

## GBV sub-Cluster Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Uganda March 2008

### I. Background

Gender-based violence takes many forms and includes rape, sexual exploitation, sexual assault and abuse, domestic violence, trafficking of women and girls, forced prostitution, sexual harassment and discrimination. It also encompasses forms of violence that are specific to cultures and societies, such as female genital mutilation, widow inheritance, and early and forced marriage.

The most commonly reported form of GBV in Northern Uganda is domestic violence; although reports on cases of grave violence (rape, defilement and sexual assault) are of equal and serious concern.

Globally, sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault and exploitation, is under-reported. Survivors do not speak out because of fear, risk of ongoing violence, shame, social stigma and lack of services that fully respect their confidentiality, rights, wishes, choices and dignity. Therefore, all actors must assume and believe that sexual violence is under-reported in Northern Uganda.

For effective GBV prevention, response and coordination in Northern Uganda, systemic and individual protections are institutionalized<sup>1</sup>. These levels are:

1. Structural level: preventative measures to ensure rights are recognized and protected (through international, statutory and traditional laws and policies)
2. Systemic level: systems and strategies to monitor and respond when those rights are breached (statutory and traditional legal/ justice systems, health care systems, social welfare systems and community-based mechanisms)
3. Operative level: direct services to meet the needs of women and girls who have been abused

Addressing gender-based violence in Northern Uganda therefore requires: measures to promote and protect women's and girl's rights; actions for intervention when those rights are breached; and services and programs to meet the needs of women and girls who have suffered violence.

Successful GBV prevention, response and coordination in Northern Uganda is dependent on the active commitment of, and collaboration between, all actors, including government; non-government; male and female community members.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from A. Jamrozic and L. Nocella (1998) *The Sociology of Social Problems: Theoretical Perspectives and Methods of Intervention*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.

## **II. Purpose of this Document**

This document outlines the strategy of the GBV sub-Cluster at the National level and in districts of Northern Uganda. The strategy reflects the immediate humanitarian imperative to save lives and prevent further harm -- as well as the priority to transition programming approaches from humanitarian to integrated recovery by strengthening national Government and community-based structures. Recovery frameworks and priorities will support medium to longer-term, sustained structural, systemic and service interventions that protect women and girls from gender-based violence in accordance with Uganda's obligations under international and national law.

## **III. Context of the Strategy**

Gender-based violence prevention, response and coordination in Northern Uganda must take into account the context both across and within conflict-affected Districts, reflecting patterns of population movement and the related early recovery/recovery context. Therefore the GBV strategy is shaped by a number of policies and factors:

- ▶ Humanitarian/life saving interventions should target the most vulnerable populations – due to their increased vulnerability by virtue of both their sex and particular circumstances that heighten vulnerability, certain groups of women and girls are more likely to need ongoing relief-oriented service delivery to reduce the risk of their exposure to gender-based violence (for example, female headed households and unaccompanied women and girls, formerly abducted girls and women who have not been able to reintegrate into their communities of origin).
- ▶ GBV prevention and response interventions and coordination mechanisms shall be shaped by national and local government plans, guidelines and policies: including the Government of Uganda's Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP); and the OPM's Parish Approach.
- ▶ Program planning, implementation, and coordination must reflect each district's different circumstances and capacity vis a vis population movement, security, deployment and coverage of district and sub county level authorities etc.

## **IV. GBV sub-Cluster Strategy**

The following strategy has been developed in line IASC Cluster Policy and architecture in Uganda, the IASC GBV Guidelines; Uganda Protection Cluster Strategy; the Government of Uganda's PRDP; the OPM's Parish Approach; The National Gender Policy; The National IDP Policy, and reflects the contextual issues identified above.

The strategy of the GBV sub-Cluster is to address both action to prevent GBV and service delivery to respond to GBV, as well as longer-term development of services, systems, and structures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence.

The GBV sub-Cluster will therefore work with all relevant actors in Northern Uganda to:

I. Deliver a set of minimum interventions to prevent and respond to GBV in line with the IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings

II. Transition multi-sectoral GBV humanitarian interventions to national and local government and community-based structures and services.

In order to achieve the above, the following activities will be prioritized by GBV sub-Cluster actors:

### 1. Coordination

Promote and support the expansion and strengthening of GBV systems from sub-county level and onwards, through:

- Development and roll-out of harmonised GBV standards, tools and guidelines across districts.
- Development and monitoring of IASC/MoGLSD capacity building programme targeting multi-sectoral local government and community based structures addressing GBV
- Technical support to clusters and sector working groups to maximise protection of women and girls and sector specific service delivery/response including GIL, Health, Livelihoods, and Education
- Intra-cluster coordination and joint planning with Protection Cluster members; Child Protection and Human Rights/Rule of Law sub clusters members.

### 2. Assessment and Monitoring

- Improving data collection, analysis and understanding of nature and scale of sexual and gender-based violence
- Collating and disseminating programming lessons-learned and good practice (national, regional and global)

### 3. GBV prevention and response

- Case management of survivors including provision of information and ensuring referral to services including: health services, economic/livelihood and psychosocial services and legal assistance.

- National advocacy platform; *national and district level plans and activities* - addressing key challenges reducing GBV and increasing access to health services and legal redress

## **V. GBV Sub-Cluster National Annual Work plan (2008) for Northern Uganda**

### **Appendix A.**

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