

PROGRESS REPORT

Addressing Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Darfur



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“During armed conflict, women experience all forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated by both State and non-State actors. These forms include murder, unlawful killings, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, abductions, maiming and mutilation, forced recruitment of women combatants, rape, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation, involuntary disappearance, arbitrary detention, forced marriage, forced prostitution, forced abortion, forced pregnancy and forced sterilization.

Sexual violence has been used during armed conflict for many different reasons, including as a form of torture, to inflict injury, to extract information, to degrade and intimidate and to destroy communities. Rape of women has been used to humiliate opponents, to drive communities and groups off land and to willfully spread HIV. Women have been forced to perform sexual and domestic slave labour. Women have also been abducted and then forced to serve as “wives” to reward fighters”¹.

¹ In-depth study on all forms of violence against women - Report of the Secretary-General, 2006, forthcoming as document A/61/122/Add. 1

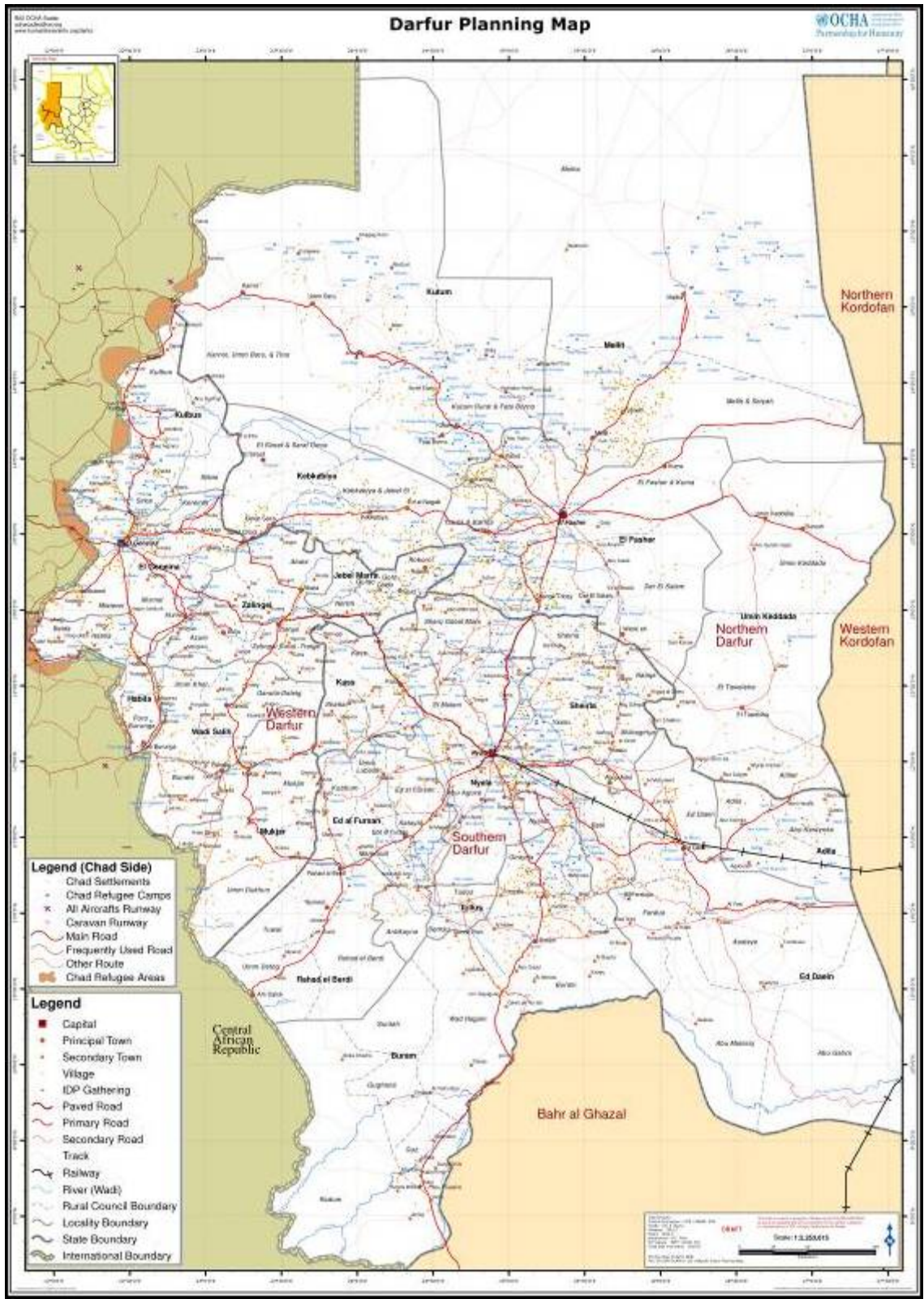


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2006 UNDP has embarked on a challenging programme addressing Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Darfur - undertaking cutting edge work in the context of the continuing armed conflict in Darfur. This progress report is meant to provide a framework for analysis, to explain the programme's vision and goals, and to describe activities undertaken in the past three months and those which are ongoing. It outlines current organizational challenges, limitations and forward looking strategies in addressing SGBV in Darfur.

The armed conflict in Darfur, which began in early 2003, has led to massive displacement and a breakdown of law and order. Widespread rape and other serious forms of SGBV committed against women and girls form part of the attacks by Janjaweed and uniformed government forces on villages in all three states of Darfur. Mass rapes occur, sometimes in public and accompanied by other forms of severe violence such as whipping, during the attacks on villages. Rape and other sexual violence are occurring during flight, attacks and when women leave the camps - in particular while collecting firewood.

Sexual and gender based violence is a violation of human rights of which the overwhelming majority of the victims/survivors are women and girls. It refers to physical, sexual and psychological harm that reinforces female subordination and male power and control. This kind of violence perpetuates the stereotyping of gender roles that deny the human dignity of the individual and hinder human development.

Sexual and gender based violence includes much more than sexual assault and rape. Although it may occur in public contexts, it is largely rooted in individual attitudes that condone violence within the family, the community and the state. The root causes and consequences of SGBV must be understood in the context of Darfur and Sudan as a whole, in order to develop appropriate strategies to prevent and respond to this violence and abuses.

UNDP, together with other UN agencies and INGOs, shares the responsibility for ensuring that women and girls, as well as men are protected against sexual and gender based violence in war torn Darfur.

In SCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security the Security Council:

Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians (...);

Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

Emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard *stresses* the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions (...)

The SGBV programme provides a tri-partite strategy to address the legal response capacity gap on SGBV in the three states of Darfur. Its aim is to undertake Prevention, Protection and Response activities on SGBV in settings where no action to prevent and respond to these events has been taken. This includes advocating for the rights of women, advising states on how to adapt their national legislation so it conforms to international standards, and taking action to minimize the increased risk caused when individuals or groups of people are displaced by conflict.

Activities aimed at achieving these goals include capacity building support to the judicial, prosecutorial and the traditional justice systems; ensuring that survivors are supported, empowered, and represented in their attempt to seek mediation, reconciliation and legal redress and the establishment of a pool of women and men, paralegals, lawyers, prosecutors, investigators and judges who will undergo extensive training in case management, legal and mediation strategy development on SGBV.

The programme is fully funded and supported by USAID and was meant to commence in March 2006. However, due to delays in the recruitment process the initial staff only came on board in August and the SGBV senior programme manager in early September. The activities outlined in this Progress Report started as soon as the first staff member was deployed to Darfur, El Fasher.

The SGBV programme started in North and South Darfur through meetings with the interlocutors among the judiciary, government institutions, UN partner agencies, INGOS and NGOs and internally displaced women and men (IDPs), as well as through the organization of SGBV trainings and workshops and inter-sectoral dialogues among Omdas and Sheiks in IDP communities, lawyers, prosecutors and judges. In the coming months activities will start in El Geneina.

All UNDP Rule of Law interventions in Darfur are mutually reinforcing. SGBV activities are tightly linked to the UNDP Strengthening Rule of Law and Sustainable Protection programme, in particular through the provision of legal aid and assistance in sexual violence cases, and the utilisation of judicial linkages and structures that will emerge and be consolidated in the process of implementation. Moreover, SGBV trainings are closely coordinated with the - UNDP lead - training programme for the African Union Forces.

1. Preventing Sexual and Gender Based Violence

It is only by identifying factors that contribute and influence the type and extent of sexual and gender based violence that we can develop appropriate and effective prevention strategies. Prevention activities must therefore target all the interlocutors from IDPs, to host country nationals, government authorities, INGOs and UN agencies. Effective prevention strategies will include actions that focus on the following objectives: rebuilding family and community structures and support systems; designing effective services and facilities working with formal and traditional legal systems to ensure that their practices conform to international human rights standards; and monitoring, reporting and documenting incidents of SGBV.

In the context of Darfur, preventing SGBV involves identifying and removing those factors that make IDPs vulnerable to this kind of violence, and designing a range of strategies that improves protection in the IDP camps. These strategies will only be most effective when they are designed, implemented and monitored by UN agencies and INGOs involved in protecting and assisting IDP communities as well as by the IDPs themselves.

Prevention of SGBV also includes continuous programme monitoring, evaluation as well as compiling and analysing data from sexual and gender based violence incident reports.

2. Transforming Socio-Cultural Norms

The causes of sexual and gender based violence are rooted in socio-cultural norms of gender inequality and discrimination. Preventing SGBV requires changes in gender relations within the community – that means the socially prescribed roles, responsibilities, limitations, opportunities and privileges assigned to women and men in the community based on their gender.

In the context of Darfur this means understanding the community structures of leadership and hierarchy from the Omdas, Sheiks, Imams, Sufis, women, youth and the Hakamats as well as identifying their native and traditional cultural practices that influence their behaviour and practices that validate any forms of sexual and gender based violence.

Because of their displacement, brought about by the armed conflict in Darfur, the IDPs have already undergone major disruptions in their lives and they have experienced shifts and changes in their traditional and gender roles. SGBV prevention programmes can support a positive transformation in gender relations within the IDP camps and neighbourhood communities over the long term. These preventive actions can actually contribute to ending harmful and traditional practices such as female genital mutilation.

This requires developing and conducting series of awareness campaigns through trainings, workshops, conferences to promote changes in community attitudes, knowledge and behaviour. Standard topics in these trainings include: human rights - including women's and children's rights; gender roles and expectations in their communities or tribes; the support services available for survivors and how to access them; engaging traditional leaders in the communities.

3. Responding to Sexual and Gender Based Violence

In order to respond to sexual and gender based violence it is essential to understand the consequences of this violence in order to design an effective programme for supporting the victims/survivors. The consequences vary depending on the form of violence perpetrated.

This means that the IDPs need to be aware of how and where to report SGBV incidents. If the victim/survivor does not report the incident, adequate support cannot be provided and they would just rely on their own family mechanisms. The IDP communities should take the lead with the assistance of different sectors in designing ways to support victims/survivors.

Response actions should include the following: developing community based awareness activities; training of a pool of women and men on how to respond to victims/survivors needs; establishing referral, reporting, investigation and monitoring as well as evaluation mechanisms; developing response to the psychosocial and medical needs of the victims/survivors; developing a security and safety response; establishing a legal and justice response which would include the native and traditional court system which IDPs would be more familiar with. The guiding principles in all this are confidentiality, ensuring physical security and respecting the wishes, rights and dignity of the victims/survivors.

When UNDP undertakes trainings in the communities among different actors it disseminates information about SGBV, encourages the members to report cases and to respond to victims/survivors needs, and to claim the necessary support and services. The UNDP workshops and public information initiatives about SGBV reflect the cultural sensitivities of an Islamic society, the ethics applied in their context and the particular circumstances that prevail in the current armed conflict situation of Darfur. Only by working with the IDP communities can sustainable programmes and actions be developed.

Government response to SGBV

The government response to the international outcry about sexual violence in Darfur has taken several forms. In July 2004, it established **National Judicial Committees** to investigate allegations of rape in Darfur and subsequently established **State Committees on Combating Gender-Based Violence**. However, there are no indications yet that its work has had a practical impact on the reported levels of sexual violence.

Rape is defined in the **Sudanese Criminal Code** as sexual intercourse, by way of adultery or sodomy, with any person without his consent. However under *shari'a* law, adultery can only be proved by the confession of the perpetrator, the testimony of four adult men who were witnesses to the act or pregnancy when the woman has no husband. The requirement of multiple witnesses to corroborate witness testimony on rape, makes it very difficult to obtain a conviction and less likely that victims will be inclined to press charges.

In addition, Sudanese law requires a rape victim to obtain a "**Form 8**" from the police to submit to the medical practitioner before receiving medical care for sexual assault. In response to concerns that the procedure prevented victims from obtaining medical care, the Minister of Justice issued a circular that allowed sexual assault victims to receive medical treatment without the form and fill out a Form 8 at a later date prior to a trial if they want to pursue legal proceedings. However, reports show that in parts of Darfur police still require completion of a Form 8 before the victim may receive medical care.

In late November of 2005 the governor of the state of South Darfur issued a **decree** reiterating that rape survivors have the right to receive medical attention without a Form 8. It further states that women or girls who become pregnant as a result of rape will not be charged with adultery.

In order to establish a legal or justice response, UNDP has to establish a system to enhance confidence with local authorities - so that the victims and survivors who wish to seek legal redress for the crimes committed against them can do so with proper guidance and support. This involves creating and maintaining a strong working relationship with local law enforcement agencies, such as the judiciary and the public prosecutors. In addition, UNDP will work with the community's native and traditional courts to ensure that victims and survivors would receive appropriate redress.

Consequently, UNDP is training paralegals and lawyers on how to handle SGBV complaints and will do research on the application of the laws and procedures in national and native courts regarding SGBV.

4. Framework for Action on Sexual and Gender Based Violence

In order to prevent and respond to sexual and gender based violence, UNDP will ensure continuous consultations with the interlocutors like the IDP communities, INGOS and NGOs: activities must be based on a multi-sectoral approach and inter-agency partnerships.

Currently the SGBV programme is conducting a situational analysis by gathering information on the needs, problems and services available to IDPs and recognizing strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, UNDP is conducting trainings, workshops and consultations with community leaders and IDPs to characterize the activities, while simultaneously identifying partners in the process.

5. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Through the SGBV and protection working groups, UNDP is in the process of agreeing on monitoring and evaluation systems, including mechanisms for reporting, referral pathways and coordination. Crucial to this work is developing a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the prevention and response interventions in close cooperation with the main actors in the IDP camps. This should include methods for information gathering, ensuring the workability of the referral pathways, the allocation of resources, the sharing of information and incorporation of the results into prevention, reporting and response planning.

As part of this, UNDP aims to develop an 'incident report form' as well as a 'monthly SGBV report' among the

members of the SGBV working group. A standard incident report form is an important tool that should be used especially when an incident of SGBV violence is reported and used by all to record and analyse trends.

A monthly SGBV report is required to track changes in the environment affecting SGBV incidents. This report can also provide insights into the occurrence and patterns of the violations, as well as its impact on the increase or decrease of SGBV in the IDP camps e.g. in relation to the level of rebels or militias presence in the area. This monthly SGBV report can be used as a guide to more effective protection and response mechanisms.

At this stage in the process it is important to reach a common understanding of SGBV concepts and to agree on standard reporting mechanisms. This will help in the development of a coherent approach in information sharing, joint monitoring, fact finding and evaluations guiding the work.

6. Access to Courts and Gender Bias in the Administration of Justice

Victims/survivors of sexual violence, like victims of other crimes, face difficulties in accessing justice due to the absence of legal courts in certain areas in Darfur and more often its failure to administer its functions. The absence of protection for victims and witnesses is another factor impeding justice for SGBV survivors. Moreover, fear of reprisals prevents many victims/survivors from reporting the crime and seeking justice and redress. In addition, there are few specific support services for rape victims such as legal aid or psycho-social counselling.

Women also suffer additional obstacles in attempting to access the justice system due to gender-based discrimination in the administration of justice. Gender discrimination, lack of sensitivity and understanding of the nature of sexual crimes all contribute to the way trials are conducted and in the decisions and sentences rendered, most of the time leading to low conviction rates. The current justice system could prosecute women who are raped of Zina (adultery) if there is insufficient evidence to prove rape.

The underlying assumption appears to be that victims/survivors of SGBV, predominantly women, are untrustworthy. Such stereotypical attitudes and reasoning are a discriminatory barrier and a burden, also creating a further victimization by the legal system itself. Therefore women are reluctant to access the courts - in an environment where women are already afraid to report any forms of sexual and gender based violence.

7. Strengthen the capacity of traditional institutions in addressing SGBV

The Interim National Constitution (INC), Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and other agreements recognize that customary law is crucial to promoting rule of law in Sudan. Article 5 of the INC stipulates that sources of legislation include Islamic Shari'a law, popular consensus, the values and the customs of the people of the Sudan, including their traditions and religious beliefs, having regard to Sudan's diversity.

Given that native and traditional institutions will remain an integral part of the justice system, efforts must be made to strengthen and clarify the customary system with regard to SGBV. UNDP will assist customary institutions and leaders to reflect on the evolution that has taken place within their communities brought on by the armed conflict and its impact on women and men.

In cases of SGBV and Omda's customary courts in Darfur, the decisions rendered have not been sensitive to the needs of the survivor and have in some cases even caused more harm. The area of customary decision-making with regard to SGBV cases needs to be sensitively explored and traditional leaders need to be brought on board to work with the community to provide a response to victims/survivors. Customary practices that positively enhance community cohesion, and are consonant with domestic and international legal standards, need to be supported and negative or harmful practices abolished.

The reverence for customary systems can affect the climate for broad acceptance of rule of law principles. It will also facilitate the disposition of justice for the overwhelming majority of community members seeking resolution of (inter ethnic) disputes and in particular on sexual and gender based violence which constitutes most of the violations happening in the communities and IDP camps.

8. Gender Rapid Response Teams (GRRT)

Under the SGBV Programme UNDP plans setting up Gender Based Violence Rapid Response Teams (GRRT) that would specifically work on all SGBV issues in the host communities and IDP camps. These teams would assist victims/survivors seeking assistance for immediate and long term support related to abuses, harassment and

sexual violence. The GRRT would be composed of paralegals, advocates, lawyers, prosecutors, judges, psychologists, social workers and volunteers. It will work with government institutions, the judiciary, traditional courts and community leaders to address SGBV through redress and mediation mechanisms available. The GRRT will consist of paralegals, lawyers, prosecutors, judges and psycho social counselors specialized in SGBV.

GRRT members would be given special trainings on how to sensitively handle SGBV cases through mediation, monitoring, investigation, documentation, reporting, psychosocial support and advocacy. The GRRT will act proactively to assist and support victims/survivors through reporting mechanisms, court procedures and community base mediation and, by doing so, improve confidence in justice mechanisms. UNDP is in the process of setting up these GRRTs in different IDP camps in Darfur. A consultation meeting for two days with possible partner organizations is planned on the first week of December 2006.

GRRTs could also consist of local NGOs, UN agencies and INGOs who are working on the prevention, protection and response to SGBV. These teams can organize rapid response fact finding missions, as well as interventions and reporting on recent incidents of sexual violence.

9. Overview of activities

a. Strengthening the Capacity of the Judiciary and the Prosecutory Bodies

Activities undertaken over the past months are geared towards the capacity building of legal practitioners and women's organizations. The main focus was on the assessment of existing capabilities and prospects for delivering comprehensive support services, including the provision of legal aid to victims/survivors of sexual violence. The following activities were organized:

Training/workshop on SGBV for Judges and Prosecutors in El Fasher (30-31 August)

The two days workshop was aimed at addressing the judicial and prosecutorial response to acts of sexual and gender base violence in Darfur and was attended by 23 judges, prosecutors, and police and military prosecutors in El Fasher. The judiciary is becoming aware of the urgent need to protect victims of SGBV especially in the war context of Darfur. The training also discussed specific SGBV cases and how they were handled in courts by the judges and prosecutors. True cases were discussed and analysed on how the judges and prosecutors determined the cases in terms of the application of fair justice to identifying the multiple crimes committed against a rape victim.



Training workshop on SGBV for lawyers in El Fasher:(20-21 September)

The two day training workshop for 27 lawyers in El Fasher focused on further enhancing the lawyers understanding of SGBV. Through specific case studies of rape, sexual and domestic violence, as well as the psychosocial impact on women, participants discussed the challenges in prosecuting SGBV crimes in formal and Sharia courts. The workshop showed a 100% turn up of all private lawyers in El Fasher. The lawyers unanimously agreed to join the GRRT and to work as volunteers for the SGBV Programme.

Meeting with Chief Prosecutor, Chief of the Judiciary, Chief Magistrate/Attorney General in El Fasher (26-29 September)

Follow up meetings with the leaders of the judiciary were held to discuss partnerships and gather their cooperation for future SGBV activities. It was an occasion to share views on the SGBV issues in Darfur and to analyze the gaps in addressing these sensitive issues. The judiciary welcomed the UNDP SGBV initiative and extended their cooperation.

b. Build on a Client-Centred Approach to Comprehensive Support Services

Meetings with the Women's Health Center operated by IRC: (2 October)

This meeting was attended by 80 women from Al Salaam IDP Camp and the discussions evolved around the women's experiences in trainings and skills building so far. They expressed their thoughts and feelings about SGBV, and the majority stressed the need for further workshops on sexual violence. As such, a series of women trainings were planned and it was agreed to align these with activities under the Fuel Efficient Stove (FES) project.

Meeting with El Fasher University Peace and Human Rights Center on the setting up of Darfur Women's Forum for Peace, Justice and Development:

Three meetings were conducted to consult key women leaders in El Fasher on the setting up of a Darfur Women's Forum for Peace, Justice and Development. This forum would look at the role of Darfuri women in the peace, justice and development process. Moreover, the forum would undertake research and advocacy on the women's role in the Darfur peace dialogue and develop a strategy for providing support to the victims/survivors of SGBV.

c. Provide Legal Aid to victims/survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence:

Provision of legal aid by SOAT/Amel centre

There continue to be many obstacles to access to justice in Darfur, especially for vulnerable and marginalized people and SGBV victims/survivors in particular. Some clients simply cannot afford legal representation, while others have no knowledge of formal channels of justice and/or face pressure not to access them. UNDP's provision of legal aid through the Justice and Confidence Center (JCCs) and in close collaboration with *inter alia* the Sudanese Organization Against Torture (SOAT)/ Amel Centre (both falling under the Rule of Law programme for Darfur) offers people a means of overcoming these obstacles. By doing so, UNDP aims to strengthen the justice system - ensuring it starts living up to basic legal standards and in particular provide SGBV victims/survivors with the necessary legal support.

In September 4 young girls were raped inside the Abu Shoak Camp in a span of one week in different locations by young men who also lived in the Abu Shoak IDP Camp. The victims and their families reported the incident to the police and an investigation and an arrest took place. Currently the lawyers from SOAT/Amel Centre continue to follow up on the cases, as well as psychosocial support and we are supporting it to be brought to the formal courts if the survivor wishes to.



Workshop on SGBV for paralegals of Abu Shouk and Zam Zam IDP Camps (12-13 September)

The SGBV training for 56 paralegals from the JCC of Abu Shouk and Zam Zam IDP Camps in El Fasher was organized to increase the paralegals' knowledge on human rights, in particular on specific laws and procedures related to SGBV cases.

This included lessons learned from SGBV case management and some effective practices used in pursuing the cases. In addition, the workshop focused on the psychosocial support for victims of SGBV.

Meeting with the paralegals of the Justice and Confidence Center (JCC) in Zam Zam and Abu Shoak IDP Camps (23-25 September)

The meeting with the 56 paralegals was an organizational follow up to the previous trainings held on September 12. UNDP led a discussion on the best way to strengthen the capabilities of the paralegals in handling SGBV incidents in the IDP camps. The paralegals agreed to set up the GRRT and recognized the need for specific SGBV training on psychosocial support, case management as well as the framing of the traditional/native courts in handling SGBV cases. A series of trainings is scheduled for the paralegals in North and South Darfur, as well as an evaluation on how the referral system on SGBV cases from victims to Women's Centres to the paralegals can be enhanced.

Meeting with the Sufis in Nyala

In October UNDP held a meeting with the Sufi leaders in Nyala to engage them on SGBV issues - in particular ensuring their commitment and participation on the prevention of sexual abuse at the community level. The Sufi meeting resulted in plans for a Darfur Sufi's conference on SGBV which is scheduled on December 16-18 in Nyala. Sufi's from North and West Darfur are invited to attend and the conference will include the planning of specific Sufi initiatives in the prevention of SGBV cases.

Meeting with the Omdas in Abu Shoak

The meeting with the Omdas in Abu Shoak IDP camps resulted in their willingness to participate in SGBV training. They expressed the wish to focus on the role and functioning of the traditional or native courts in relation to sexual violence in their communities or tribal groups. The Omdas SGBV training is scheduled for November and will also include the sheiks and Hakamat women.

10. Assessment

In Darfur, UN agencies, INGOs/local NGOs and government institutions have developed a number of initiatives to address sexual and gender based violence: the most visible being the State Committees on SGBV, the inter-agency SGBV working group, and various INGO projects related to i.e. psychosocial support and skills development. However, much needs to be done in terms of the coordination of trainings and activities as well as information sharing. There is a need for strong leadership and a clear vision on how to implement SGBV projects. A support system for SGBV victims/survivors should be initiated to assist women who have no recourse for their sufferings.

Due to current security problems in North Darfur most of the projects are only being implemented in the 3 IDP camps in El Fasher. Other camps outside are in dire need of support but security tensions among the rebel groups and GoS soldiers and the restriction of movements of UN agencies has stalled a number of support services and projects in areas like Kutum and Kabkabiya. UNDP is working with UNMIS HR to participate in joint missions outside El Fasher.

An assessment mission to South Darfur was undertaken to establish the level of SGBV work undertaken by different UN agencies, INGOs, government institutions, local NGOs and women's organizations. Meetings were held with all interlocutors on how their SGBV projects operate. The inter-agency working group on SGBV needs leadership to strategically coordinate the different SGBV programs in order to set policies and guidelines and to establish trends, patterns and analysis of SGBV abuses/violations in Darfur. The SGBV working group should ensure guided protection, response and advocacy on SGBV issues. Guidelines should explicitly spell out what would be required from SGBV working groups in the three Darfur states.

There is a need to assess the functions and mandate of the Darfur State Committees on SGBV. Reports on the current functions of the State Committees show concern that the State Committee is there to white wash and deny allegations of SGBV occurring in Darfur. The State Committee's role to address SGBV issues has become futile, less engaging and counter productive - with incidents of the committee denying rape cases. The three Darfur States handle their committees differently and therefore a strategy on how to engage with them has to be deeply assessed and planned. UN agencies who are partners in the SGBV State Committees should have a clear policy on how to proceed.

The existing SGBV State Committees should be handled with care as they are the only committees that address sexual violence on a state level. UN agencies should coordinate and plan their approaches and agendas to the State Committee meetings in order to ensure that they are active in addressing SGBV cases through joint fact finding missions on rape cases, ensuring that the police are responsive to rape victims coming to the police station; and working on activities for the protection of women, especially in IDP camps, from further abuses.

11. Challenges and Opportunities

The SGBV project is starting during a phase within the context of war torn Darfur, where rape, sexual violence and abuses occurred unabated in an armed conflict situation. Cultural, religious and traditional harmful practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child bride, forced marriage and domestic violence have placed women in a disadvantaged position in society. Concerns are, to say the least, that sexual and gender base violence is underreported and not well understood.

Through a series of programmed capability building trainings UNDP will select people whose skills in addressing SGBV will be developed. To that end the SGBV programme will negotiate its presence, work among IDP camps, communities, traditional leaders like the Sheiks, Omdas, Hakamat women, survivors and victims, as well as with partner agencies & organizations, lawyers & paralegals, judges, investigators and attorney generals.

There are a number of SGBV projects undertaken by UN agencies, international NGOs including government ministries but clearly there is a need of a more cohesive approach in integrating SGBV in order to develop the capacity of the people in combating SGBV. Coordination in the inter-agency SGBV working group should be strengthened through goals, leadership and vision.

12. SGBV Programme Staffing

In order to advance the SGBV work in the whole of Darfur the current program needs additional staffing. Currently it has a senior programme manager and one UNV, and members of the rule of law team support its activities. To be fully operational it should have permanent staffing in the north, south and west Darfur. The current budget does not reflect this staffing proposal and therefore a budget review is suggested in order to address the current need for staffing and logistics.

To fully maintain the SGBV programme there has to be dedicated staff in each region to attend all State Committee and UN/INGO coordination meetings as well as to organize the SGBV trainings, workshops and activities as mentioned in the project document. Each region has its own specifics in terms of addressing SGBV issues and demands proper and continuous assessment of the role and influence of the state government as well as the lawyers, prosecutors, judges, Omdas, sheiks, youth, Hakamat women and other women's groups.

13. Partnerships

The UNDP SGBV programme works in partnership with UNFPA, UNMIS HR, UNMIS CP, UNICEF, and INGOs like IRC, RI, Oxfam and NRC. Likewise, it works with local lawyer organizations, in particular SOAT/AMEL Centre for Human rights, local women's groups and government institutions, like the judiciary and office of the prosecutors. Plans have already been lined up for workshops and series of seminars among these sectors.

The SGBV programme takes the primary initiative in establishing and maintaining these partnerships. This includes joint planning, funding and programming, thus ensuring that substance and programming is interrelated and long term. The programme is expected to fill in some of the gaps in addressing SGBV, incidents of which may increase as armed conflict begins to intensify in the region.

In the past months the SGBV programme has made headway in implementing its activities through a series of trainings and workshops. There is a lot of interest in different sectors on SGBV issues expressed in the openness of participants to understand the concept and to analyze the problem in line with their culture and tradition. This interest is a major step in the acceptability of new concepts and UNDP aims to build on from these experiences.

Despite the fact that the implementation of the SGBV programme has just started, UNDP has put in place a strategic plan to develop a pool of SGBV cadre among the paralegals, lawyers, judges and women whose skills and capacity will be developed in order to effectively address sexual and gender based violence in Darfur.

14. Sustainability

The SGBV programme deals with systematic and therefore long term issues. It will be addressing SGBV not only brought about by the armed conflict and the deteriorating security situation in Darfur, but also during peace time: the current justice system has a long way to go to effectively and responsibly handle SGBV cases and demands legal reform and capacity building support. For example, in addressing rape cases alone, the application of Sharia law and Zina is already a major hindrance for women to bring out their cases to court. Influencing and changing the system so that it becomes viable for women and men to seek legal redress and accountability for all forms of sexual abuse will take time - especially since it demands changing traditional and prevailing norms and approaches in addressing SGBV. As such, UNDP has adopted a more forward looking strategy.

15. Conclusion

Continuing pervasive violence against women fuels a culture of violence and undermines progress towards the goals of human rights, development and peace. As such, and in tandem with the states responsibility for prosecution and punishment, UNDP through its SGBV programme is supporting government structures in providing just and effective remedies for women and men subjected to sexual violence - including access to justice and the availability of services, such as free legal aid and advice for indigent women.

Although this approach has - worldwide - proven to be a promising practice, there are still many challenges ahead before the tide turns for men and women suffering from sexual and gender based violence in Darfur.

ANNEX 1: Financial reporting

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)		
Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Darfur within the Rule of Law Programme		
Project 00050967		
Interim Financial Report - January to November 2006		
<i>Duration of Project</i>	<i>March 2006 - Nov 2008</i>	
<i>Donor</i>	<i>USAID</i>	
<i>Agreed contribution</i>	<i>USD \$ 2,273,697.00</i>	
<i>Contribution received</i>	<i>USD \$ 2,273,697.00</i>	
<i>Expenditure to date in ATLAS</i>	<i>USD \$ 336,121.14</i>	
<i>Balance in ATLAS</i>	<i>USD \$ 1,937,575.86</i>	
<i>Currency used in Reporting:</i>	<i>USD \$</i>	
<i>Date prepared:</i>	<i>27-Nov-06</i>	
CATEGORIES	EXPENDITURE TO 26 November 2006 (USD \$)	
International Personnel Costs	24,590.48	
International Consultants (Short Term – Technical)*	99,745.60	
Contractual Services - Individuals (Local Payroll)*	22,329.60	
UN Volunteer Costs (Stipends and Allowances)	13,608.32	
Travel Costs (Field Travel for Activities)	5,950.91	
Contractual Services – Companies*	144,532.46	
Publications and Books (for Legal Information Centre in Darfur)	392.53	
Communication Costs	3,176.10	
IT Equipment	99.34	
Maintenance and Operation of Transportation Equipment	436.57	
Field Costs (Operational)	6,343.65	
Reimbursement to UNDP for Support Services	3,205.37	
Bank Charges and Insurance	497.60	
Facilities and Administrative Costs - Implementation Services	11,212.61	
TOTAL in ATLAS	\$336,121.14	
* The funding in these categories has been used for the UNDP Rule of Law programme in Darfur and will be reimbursed.	\$243,033.90	
ACTUAL TOTAL	\$93,087.24	

ANNEX 2: List of Acronyms

AU	African Union
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GMS	General Management Service
GoS	Government of Sudan
GRRT	Gender Rapid Response Teams
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
INC	Interim National Constitution
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OAU	Organization of African Unity
RI	Refugees International
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SOAT	Sudanese Organization Against Torture
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMIS HR/CA	United Nations Mission in Sudan Human Rights Unit / Civil Affairs Unit
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs