

Preventing and responding to SGBV in conflicts

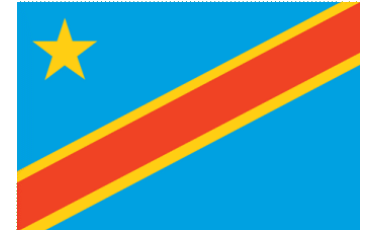
Psychosocial support for victims of SGBV in DR Congo

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DR Congo, Nord Kivu



- Population: 5,7 mio.
- Provincial capital: Goma with HEKS/EPER office
- Area: 59'500 km²





Conflict situation in Nord Kivu

Conflict between army and at least 70 armed groups (internal and foreign) since more than 20 years as well as ethnic violence (e.g. between the Hutu and Nande), since 2013 (defeat armed group M23) security situation has improved slightly in Nord Kivu.

- **Conflict dynamics:** land rights and natural resources, international power relations, ethnic identities, power game between official political structures and local customary chiefs, refugees and internally displaced persons, corruption and sexual violence, election-related human rights violations at the beginning of 2016.
- **Consequences:** 5 Mio. deaths > 1.5 million IDPs in Eastern Congo (OCHA 31/01/2016), systematic violence against women and girls by diff. armed groups, burning down houses, schools, health centers, streets, etc., another challenge are the IDPs coming back to the villages



Sexual and gender based violence

- Extremely brutal forms of SGBV: Military and armed groups are accused of abuse of civilians, including arbitrary arrest, extortion, looting, child conscription, sexual violence, and executions
 - Increasing amount of perpetrators of sexual violence are reported to be civilians, ex-combatants and civilians report extreme levels of exposure to traumatic events, sexual violence against women and girls is prevalent in Nord-Kivu
 - Prosecution of SGBV remains challenging due to high costs of legal proceedings, corruption, legal illiteracy, lack of staff and an insufficient number of courts
- Little redress for victims of violations, most perpetrators still enjoy impunity





AVREO
BUREAU DE RUTSHURU

HEKS/EPER project with partner organisation AVREO

SUPPORT FOR VICTIMES OF SGBV

- Psychosocial support (« maisons d'écoute »)
- Medical support (cooperation with health centers, hospitals)
- Juridical support (access to justice)
- Socio-economic re-integration of victims

PREVENTION OF SGBV

- Sensibilisation sessions with communities and radio programs
- Focus group discussions (ex-combatants, men/women)
- Advocacy sessions (pol./trad. authorities, military, police)
- Socio-economic re-integration of ex-combatants and vulnerable youth





Psychosocial support

- 360 victimes of SGBV (2015-2017) are identified and accompagnied psychologically, by 3 psychological assistants (in 3 maisons d'écoute), all cases are documented
- Difficulte cases (high level of traumata) are supported by the HEKS/EPER psychologist
- Formation, post traumata prevention and peer to peer exchange for the psychosocial assistants

Follow-up

- Solidarity groups of victimes
- Follow up meetings and home visits
- Family mediation (re-integration in the family)
- Reference to medical and juridical support



Challenges

- Recruitment of professional staff and formation of psychosocial assistants (risk of post traumata) in rural areas
- Work not only with victims but also with perpetrators: Develop social norms of nonviolent interaction for ex-combatants impaired by trauma-related disorders, safeguard against (re-)recruitment
- Safeguard against (re-)recruitment: selection, professional trainings (challenge to find trainers, job opportunities after the training), follow-up, violent behaviour
- Rebuilding trust and social cohesion within communities and trust between communities and the state
- Address impunity: risks of legal measures, high costs of legal proceedings, corruption, legal illiteracy, lack of staff and an insufficient number of courts, negative side effects for women going to courts, stereotypes and tolerance of violent behaviour



Many thanks for your interest!



BACK UP



EPER théorie de changement

ToC DevCo: HEKS/EPER strengthens civil society and inclusive governance structures, living together in peace, the pursuit of access to land and resources as well as sustainable production and inclusive market systems. Thus, HEKS/EPER contributes so that all people and communities enjoy equal rights and prosperity despite shocks and stresses.

