources especially in the legal, security and health sectors
- Weak, inefficient, unfriendly, non-confidential and intimidating legal systems and environment in courts of law
- Lack of information on the magnitude of the problem
- Unsensitized police forces, military, peace keepers and security forces

- Existence of armed groups that destabilize the region and pose constant threat to women and children

H. Beneficiaries

- Women
- Girls and young boys
- Prisoners and detainees
- Refugees and Asylum seekers
- Survivors and victims of SGBV

I. Financing

Either as part of ongoing programmes or additional requirements depending on the region's and each country's needs, the financing of this project will mainly be borne by:

- Member states of the International Conference.
- Bilateral and multilateral partners – in particular the Nordic Countries
- International and National NGOs
- Donations from private sources (corporate and individual)
- Relevant UN agencies
- Debt Relief Fund

J. Institutional Arrangements

A Regional Project Co-ordinator (RPC) will be responsible for overall execution, follow-up and co-ordination of the project at regional level. He will be assisted by the National Programme Co-ordinators (NPC) of each member state, who will be in charge of day-to-day activities at the national level as well as ensuring proper involvement by local institutions and authorities and concerted participation of relevant stakeholders. The RPC will be working under the overall supervision of the Coordination Committee on Humanitarian and Social Issues and in particular the proposed expert sub-committee dealing with *sexual exploitation and gender-based violence, which will serve as Steering Committee for the project.*

Proposed mandate of the Coordination Committee

1. Coordinate and implement activities in the Humanitarian and Social Issues programmes of action;
2. Harmonize the protection and assistance policies including support to host communities;
3. Mobilize resources and advocacy on humanitarian and social issues;
4. Lend support to the sensitization and advocate for compliance with international instruments, including the domestication of regional protocols (on IDPs, sexual violence and the property rights of returning communities);
5. Facilitate coordination and dialogue on matters pertaining to humanitarian and social issues in the region.
6. Provide institutional support to national structures dealing with humanitarian and social issues.

The coordination committee shall be composed of senior officials mandated by their respective Governments. The officials should be highly qualified in the above listed fields. The coordination committee would report to the Inter-Ministerial Committee, which would in turn report to the Summit of Heads of State and Government.

Proposed mandate of the Expert Sub-Committee

1. Prepare the meetings of the Coordination Committee
2. Follow-up on the different activities identified in the projects in the Humanitarian and Social Issues cluster
3. Collect, analyze and disseminate any information relevant to this field to the attention of the Coordination Committee which will in turn bring them to the attention of the Inter- Ministerial Committee.

The expert sub-committee shall be composed of government representatives but supported by civil society as well as individual experts in their respective fields. Other relevant partners will lend their support in specific areas e.g. UN, AU, Civil Society, Women's organization etc

At the National Level the project will be implemented through a proposed National Coordinating Committee whose members will include representatives from the proposed regional Coordination Committee. This will ensure exchange of information and decisions at both levels. The National Coordination Committee will meet within an agreed schedule and will be composed of but not limited to the following representation:

- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Public Works
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Water
- Ministry of Social Services
- Ministry of Gender or equivalent
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Local Government
- National AIDS Council or equivalent

In addition, the proposed National Coordination Committee will include local representatives of relevant UN agencies, Civil Society and Donors.

Proposed mandate of the National Coordination Committee

1. Prepare a work-plan for the national implementation of the project
2. Liaise with grassroots organizations and local government in the implementation of the activities.
3. Monitor and guide the implementation of the project by various actors.
4. Prepare regular monitoring reports for the regional Coordinating Committee.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Expected Results	Indicators	Activities	Resources
<p>1. Member States adopt and operationalize legal instruments relating to SGBV.</p> <p>2. Regional and national mechanisms for psychosocial support and assistance for victims of sexual and gender-based violence are set up.</p> <p>3. Prevention and assistance policies on sexual and gender-based violence issues are developed and operationalized.</p> <p>4. Sufficient funding is allocated for SGBV programmes.</p>	<p>Signing and ratification of legal instruments relating to SGBV</p> <p>Number of SGBV cases reported</p> <p>Number of SGBV victims treated and receiving assistance</p> <p>Level of funding for SGBV programmes</p> <p>Number of Police Officers and Peacekeepers trained and sensitized on SGBV issues</p>	<p><u>Regional level</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor the adoption and operationalization of the Protocol on Sexual Violence Against Women and related legal instruments. 2. Institute an effective regional system of deferral to national and international criminal courts for fugitive perpetrators. 3. Create a regional fund for SGBV programmes including training for police units dealing with sexual violence and support to sensitization programmes that benefit the local communities and initiatives at the national level. 4. Put in place a mechanism for the dissemination and exchange of information and positive initiatives on the fight against SGBV. 5. Provide technical assistance to Member States in order to strengthen their capacities to prevent, eradicate and punish all forms of SGBV. <p><u>National level</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sign, ratify and operationalize legal instruments relating to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence 2. Reform Penal codes to provide for stiff sanctions and punishment for crimes related to SGBV. 3. Undertake an extensive and sustained public awareness campaign to sensitize women and children on their rights. 4. Set-up gender desks at all police stations with a policewoman to deal with SGBV related issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member states of the International Conference. ▪ Bilateral and multilateral partners – in particular the Nordic Countries ▪ International and National NGOs ▪ Donations from private sources (corporate and individual) ▪ Relevant UN agencies ▪ Debt Relief Fund

		<p>and sensitize and train all Police Officers, Peace Keepers and other military personnel.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Assess and document the extent of and experiences of SGBV especially on women, girls and young boys.6. Allocate funds from national budget and debt cancellation to support SGBV and strengthen capacities of various institutions to enable them deal with SGBV.7. Simplify procedures for lodging complaints related to SGBV, strengthen medical structures to facilitate the obtaining of medical certificate and ensure timely hearing and confidentiality of related cases.8. Undertake an extensive and sustained public awareness campaign providing information on existing and planned assistance for victims of SGBV, involving men and the Civil Society.9. Set up 'one-stop' centres (especially at the grassroots) for SGBV victims and their families.10. Develop and implement behavioural change programmes specifically designed for imprisoned perpetrators of sexual violence.11. Provide training and identify economic opportunities for the reintegration of SGBV victims.	
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BUDGET

Double click on the icon below to view the budget

Microsoft Office
Excel Worksheet
