



**CADS STAFFS PHOTO DURING GBV TRAINING INNORTHERN BAHR EL
GHAZAL-AWEIL**

**END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRL (EVWG) IN NORTHERN BAHR
ELGHAZAL-AWEIL, SOUTH SUDAN.**

Gender-based violence (GBV) in the context of conflict and displacement is a serious, life threatening protection issue primarily affecting women and children. It is well documented that gender-based violence is a widespread international public health issue, and that adequate, appropriate, and comprehensive prevention and response are lacking in most states of South Sudan. Countrywide Gender-based violence is especially problematic during armed conflict and in displaced settings, where civilian women and children are often targeted for abuse, comprise the greatest numbers, and are the most vulnerable to exploitation, violence, and abuse simply by virtue of their gender, age, and status in society. Humanitarian aid leaders and staff often lack understanding, knowledge, skills, and experience in GBV programming; a fact which only adds to the challenge of addressing this enormous and complex problem.

Although reports of rape, sexual exploitation, sexual bartering, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence are increasingly surfacing in conflict and displaced settings, few actual



numbers are known at this time. Wartime sexual violence perpetrated by combatants is a long standing serious risk. Sexual abuses such as rape, exploitation, and sex-for-survival in displaced settings are believed to be pervasive problems worldwide. Other forms of gender based violence that occurred in communities prior to displacement, such as domestic violence, harmful traditional practices, and discrimination against females in society; usually continue in settings of refuge. Since the early 2013's, the humanitarian community has increased its attention to the problem of gender-based violence in populations affected by armed conflict. Efforts are underway in much conflict and displaced settings to address GBV. So far, the most promising efforts to prevent gender-based violence and provide services to survivors require integrated and coordinated action by multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary, inter-organizational actors from the displaced community, international humanitarian organizations (NGOs and UN), national organizations, and host government ministries. A minimum set of services must be available for health care, psycho-social support, security/police/protection, and legal justice (both formal and traditional).

To achieve effective, integrated and coordinated action, there must be collaboration, skill, knowledge, training, coordination, and high level support and commitment within all organizations.

The world's awareness of the use of gender-based violence, especially sexual violence, as a deliberate strategy to undermine communities was raised during the crises in South Sudan. The convictions by the ad-hoc tribunals for Rwanda and

Yugoslavia on rape as a war crime and crime against humanity and the inclusion of sexual violence as a crime against humanity in the statute of the new International Criminal Court indicate the reduction of tolerance for impunity for these crimes. The problem, however, is ongoing. Recent events in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, Sudan demonstrate that sexual violence continues and the majority of perpetrators escape justice. Even when trials occur and those who commit or are responsible for sexual violence are punished, there is little assistance for the survivors. True justice requires that the survivors receive

Workshop Overview

Effective prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV) requires a well-planned and coordinated effort among an array of organizations, disciplines, and sectors. In populations affected by conflict, there are additional and specific threats and risks that require action in order to establish effective protection from GBV. This workshop enhanced planning and coordination by bringing together key staff in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, South Sudan to assess progress so far and begin mapping next steps to increase their collaboration in addressing gender-based violence in populations affected by conflict. The four day participatory workshop combined training, information sharing, and planning. Christian Action for Development & Support (CADS) initiated this workshop in order to build staff capacity to design and implement strategies for protection from GBV. In addition to training and capacity building for CADS staff in the field, Part Two of the workshop brought more organizations to the table to discuss broader implementation, coordination, and collaboration issues.

Part One, Days One and two were targeted for Christian Action for Development & Support (CADS) staff, to build capacity and increase knowledge, skills, and abilities to address gender-based violence in conflict-affected populations.



Outcomes of Part One include:

- Strengthened individual capacity of programme leaders in Christian Action for Development & Support (CADS).
- Commitments from individual participants for concrete action within their organizations and programmes to strengthen action to address GBV using a multisector and interagency approach:

Part Two, Days 3 and 4, the CADS was joined by representatives from CEDS, TADO, TCA, and a few key partner NGOs. During these two days, participants identified strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities for strengthening country-level work to address gender-based violence.

Part Two outcomes include:

- Broader understanding of each other's work and shared challenges
- Renewed interest in coordination and collaboration at state and local levels
- Concrete Northern Bahr el Ghazal action plans to strengthen protection from GBV through coordination and collaboration with each other Participants worked together, discussing and exploring this extremely challenging programme area. With a spirit of collaboration, participants agreed that this work is indeed challenging, but can be addressed when we work together.

Individual Action Plans

At the end of Part One, participants shared with the group one action they –as individuals– will commit to take on returning to their field site. Participants agreed that each of them are responsible for addressing gender-based violence, and their individual actions can make a difference and strengthen protection from GBV:

- Conduct training for police and armed forces (5 people)
- Train judiciary and support laws on GBV during the process
- Work on guidelines for implementing the codes of conduct and putting systems in place for enforcement and compliance
- Work with the Aweil women Association GBV recovery centre for developing guidelines for GBV
- Work so that community members (survivors) know where to go for help and trust they'll be treated with respect and confidentiality
- Support the law reform commission to come up with a draft bill on domestic violence
- Re-fund the printing of national guidelines on GBV and hold a dissemination workshop
- Facilitate a workshop for all members of the GBV coordination team
- Help put in place a protocol on GBV for Great Northern Bahr el Ghazal.
- Work with the review of the legal framework for gender violence in national laws
- Work to strengthen health examination and treatment of GBV.
- Work to support capacity of female lawyers to provide legal assistance to survivors
- Make sure the four guiding principles are well understood and put into practice
- Baseline study on GBV in the education system
- Train colleagues on the code of conduct
- Work with section to bring about changes on legislative and policy reform
- Share knowledge and information from this workshop with others
- Interagency coordination to figure out interagency training needs and plan
- Teach staff members the relationship between GBV and HIV
- Finalize psychosocial strategy and include GBV issues in it



- Work with Women's Secretariat to establish reporting systems.

State Team Action Plans

Participants met in country teams to discuss how they, as a team, would use and implement the information and insights gained during the workshop:

Northern Bah el Ghazal-Aweil

- Discuss with interagency GBV working groups the possibility of establishing two GBV task forces: one for Aweil South, one for Aweil North. Have coordination meeting twice a year to share strategies, results, and challenges.
- Talk to health staff to ensure they come to GBV meetings

Commitment and Next Steps

At the closing of the workshop, participants agreed to be responsible for carrying forward messages from this workshop. These include:

- GBV is a serious, life-threatening issue requiring intervention.
- Well-coordinated, integrated multisector, inter-organizational, interdisciplinary action is needed.
- Policy and accountability support is needed from the highest levels in our organization
- Work in collaboration with the community.
- Provide appropriate, compassionate services to survivors, maintaining the four guiding principles.
- Implement prevention strategies addressing short-term situational factors and long-term behaviour change.

All participants will take concrete steps at the country and regional levels to increase coordination with colleagues inside and outside of their organizations, to increase knowledge and skills of others by conducting training and/or sensitization sessions.

In addition, participants will continue building alliances and networks, strengthening coordination, and increasing communication among participants and their organizations, and include others who were not present at this meeting. This includes taking steps to influence knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour related to gender-based violence within our own organizations, to increase attention to the issues and strengthen our organizations' work to address GBV.

There should be consistent follow up communications and meetings at the national and regional levels. Participants are now increasing their collaboration and coordination. Subsequent meetings should include review, revision, and refinement of coordinated action plans.