

<b>General Information</b>		
<b>Title of the initiative: “Establishment of Rwanda National Police Gender Desk”</b>		
<p><b>Region/country</b></p> <p>Central Africa Region, Rwanda</p>	<p><b>Duration of the initiative</b></p> <p>2005- to date</p>	
<p><b>Implementing partner(s) and stakeholders</b> <i>List all partners. Place an * next to the name of those partners who were key implementers in this initiative:</i></p> <p>Rwanda National Police* UNIFEM UNDP</p>	<p><b>Topic /Subject</b></p> <p><i>Indicate the main group/s (women survivors, men, adolescents, indigenous, migrants, etc.); sector/s (health, education, police, justice, etc); forms of violence (sexual, domestic, harmful practice, etc.); and approach (prevention, services, policy development, etc.) highlighted in this case study:</i></p> <p>Main groups: Women survivors of SGBV and girls</p> <p>Sectors: National Police</p> <p>Forms of violence: all</p> <p>Approach: Prevention and response services</p>	<p><b>Search criteria – Keywords</b></p> <p><i>Enter any words that characterize and would help identify this initiative in a keyword search (e.g. including by form of violence, group reached, sectors or types of intervention):</i></p> <p>National Police, Gender Desk, GBV Committees, GBV Clubs, Prevention, Services, Survivors of violence, Women, Girls, Men, Boys, Community Policing Committees, Faith-based organizations, UNIFEM</p>
<p><b>Are there any guides, handbooks, training manuals, audiovisual materials or other products developed for this initiative?</b></p> <p>Yes</p> <p>A training curriculum on investigation on SGBV cases has been developed. The National Police has been trained on improved responses to survivors of SGBV.</p> <p>The capacity of the National Police on developing and disseminating SGBV advocacy materials has been enhanced. This has been achieved through a</p>	<p><b>Was the initiative evaluated?</b></p> <p>Please tick the appropriate box:</p> <p>Yes in the framework of an overall programme evaluation on prevention of SGBV community-led approaches of DFID.</p> <p>An evaluation is planned for 2010.</p> <p>Indicate the type of Evaluation: External Evaluation of DFID Prevention of SGBV community-led approaches</p> <p>Please attach the evaluation report.</p> <p>Can it be publicly shared? Yes</p>	<p><b>Donors</b> <i>List all donors.</i></p> <p>UNDP, DANIDA, DFID, Belgium, SIDA, UNIFEM</p>

<p>participatory approach to develop a quarterly police magazine on SGBV, brochures, posters, calendars and a film documentary in order to improve public awareness on SGBV, its nature, causes and consequences.</p> <p>Furthermore, a National Police Policy on Child, Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence as well as a CDGBVA (Child, Domestic and Gender Based Violence and Abuse) training manual for police and cadet schools has been developed.</p> <p>Can they be publicly shared? Yes</p>		
<p><b>Budget for Evaluation:</b>  <b>Cost</b> Give an estimate (in US Dollars) of how much it cost to design, implement and evaluate this initiative. (If possible please indicate how much was spent on evaluation activities separately):</p>	<p><b>Contact Information</b>  <a href="mailto:evaw.helpdesk@unifem.org">evaw.helpdesk@unifem.org</a></p>	

## Establishment of Rwanda National Police Gender Desk

### *What is the promising practice?*

In 2005 a Gender Desk was established at the Rwanda National Police funded under the project, **Enhancing Protection from Gender Based Violence** (GBV), implemented by UNIFEM with funding from UNDP. The project has been ongoing since with support from UNIFEM, Belgium, DANIDA, DFID and SIDA. The overall goal of this initiative was to enhance the Rwandan National Police’s response to GBV, in line with Rwanda’s commitment to relevant international, regional and national laws such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and others.

The **objectives** of the GBV Desk are:

- to increase police logistics for rapid response to reports of GBV
- to increase police capacity in investigating GBV cases
- to increase police capacity in counseling GBV survivors
- to develop strategies and guidelines on the prevention of and response to GBV
- to increase public awareness on GBV and the role of the Police Gender Desk

- to assist survivors in getting access to appropriate health, legal and psycho-social support services, and
- to collect data and information on GBV in Rwanda.

Facilities of the GBV desk include an operational office at the National Police Headquarters in Kigali with six staff, the nomination of GBV Focal Points at all province and district police stations, motorcycles and vehicles to ensure rapid responses to reports of GBV cases, in particular in rural areas, modern interview and surveillance rooms and a toll-free hotline (3512) to facilitate reporting of GBV.



**Results** to date include:

- Training of 250 police officers from community policing committees from all five police regions on Standard Operating Procedures of prevention of and response to GBV<sup>1</sup>
- 80 females from the Rwanda National Police Women’s Network (e.g. police officers, Rwanda Defence Force Gender desk and youth representatives from schools) from 5 regions were sensitized on use of Standard Operating Procedures of prevention of and response to GBV<sup>2</sup>
- Training of 166 GBV Desk police officers on GBV from a human rights and security perspective as well as on investigation<sup>3</sup>
- Training of 45 police officers in psycho-social counseling<sup>4</sup>
- Improved operational capacities (acquiring 15 motorcycles) to ensure rapid response, in particular in rural areas, to GBV cases
- Strengthened collaboration with the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF), including a training of 70 military officers in Kigali City<sup>5</sup>
- Enhanced partnerships with key stakeholders such as local governments, Rwanda Defence Forces, medical, psychosocial and legal service providers and women’s rights advocates.
- Enhanced sensitization and awareness among communities, local governments (e.g. in Gasabo District and Kigali City), schools (400 teachers and students trained), women cooperatives (300

<sup>1</sup> National Police Progress Report “Supporting Women’s Engagement in Peace Building and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict”, 30.12.2009

<sup>2</sup> National Police Progress Report “Supporting Women’s Engagement in Peace Building and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict”, 30.12.2009

<sup>3</sup> Data refers to June 2007-June 2009. Ministry of Internal Security, Rwanda National Police: Narrative Report for the project Supporting Women’s Engagement in Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Peace Building, 29 June 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Data refers to June 2007-June 2009. Ministry of Internal Security, Rwanda National Police: Narrative Report for the project Supporting Women’s Engagement in Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Peace Building, 29 June 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Data refers to June 2007-June 2009. Ministry of Internal Security, Rwanda National Police: Narrative Report for the project Supporting Women’s Engagement in Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Peace Building, 29 June 2009.

- members trained in Musanze und Gicumbi districts), religious leaders and faith-based organizations
- Formation of a regional network on Sports for Social Change targeting GBV prevention and response
  - Development and dissemination of sensitization materials (posters, brochures, magazines, stickers, calendars) for communities
  - Enhanced monitoring, collection and analysis of GBV data across the country Increased reports and effective interventions in GBV
  - Increased access to medical, psychosocial and legal services for survivors of GBV Influenced establishment of a network of Rwandan female police in Rwanda for enhanced response to SGBV and networking

## **Background**

### Constitutional and Legal background:

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda affirms the enjoyment of all fundamental rights of individuals by citizens of Rwanda with respect to the intentions of the United Nations Declaration for Human Rights. In Article 11, the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda declares: *“All Rwandans are born and remain free and equal with equal rights and duties. Discrimination of whatever kind based on, inter alia, ethnic, origin, tribe, clan, colour, economic status, culture, language, social status, physical or mental disability or any other form of discrimination is prohibited and punishable by law.”*<sup>6</sup>

The Government’s efforts to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment are reflected in the ratification of numerous international conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform of Action, African Charter of Human and People’s Rights and others. The recently adopted Law on the Prevention and Punishment of GBV<sup>7</sup> as well as the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Paper (EDPRS 2008-2012) reaffirm the Government’s commitment to translate these commitments in concrete actions in order to improve the livelihoods of Rwanda’s women and to work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDG 3 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.

### GBV background:

According to a post-conflict report by the United Nations, at least 250,000 women were raped during the genocide in 1994.<sup>8</sup> Today, many Rwandans, in particular women and girls, continue to experience various forms of gender-based violence such as sexual, physical and psychological violence despite the Government’s efforts to prevent and reduce GBV. In 2001, two hundred

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<sup>6</sup> Rwanda Republic/Rwanda Legal and Constitutional Commission: Constitution of Rwanda, [http://www.cjcr.gov.rw/eng/constitution\\_eng.doc](http://www.cjcr.gov.rw/eng/constitution_eng.doc)

<sup>7</sup> Law Number 59/2008 of 10.09.2008 published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda Year 48, number 14, 6 April 2009

<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW): Struggling to Survive: Barriers to Justice for Rape Victims in Rwanda. September 2004, New York, HRW.

seventeen (217) cases of GBV were registered; in 2004, 312 cases<sup>9</sup>. In 2008, 2051 cases of defilement and 388 cases of rape were reported to the Rwanda National Police.<sup>10</sup>

Despite this increase in numbers, data on GBV is not collected in a consistent and reliable manner and only reflects the number of reported cases. Furthermore as many survivors – for various reasons – are reluctant to report cases, the data collected only presents the tip of the iceberg of actual GBV incidences.

It is in this context that the Rwanda National Police Gender Desk was established in order to ensure Rwandan women and girls' human rights and safety.

### ***Analysis of the process***

Different strategies were used in order to ensure the successful implementation and functioning of the GBV desk as well as sustainability, including capacity development of police, community sensitization and the establishment of coordination structures with stakeholders from other sectors, including legal, medical, faith-based and other organizations.

It remains crucial to implement international commitments on the national level and especially on the decentralized level. For this reason, as a key strategy, this project takes a community approach in order to ensure that interventions are translating at the local level to stimulate behavioural change as well as a change in power relations. Police Gender Focal Points are deployed at all levels allowing for rapid responses to GBV reports. It is equally important to engage men and boys in the prevention and fight against GBV. Their roles and responsibilities have been reflected upon during the 2009 16 Days of Activism campaign in Rwanda.

### **Capacity development among police staff**

Awareness raising and training of police staff are a key component of the GBV Desk efforts to sensitize police at all levels to gender-related issues and to institutionalize effective response mechanisms to GBV. The development of a Policy and Standard Operating Procedures on Child, Domestic and Gender-based Violence, a psycho-social training manual, a training manual on investigating GBV cases and a manual on Gender concepts as well as the setting up of training curricula support this strategy.

### **Gender-disaggregated data collection, analysis and dissemination**

The collection, analysis and dissemination of reliable and timely data forms the basis for evidence-based policy making and informed decision-making. Without accurate gender-disaggregated data, interventions are likely to fail and strategies may not reach the intended results. GBV is a crime that often remains unreported as its survivors don't speak out in fear of the perpetrator, stigma, social exclusion and other reasons. It is therefore crucial to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the survivor or any other witness when he/she reports a case.

### **Assistance to survivors of GBV**

The Gender Desk assists survivors of violence in accessing medical and psychological services in order to ensure the survivor's wellbeing as well as to secure evidence. Depending on the case,

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<sup>9</sup> Résultats de l'enquête sur les cas de viol et d'attentat à la pudeur commis sur les femmes et les enfants de 1995 à 2002. The study conducted by Association "HAGURUKA asbl" pour la Défense des Droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant.

<sup>10</sup> National Police Statistics.

police accompany the survivor to the hospital and hand her/him a medical referral form which doctors have to fill out. In case of rape, the survivor is treated free of charge. In 2009, a One Stop Center for Survivors of Child, Domestic and Gender-based Violence was opened in Kacyiru Police Hospital in Kigali City where survivors of violence are assisted medically, psychologically and legally.

From July to December 2009, 370 women, men, boys and girls have been assisted.

Also, the Ministry of Health made a commitment to provide offices in all government-run hospitals for police officials to follow up on cases of GBV. Furthermore, a ministerial order was passed that survivors of rape must be medically examined no later than 72 hours after the incidence.

### **Community policing**

Interaction between police and communities have enhanced the trust of community members in the police which – amongst many others – is one of the reasons why GBV cases remain unreported. The police needs to be seen as a trustworthy partner in the prevention and response against GBV and the maintenance of security and safety. For this reason, it is also very important to raise the number of women among police staff as women and girls will feel more comfortable to report to a police woman than a man. Furthermore, the establishment of community policing committees ensures that information on GBV is passed on and exchanged between communities and police.



### **Establishment of partnerships**

The police have sought close partnerships with different stakeholders such as local leadership, schools, health centers, the Rwanda Defence Forces and others to maximize the holistic impact of its interventions and knowledge about services available. Results include the establishment of a GBV desk in the Rwanda Defence Forces, Anti-GBV Clubs in schools, women's peace building clubs and others. The cooperation with women's and human rights' organizations has helped to increase the access of survivors to police, medical and legal services.

### **Outreach to communities**

One of the main components of the programmes is awareness raising and information sharing on the responsibilities and services of the GBV desk encouraging community members to report incidences of violence. Furthermore, the local leadership in collaboration with the police helps to further sensitize the community at its monthly meetings (Umuganda) and encourages men, women and children to not tolerate any form of violence against women and girls, men and boys. A toll-free hotline (3512) has been set up where survivors of violence can report to.

### **Community-led initiatives**

The Gender Desk has encouraged community leaders to take a pro-active stance and actively carry out actions to address the prevalence of GBV in communities, such as the establishment of

anti-GBV clubs in schools, fora to disseminate advocacy materials to community members and family-to-family awareness-raising initiatives on GBV.

### ***Lessons learned/Recommendations/Challenges***

All of the above mentioned strategies have proven to be essential for the successful implementation of this project. In the following, some lessons learned as well as recommendations are highlighted:

- The **commitment of Rwanda National Police** to recognize GBV as a threat to security, peace and development facilitated the successful implementation of the project.
- **Community sensitization and involvement** is a key entry point to reduce the prevalence of GBV in society and to initiate behavioral change.
- **Enhanced partnerships** and coordination between key stakeholders in health, legal, medical and law enforcement sectors, as well as civil society are crucial in order to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach.
- **Study visits** from law enforcement personnel from Southern Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, and Burundi have fostered inter-regional exchange and up-scaling of this initiative as a regional centre of excellence.
- **Increase in the number of reported cases:** The free hotline has provided a good service to survivors of SGBV, leading to increased reporting and access to other services such as legal, medical, psychosocial services.
- **National cross-institutional learning** (the National Police Gender Desk model has been replicated at the Rwanda Defence Forces) has allowed for an inclusion of more partners committed to eradicate GBV and has allowed for replication.
- The recruitment of **police women** and establishment of a **Police Women Network** is essential in order to build trust especially with women and girls.
- **Men and boys** must be involved in the prevention and fight against GBV.

Despite the successful interventions mentioned above, challenges remain:

- The lack of **operational and logistical equipment** including computers, printers and furniture may cause delays in response to and follow up of cases of GBV.
- In order to further strengthen the **capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate data**, further training and the institutionalization of an information management system is crucial.
- Access **barriers to police, medical, psychological and legal services** for survivors need to be diminished.

- **Synergies** with similar initiatives and projects should be sought in order to streamline and harmonize interventions, thus rendering them more effective.

**Final remarks:**

The Police Gender Desk to date has not only created an institutionalized response mechanism to cases of GBV but also takes a sustainable approach by engaging and involving communities - men, women, boys and girls- in initiating behavioural change to end gender-based violence. Furthermore, it closely works with other key partners on national and decentralized levels in order to ensure that survivors of GBV have appropriate access to police, medical, psychological and legal services and care.

The establishment of the Rwanda National Police Gender Desk is a strong sign to the international community as well as to its own people that Rwanda recognizes GBV as a human rights violation, a crime and a threat to development, security and peace. Rwandan women and girls are equal citizens as per the 2003 Constitution and their full participation in the economic, political and social life in Rwanda and full enjoyment of rights is a prerequisite for the attainment of the MDGs and Rwanda's own development goals.

**Additional Materials:**

1. Rwanda National Police Criminal investigation Department. June 2008. "CDGBVA Training Manual".
2. Victim Advocates Checklist. "Guidelines for Advocates for Victims of Sexual Violence".