

**WOMEN RIGHTS VIOLATION, PROTECTION ASSESSMENT,
MONITORING AND ANALYSIS REPORT
DECEMBER 2020**

LONGECHUK COUNTY UPPER NILE STATE, SOUTH SUDAN
July 2020 - November 2020 FINDINGS



FUNDED BY SOUTH SUDAN HUMANITARIAN FUND (SSHF)

The women are requesting to be treated like human beings

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Coalition for Humanity is a National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built resilience of the vulnerable people, through programmes in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, Protection/GBV, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition through strategies like community capacity building, Social Behaviour Change Communication, market linkages, advocacy and governance to enhance contextualized innovative solutions for service delivery in Emergency Response and Sustainable development in South Sudan. Coalition for Humanity was funded by South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) to implement a protection project between June 2020 and May 2021. The project objective was to assess the general protection concerns in Upper Nile Longechuk County. Several meetings were held with women aged of 20 and 46 years. The meetings were held on monthly basis. Each meeting had between 8-12 participants. The discussion sort to asses any protection concerns. The women were asked questions about general safety and security during distribution of NFIs, WASH related protection concerns, forced child marriage, their role in decision making, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, housing land and property, and the role of women in leadership. This report consolidates findings form 60 female participants of child bearing age randomly sampled across different Payams in Longechuk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan. A total of 5 focus group discussions were held, and the findings consolidated.

The findings of this report are necessary in raising awareness about challenges women are facing, coming up with redress mechanisms and various interventions. This report is important for humanitarian workers, Protection and GBV cluster, WASH cluster, NFI clusters, South Sudan government, ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and global GBV call to action, the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.

The women are requesting to be treated like human beings

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The women in Longechuk County are facing various challenges. Gender Based Violence (GBV) is rampant in this county. Women are suffering from intimate partner violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). After communal violence and cattle raiding, women are also abused by husbands' enemies as a way of revenge. There are safety concerns during distribution of food and Non-Food Items, Men bully women on the queues, some hide in the bush and snatch women the items. Women are raped on their way to fetch Food and Non-Food Items (NFIs) from distribution points. They also face the risk of sexual assault when going to fetch firewood, or to fetch Water. There is a serious water scarcity, with one borehole serving an entire Payam, women fight at the water point.

Culturally, men feel happy beating their wives, it's a sign that there is an authority in the home, some women believe the fight is also a sign of love. The women are helpless when it comes to decision making, they are not allowed to make decisions about child education, they don't decide on the early forced marriages, only the fathers, uncles make marriage arrangements. Women are not allowed to make decisions or comments in public meetings, this is a restriction by the husbands. Women are only given minor roles in the community, this role comes with no incentive, senior leadership roles that have incentives are reserved for men. Women are not allowed to own land and property. Only widows who have an elder son can inherit land, housing and property. If a widow has no elder son, property is inherited by brother in-laws.

The women in Longechuk are suffering due to lack of access to basic needs like water, sanitation, and healthcare. Women are also suffering from Gender Based Violence (GBV). There are no proper redress mechanisms, no health facilities to handle GBV, no police stations to handle such cases. Women fear speaking out on issues of abuse because the leaders favour men in decision making. GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The community leaders, local authority have a major role to play in ending GBV.

Recommendations

1. The next project should be integrated, Protection, GBV and Case Management of Rape (CMR)
2. Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
3. Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men, community leaders and local authority on human rights.
4. Initiate a policy that makes it compulsory for gender balance in hiring and leadership positions by percentage at the local levels.
5. Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
6. Initiate a policy that protects widows who do not have an elder son.

1.0 FINDINGS

1.1 General Security

The women in Mathiang, Jangok and Werweng Payam do not feel safe especially when travelling from one area to another. They face harassment and sexual abuse on their way to fetching water and collecting fire wood. There are many rape cases in this community. During distribution of Food and Non-Food Items (F&NFIs), men harass women. Men deny women taking their share at the right time. Sometimes when women line-up to receive food and NIFs, men don't queue, when the women complain they are beaten and branded disrespectful. Some men hide somewhere along the road waiting for women coming from distribution sites to snatch all the things that the women received especially NFIs. On the contrary, the women do not report cases of sexual assault because they have nowhere to report. They do not share these cases with anybody for fear of their secrets being exposed, which will be shameful to them and may lead to them committing suicide.

Due to inadequate water, frequent conflicts have been reported at the water point. Warweng Payam has got one borehole at Mockley Boma that is shared by the rest of the Payams. As a result, congestions are witnessed daily. One borehole served more than 300 households. Women participants requested Coalition for Humanity to provide them with dignity kits, blankets, cooking utensils, water jerry cans for storing enough water and soaps. The women in Mathiang do not feel safe while walking to fetch water especially when one has to walk alone, because one is faced with the problems of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. This type of abuse is perpetuated by alcoholic men, traders and youth.

1.2 Gender Based Violence

Physical and sexual violence was everywhere including when they travelled to Maiwut county. Due to the political difference, women would mostly be allowed to pass after sexual demands from the guards at the border. Women also, experience physical & sexual violence from their husband's enemies. Women said that men felt happy when they beat them. Culturally, this was a way they showed that there was a man in the home. Women said the men did not treat them like human beings. They would work the whole day but they would still be beaten up. The women also said they would be too exhausted other times to have sex but the husbands would still demand for sex. "They can't even give us time to breastfeed our young children". Failure to honour to the demands often resulted into conflicts. Even during sickness, the women said their husbands failed to take initiatives in finding them medication or taking them to hospital. They said they were not complaining about it because culturally, it was a sign of love. Some women would even intentionally cause problems so as to be beaten up. The community believed men had rights over their wives. In fact, parents would often warn their daughters never to report their husbands anywhere about conflicts inside the house. If reported, the elders settle the cases though in an unfair manner. When they find out that the problem was the man, they tend to encourage the family to stay peacefully but when it is the woman, she is thoroughly beaten. The woman in fact risks being divorced.

After communal violence or cattle raising, their husband's enemies' revenge by raping the wives or their children. Women get assistance from the police at a fee but generally police structures and rule of law are very weak. There was also a lot of problems especially from men who were addicted to alcohol and drugs. They would ask for sexual relationship including when they were not willing for it and any resistance would result into fighting at night. The women do not feel valued respected in their families. The men do not support the women. The men only idle waiting to find any mistake by women so that they beat them. Culturally, men in this community do not accept their mistakes. This means that if they do not have money, they are not offered any assistance. The fear to take any actions against abuse is because there is no support and no confidentiality, people start blaming it on the woman instead of the perpetrator.

1.3 Role of Women in Leadership and Decision Making

Women are not involved in major leadership positions especially like Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS), local authorities etc. Local authorities involved women in small leadership positions in the community such as Women League or Associations. Positions such as Payam leader or Payam administrator are reserved for men, even if the men are not educated. if they offer a woman a good position, she will just be volunteering without any incentive. Women were also not allowed to talk in public meetings and give suggestions. According to their culture, women have no rights to decide and its only their husbands who make decisions concerning them. Only the father of the child is the initiator and final decision maker concerning marriage in the family. Husbands and brother in-laws were the final decision makers concerning marriage issues and women had no rights to talk about it or give opinions. They therefore had no role to play in stopping early child marriage. Women do not play any role in forcing children into marriage because the men are the sole decision makers. Women insisted that there is absolutely nothing that they can do to stop child marriages, Women fear taking action because the extended family members will beat and excommunicate her. Despite most women having not been educated, they believed they had good ideas that would help the community if they shared in public gatherings. However, this was not possible because they would never be allowed by their husbands to speak in any public gathering or in front of people. (Warweng doesn't have women leader). It was reiterated that the community had had a belief since time in memorial that women could not lead

1.4 Housing Land and Property

Land is only owned by men. The family does not allow women to take the ownership of property, land and house. If a woman loses her husband, and doesn't have an elder son, control of property and land will be taken by the husband's brother immediately. The culture and laws do not support women to own properties. It only gives widows the right to own property, land and house if the widow has an elder son. If the widow has no elder son, the brother in-laws will inherit everything from the deceased brother.

1.5 Redress Mechanisms

In case of a problem facing women, there is no redress mechanisms. People were however not reporting because it was shameful especially when it happened to girls. Most girls would not get married because of the rape encounter so most families would prefer keeping it silent. Women do not talk to anyone about the problems they experience. They may talk to their parents or friends but all are helpless. When assaulted, women talk to fellow women about it, but they don't get the support that they need. Other women decide to commit suicide by hanging themselves in the bush. Relief international has a centre in the area and that is the only facility in Mathiang that assist women who have been assaulted. However, it does not handle cases related to rape. Instead, they refer these cases to Maban County which would require a woman to walk for four days before arriving there. The facilities are not easy to reach since they are located very far. The community lacks facilities that offer counselling psychosocial support or in-kind assistance to women survivors. The women suffer when they are raped or beaten by their husbands because they have no one to run to for counselling. Warweng Payam does not have a police station. Warweng has no health facility so most people would go to Mathiang Payam for treatment when assaulted. Other survivor services were also not available (counselling services and PSS)

1.6 Conclusions

The women in Longechuk are suffering due to lack of access to basic needs like water, sanitation, and healthcare. Women are also suffering from Gender Based Violence (GBV). There are no proper redress mechanisms, no health facilities to handle GBV, no police stations to handle such cases, Women are requesting to be treated like human beings. Based on the findings, the GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The most affected person is the woman and the person affecting the woman is the man. The community leaders who decide on GBV cases have a key role to play in ending GBV and protection concerns. There is need for sensitization workshops for men and community leaders to change their perspective about women. There is a need to provide security along the paths and venues during distribution of food and NFIs. There is a need for increasing water supply in the area, provision of water storage facilities. There is also a need for health facilities that can handle case management of rape, the outreach and PSS need to be enhanced in Longechuk County. There is need for gender balance in leadership positions. 'Women are requesting to be treated like human beings. Based on the findings, the GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The most affected person is the woman and the person affecting the woman is the man. There is need for sensitization workshops for men and community leaders to change their perspective about women.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1 The next project should be integrated, either protection, GBV and Case Management of Rape (CMR)
- 2 Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
- 3 Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men and community leaders on human rights.
- 4 Initiate a policy that makes it compulsory for gender balance in hiring and leadership positions by percentage.
- 5 Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
- 6 Initiate a policy that protects widows who do not have an elder son.

ANNEXES MONTHLY WOMEN FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Women FGD July



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Lonechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

Date: 24/7/2020

State: Upper Nile County: Longechuk

Payam: Mathiang

Background

Coalition for Humanity is National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built resilience of the vulnerable people, through programmes in Peace Building and Conflict Transformation, Protection/GBV, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition through strategies like community capacity building, Social Behavior Change Communication, market linkages, advocacy and governance to enhance contextualized innovative solutions for service delivery in Emergency Response and Sustainable development in South Sudan. Coalition for Humanity is currently implementing a protection project funded by South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF). The project seeks to assess the general protection concerns in Upper Nile Longechuk County. A meeting was held with women between the age of 20 and 46 years, the discussion sort to asses any protection concerns. The women were asked questions about general safety and security during distribution of NFIs, WASH related protection concerns, forced child marriage, their role in decision making, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, housing land and property, and the role of women in leadership.

General Security

The women in Mathiang do not feel safe especially when travelling from one area to another. They face harassment and sexual abuse on their way to fetching water and collecting fire wood. There are many rape cases in this community. For example, in May 2020, an old woman was raped on her way from Mathiang town to Paytath Boma in the evening. The case was reported to the police though the action taken against the perpetrator is not yet known. In June 2020, an 11-year-old girl from Mathiang town was raped while collecting firewood in a bush in Mator Boma. The perpetrator was a 23-year-old man. The incident, which happened in the morning hours, was reported to Relief International and the police. As a way of resolving the issue, the family of the perpetrator was fined a number of cows. The girl was later taken to Ethiopia for checkup and medication. A separate incident happened on 26/07/2020 where a 16-year-old girl was raped in Phalang Boma on her way to collecting firewood around 10am. On the day after, it was reported that the girl had disappeared from their house and her whereabouts still unknown.

Safety and Security During F &NFIs Distributions

During distribution of Food and Non-Food Items (F&NFIs), men harass women. Men deny women taking their share at the right time. Sometimes when women line-up to receive food and NIFs, men don't queue, when the women complain they are beaten and branded disrespectful. In other occasions, the husbands of these women make a deal with the food or NFI distributor to lie to the women that they are no longer in the distribution list only for these husbands to take the share that belonged to the women and sell it in the market. The women end up returning home empty handed. Some men hide somewhere along the road waiting for women coming from distribution sites to snatch all the things that the women received especially NFIs. When these women try to complain, they are beaten and no one in the community will intervene to help them. The women recommended that, during distribution of F&NFIs, people with special needs, people with disability, and the elderly cards should be taken and their share brought home to them. This is because if forced to come and collect, women are supposed to carry them or support them to walk by holding their hands or pushing their bicycles to the distribution site and line-up on their behalf.

Gender Based Violence

Women in Longechuk experience physical, sexual and economic violence. Regarding economic violence, these women face many challenges concerning family responsibilities. They do a lot of work to make sure they provide food but their men do not appreciate. The men ask for money from the women for alcohol and if the women do not comply, they are beaten. Women also, experience physical & sexual violence from their husband's enemies. After communal violence or cattle raising, their husband's enemies' revenge by raping the wives or their children. There is no organization assisting women facing violence. Sometimes, these women get assistance from the police at a fee but police structures and rules of law is generally weak. This means that if they do not have money, they are not offered any assistance. Women in this community recommended that there is need to create a safe environment for women, by raising the level of awareness especially on rape issues, domestic violence, cattle raiding, economic violence, communal violence, and also there is need for Capacity building training on GBV and its effects in the community targeting men so that men can understand what they're doing is not good for women health and also women recommend that there is a need for a place where they can go to for support whenever they experience any kind of GBV in the community.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Women of Mathiang sometimes fight because the late comers to the water points who want to get water as soon as they arrive which becomes a problem. They normally report the incidences to the police. The women in Mathiang do not feel safe while walking to fetch water especially when one has to walk alone, because one is faced with the problems of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. For this reason, women [refer walking in groups in order to feel safe. This type of abuse is perpetuated by alcoholic men, traders and youth. On the contrary, the women do not report cases of sexual assault because they have nowhere to report. They do not share these cases with anybody for fear of their secrets being exposed, which will be shameful to them and may lead to them committing suicide. The fear to take any actions against abuse is because there is no support and no confidentiality, people start blaming it on the woman instead of the perpetrator. The women recommended the need for creation awareness on the issues that are affecting women. The women also need counselling services or organizations that deal with such issues.

Domestic / Intimate Partner Violence

Domestic violence is common in this community particularly physical, sexual and economic violence. The women do not feel valued respected in their families. The men do not support the women. The men only idle waiting to find any mistake by women so that they beat them. To resolve conflicts, the elders call for family meetings to find out what caused the conflict and try to address it. If it happens that the man was the cause of the problem, the elders will not take any disciplinary action but if the woman or the children were the cause of the problem, they will be brutally beaten. Culturally, men in this community do not accept their mistakes. Women in Mathiang are beaten by their husbands specifically the alcoholic ones. The husbands demand sexual or romantic relationships at any time they please and if a woman refuses for a reason or another, it becomes a problem. When a woman does not perform her daily duties at home, she also experiences partner violence also failure of men to take responsibility leads to intimate partner violence. The women of Mathiang payam do not take any action because they lack the courage and support to express themselves, or to talk about the problems they are facing in the community. There is no one to support them or even, hear them out. If their husbands find out that they talked about the issue to anyone, they beat the women and may also decide to divorce them

Forced Child Marriage

Early marriages are a common occurrence in this community. In May 2020, a 10-year-old girl was forced to get married in Phalang-A Boma for exchange of dowry. However sad this incidence is, the women cannot talk about it because they lack the power to talk about such issues. Only the father of the child is the initiator and final decision maker concerning marriage in the family. Women do not play any role in forcing children into marriage because the men are the sole decision makers. Women lack the rights to give their opinion. Whether women like it or not, the young girl will be forced into marriage. Women insisted that there is absolutely nothing that they can do to stop child marriages, because their voice is not considered in the community. This practice is also rooted in the culture and the community abides by it. Women fear taking action because the extended family members will beat and excommunicate her.

Decision Making at Home

Women are not allowed to make decisions for the family except decisions on what meals to be taken and to get food to feed the family. In fact, theirs is to obey the decisions made by men. Women are also not consulted in most of the family affairs. If a woman made any critical decision without the permission of her husband, the husband and brothers in-laws beat a woman and they may even chase her from the home.

Housing Land and Property

In this community, land is only owned by men. The family does not allow women to take the ownership of property, land and house. If a woman loses her husband, and doesn't have an elder son, control of property and land will be taken by the husband's brother immediately. The culture and laws do not support women to own properties. It only gives widows the right to own property, land and house if the widow has an elder son. If not, the late husband's brother will take control. The brother in-laws to the widow control everything, which belonged to her late husband. This makes it difficult for the children to have a happy life or to access their fathers' property. For this reason, women have to struggle to collect firewood from the bush to sell in the market for them to get money for food for their children. The women believed that there is need for creating awareness in the community women rights to land and property. They also recommended capacity building for male leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women on women rights.

Role of Women in Leadership

Women are not involved in major leadership positions especially like Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS), local authorities etc. These major positions in the community are reserved for men, even if the men are not educated. Educated women in the community are not given any leadership roles, if they offer a woman a good position, she will just be volunteering without any incentive. Their men counterparts receive incentives so women just end up being limited to domestic work. Women are also not involved in decision making in Mathiang Payam. For example, in matters concerning marriage, the family does not give an opportunity for women to express themselves. For this reason, women do not feel valued in this community. Most women are not educated and their husbands do not allow them to go to any public gathering or to address people. According to their culture, women have no rights to decide and its only their husbands who make decisions concerning them. Lack of education, culture, and control by husbands remain the greatest barriers in women participating in leadership and decision making. The women recommended Awareness raising in the community on women rights to leadership and decision making, capacity building and training for women and men to understand the important of involving women in leadership position so that women can participate in community leadership, politics and government

Redress Mechanisms

In case of a problem facing women, there is no redress mechanisms. Women do not talk to anyone about the problems they experience. They may talk to their parents or friends but all are helpless. When assaulted, women talk to fellow women about it, but they don't get the support that they need because there are no policies put in place to address women issues. Violence against women/ assault is not resolved because no one is available to solve these issues in the community. It is for this reason that women sometimes do not report these cases. Women do nothing but just continue with their normal duties and responsibilities because community will not support them any case against a man. Other women decide to commit suicide by hanging themselves in the bush. Relief international is the only facility in Mathiang that assist women who have been assaulted. However, it does not handle cases related to rape. Instead, they refer these cases to Maban County which would require a woman to walk for four days before arriving there. The facilities are not easy to reach since they are located very far. The community lacks facilities that offer counselling psychosocial support or in-kind assistance to women survivors. The women suffer when they are raped or beaten by their husbands because they have no one to run to for counselling.

Summary of Findings

- 1 Rights denial: women are not allowed to own lands in this community.
- 2 Domestic violence is common within the community because it has something to do with the culture inherited from grandfathers and ancestors.
- 3 Sexual violence is also another issue in this community. Women are not safe when moving from area to another.
- 4 Women are not allowed to make decisions at family and community level. They are also not allowed to participate in leadership positions.
- 5 GBV issues are common in Longechuk County where by women lack the rights to live their lives freely.
- 6 There were cases of forced and child marriages in all the Bomas and payams as reported by women FGD participants.
- 7 Intimate partner violence is also common in this community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in the greater Longechuk community to handle GBV cases.
 - 2 Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
 - 3 There is need for women and girl's friendly spaces so women can go and express their issues and learn from each other experience.
 - 4 Need for capacity building and training on women rights to be offered to parents, local leaders police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
 - 5 Conduct awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on rights violations,
 - 6 GBV and challenge negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership.
 - 7 Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
- Engaging women in small income generating activities to empower them

Findings from Women FGD August



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

Date: 27th August, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 27th August, 2020 from 4.00pm to 4.55pm. Twelve women attended the meeting with all of them coming from the host community. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longgechuk County.

General security

Women said they were not safe in greater Longgechuk especially when moving from one place to another. They faced problems on their way to fetch water and collect firewood. They would often be harassed and abused sexually and sometimes physically. They said there were a lot of GBV cases that happened in the community e.g. rape and an example of a case that happened in March 2020 was given. They said a woman was raped by a young man on her way from Mathiang to Palkach Boma. It was in the evening hours and nobody took the matter into consideration. The same thing happened in the second week of August, 2020 where a pregnant woman was raped on her way from Pelweang Boma to Mathiang town during food distribution. This happened at around 9.00am. She was rushed to Mathiang hospital for treatment though the case was reported to the police. The perpetrator was later arrested and jailed. According to the women, the community was not safe because rape cases were many. People were however not reporting because it was shameful especially when it happened to girls. Most girls would not get married because of the rape encounter so most families would prefer keeping it silent.

The participants further said that women faced problems at distribution points. Men harassed them and sometimes took what they would have acquired. They added that sometimes the men would collude with the food and NFI distributors to falsely tell the women that their cards were expired so as to take everything that would be meant for them. Some men would hide along the roads to forcefully snatch women their items. The bad thing according to the women is that nobody stood for them in all the frustrations. It was however highlighted that the elderly and people with disabilities were helped by their relatives during distribution either by escorting them or by picking the items on their behalf.

Women said that men felt happy when they beat them and children because it was a routine for them to get drunk and cause problems when they returned home. Culturally, this was a way they showed that there was a man in the home. They also said that men economically frustrated them by taking all the money they made through collection and selling of firewood or other items. Men would demand the small money to go and drink alcohol or take tea with other men in the market.

Therefore, to create a safe environment for women, they believed creation of awareness in the community against rape, physical violence and economic violence would help. They also recommended establishment of youth centers so that the youth would get busy in the center rather than going to market and drink alcohol and abuse drugs.

WASH related protection Concerns

Women said they sometimes fought because of new or old issues that they would be having with neighbours. This usually happened at water points especially when those they had issues with came and went ahead of them. They said they were not safe also on their way to water points. They faced challenges such as sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse. They however added that walking in groups was safer than walking as an individual especially in the evening hours. Perpetrators were; men, youth and armed youth who drink alcohol and those who were addicted to drugs including traders.

In such incidences, most women would not take action because the community would never support them and they said even reporting to the police was not helping because they never assisted pro bono. The women said they preferred keeping silent with their unfortunate encounters because it was worse when the community got to be aware of it because it would be so traumatizing because everybody would be talking about it including in the market places. Women believed creation of awareness in the community on effects of sexual assault would help minimize their problems. They also suggested the need for establishment of centers that would offer counselling and other PSS services to the victims

Domestic Violence

Women said the men did not treat them like human beings. They would work the whole day i.e. collect firewood, fetch water, cook and bath children but they would still be beaten up by their husbands without any concrete reasons. Even during sickness, the women said their husbands failed to take initiatives in finding them medication or taking them to hospital. Furthermore, they would not take an initiative in relieving them from household chores instead they will leave and come in the evening to ask for food. Failure to serve food leads to them being fought despite their sickness. Women felt men never valued them and living as a woman was just but a frustration. The women said elders occasionally took part in settling the misunderstanding though they always encouraged the women to persevere and understand that being beaten was part of life.

Intimate partner Violence

According to women, there was a lot of problems especially from men who were addicted to alcohol and drugs. They would ask for sexual relationship including when they were not willing for it and any resistance would result into fighting at night and such wouldn't be reported to anyone. Failure to perform other duties also provoked the men and they would be beaten. Physical and sexual violence was therefore common and women frequently suffered from it. Despite the assault, the women would not share with anybody because culturally they were household issues and there were no laws and policies that protected women from them.

Child marriage

Early child marriage was common in the community. A 17-year-old girl was forced into marriage with an old man in August at Kamboor Boma. The girl was schooling in Ethiopia and had just come home to visit her parents after the schools closed due to the pandemic. She was told to forget about education because the father had already taken a number of cows from the old man. Currently, the girl looks mentally disturbed because her behaviour became weird since she was given the news by the parents. Husbands or the fathers of the children were the final decision maker concerning under age marriages in the families. Women would not play any role in this because they were not allowed to participate or give their opinion on the issues and this meant that they were also not able even to stop it. The women added and said the biggest barrier was culture because it fully supported early marriages.

Decision making at home

The participants said women in the community were not allowed to participate in any issues related to decision making in the family because they were just house-keepers and had no voice to express their opinion. The family only allowed women to decide on the issues relating to food and taking care of the children at home. They would therefore not attempt to decide on anything related to household affairs without permission or in the absence of their husbands. Going against this would result into being beaten up or divorced.

Housing land and property

Men owned land in the community and not women. In cases where a man died without a son, the land and properties were inherited by the husband's brother immediately and who then becomes the controller of everything. The culture and laws did not support women to own properties. Widows would only have the right to ownership of property, land and house if they had a big son and if not the brother to the late husband takes control of everything. This had challenges according to the women because children suffered a lot because they would have no authority to sell whatever their father left them for upkeep. Most of them would therefore resort to collection and selling of firewood in the local market in order to buy food and other essential basic needs. To ensure women get their right to own property, women believed awareness raising in the community about women rights would help and it would be more effective to target men leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women.

Role of women in leadership

The participants said the local authorities involved women in small leadership positions in the community for example they were always given chance to become Boma women leader. Other big positions such as Payam leader or Payam administrator were however not given to women despite the level of education a woman would have attained. Those who got a chance to work in higher positions only worked as volunteers without any incentives. Salaries went to the men. Women were also not involved in decision making in the community e.g. issues related to marriage or even cattle raiding. They were not allowed to talk about it despite having good solutions to the problems. Women were also not allowed to talk in public meetings and give suggestions. They only had some small freedom when it comes to determining the type of food to be eaten in the house.

Most women were not educated and this limited them from taking up leadership positions because they were not aware of their rights. Husbands also never allowed women to take part in public issues or even speak in certain gatherings. According to the culture, husbands decided everything that a woman was supposed to do. To ensure women participation, the women recommended creation of awareness in the community on human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls, leaders and local authorities. According to them, this would help the community understand the important of involving women in leadership positions. They also suggested for women empowerment training on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress mechanisms

In the community, women had no one to talk to when they experience problems. They only shared their issues with close trusted friends and parents when they visit though it would just be for their information because they never helped in bringing a solution to their problems. Some women report to the Boma Women leader but she would not help because culturally the women were not allowed to express their grievances to the public. This included cases of violence/assault and it was said to be the reason as to why most women would prefer keeping the problems to themselves. Those who would be physically assaulted or raped sought help from Relief International Health facility in Mathiang Payam which is not very far from their Bomas. However, there were no facilities that offered services or support to women survivors in the community in terms of counselling or even PSS.

Summary of findings

- Women are sexually harassed on their way to water points and while fetching firewood
- Women have got no right to land, housing and property ownership
- Culture supports assault and violence against women
- The women lack proper channels to report their problems
- Culturally, women have got no chance to take up leadership position and contribute to decision making in the community

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 There is a need for awareness raising targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on human rights violations, GBV and negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership and decision making.
- 2 There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in greater community of Longechuk to handle GBV cases.
- 3 Empower women through small income generating activities to improve their living standard.
- 4 There is a need of women and girl's friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other experience.
- 5 Men and youth need to be train on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 6 Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders police personnel's, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 7 Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.

Findings from Women FGD September



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Lonechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

**Date: 11th September, 2020
Payam: Warweng
State: Upper Nile**

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 11th September, 2020 from 10.45am to 11.45am. Twelve women attended the discussions which were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General security

The participants said they were not safe in Werweng Payam because there was a lot of physical and sexual violence happening in the community especially when women move from one area to another or go collect firewood and fetch water from far places. They faced challenges on the way such as harassment and sexual abuse. On the last week of August 2020 there was a woman from Kuryith Boma of Werweng Payam who was badly beaten by a man on her way from Mathiang around evening hours, she was trying to rescue herself from being raped. This was reported to the police in Mathiang because Warweng does not have a police station. The perpetrator was arrested for seven days only. In April 2020, another woman was violated on her way after she had collected firewood in Wunikirr Boma. She met with a youth on the way who asked money. When she told him, she didn't have the money, the youth instead raped her. This happened in the morning hours though this one was not reported to the police.

Participants said they also had issues during distribution on their way from Mathiang. Due to the distance, some men hiding in the bushes took advantage by taking from them whatever they would have collected. They further reported that NFI were the most targeted because they would easily sell in the market or use in drinking alcohol. There were also a lot of frustrations in the distribution lines. Men would often come late and overtake them by lining up in front of them and they wouldn't speak about it for fear of being beaten up. The elderly and persons living with disabilities were assisted in collection of food and NFIs. Relatives would just take with them the distribution cards and receive the items on their behalf. Sometimes they would be helped to reach the distribution sites by children who pushed their wheel chairs or hold their hands to the sites. However, family members always accompanied them to carry the items.

Physical and sexual violence was everywhere including when they travelled to Maiwut county. Due to the political difference, women would mostly be allowed to pass after sexual demands from the guards at the border though men would just be killed. Economic violence at the household level was another challenge because men demanded a share of any money that would have been collected by the women despite the means. It was reported that the men would take up to half the money they would have struggled to get through collection and selling of firewood to just spend at the restaurant, drink alcohol and take tea at the market. According to them, nobody would help them out of their problems because the police also demanded money to seriously follow up a case. They however believed that awareness raising on the effects of physical violence, rape and economic violence would help change the perspective of the locals on women. They also recommended capacity building of men, youths, chiefs, police and local authorities on the rights of women.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Due to inadequate water, frequent conflicts have been reported at the water point. Warweng Payam has got one borehole at Mockley Boma that is shared by the rest of the Payams. As a result, congestions are witnessed daily. Families which are unable to keep up the competition for the limited resource tend to opt for rain water (during rainy season) or go up to Mathiang in order to fetch drinking water for the family. This long-distance travelling had implications according to the women. They reported to experience cases of sexual harassment and abuse along the way though they didn't know who to report to. The perpetrators were said to be armed youth, unarmed youth, men, soldiers, drunk men and traders. In addition, they said they had no motivation to report to the community because instead of comfort most people would turn against them and this was always shameful. Local policies to protect women were not there and they would most of the time suffer in silence. They however believed that awareness creation on the negative consequences of sexual harassment and assault would help change the society. They also suggested capacity building of leaders, local authority, chiefs and youths on the consequences of Gender Based Violence.

Domestic Violence

In the community, domestic violence was very common and women were the most affected. It was said that adolescent girls were more respected than women because they were a source of wealth. Women who had no girls would be beaten almost on a daily basis and this frustration had caused some of them to commit suicide. Boys would sometimes intervene to rescue their mothers from the fight which even causes more problems. Most of the time the elders settle the cases though in an unfair manner. When they find out that the problem was the man, they tend to encourage the family to stay peacefully but when it is the woman, she is thoroughly beaten. The woman in fact risks being divorced.

Intimate Partner Violence

Women reported that they frequently got beaten up by their husbands especially those who were alcoholic. This would be prompted by when men presumed the women had not performed certain duties. The women also said they would be too exhausted other times to have sex but the husbands would still demand for sexual relationship. "They can't even give us time to breastfeed our young children". Failure to honour to the demands often resulted into conflicts. Despite the violence, women persevered because they didn't have anyone to report to. The community believed men had rights over their wives. In fact, parents would often warn their daughters never to report their husbands anywhere about conflicts inside the house.

Child Marriage

The participants said forced child marriages were common and normal in their community because they also married people they had never known. According to them, girls had no chance to fall in love and marry whomever they chose. An example was given that a 13-year-old girl was forced into marrying an Ethiopian trader in 2019 because the old man had a lot of cows. The man was unfortunately killed on his way to Maiwut and the son had to inherit the girl as his wife. Another case happened in Kuryith Boma in the first weeks of September, 2020 where a 17-year-old girl from Benjiel Primary school was forced into marriage. The parents said she had become mature and after all schools had been closed due to Corona virus pandemic. Husbands and brother in-laws were the final decision makers concerning marriage issues and women had no rights to talk about it or give opinions. They therefore had no role to play in stopping early child marriage because culturally they had been restricted. An attempt to do so would result into the family beating the woman or chasing her away for good because of disrespecting the culture and believes and also disrespecting the husband and family.

Decision Making at Home

Women said they were not allowed to make any decisions in the family matters and men never consulted on anything. Women would only make decision freely when it came to what the family would eat, when to collect firewood and when to fetch water. They added that it was a form of taboo to make decisions in the absence of their husbands. In the case of a deceased husband, brother in-laws would make family decisions.

Housing Land and Property

Women were generally not allowed to own land or take ownership of property in Warweng Payam unless the husbands had passed on. Most property would however be controlled by a brother in-law. This situation was not being the same if the deceased left a mature son because he would directly inherit the father's property. It was added that it would always be frustrating and worse when a brother in-law inherits. The children drop out of school and getting even a meal a day becomes a problem. To sustain the family, the widows collect and sell firewood in order to feed the children. The women therefore recommended awareness raising in the community on the rights of women on owing property, land and housing. They also suggested the need for capacity building men leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women on the rights of women

Role of Women in Leadership

According to the participants, women were not involved in any big leadership position in the community especially positions like Local authorities such as commissioner, Director of Relief organization for South Sudan (ROSS) or even Payam leader. The positions were reserved for the men. For any big position, women worked as volunteers. This meant that men took all the incentives for the position and the reasons as to why they would just choose to stay at home. They were also not allowed to participate in decision making and/or give their opinion concerning certain issues such as revenge killings or marriage. Despite most women having not been educated, they believed they had good ideas that would help the community if they shared in public gatherings. However, this was not possible because they would never be allowed by their husbands to speak in any public gathering or in front of people. They recommended awareness raising in the community on the human rights and capacity building training for women and men to understand the important of involving women in leadership position.

Redress Mechanisms

Generally, women had no one to talk to in the community. They would attempt to share their concerns with close friends as well as parents but they would never get the support they would look forward to. This happened also when the issues were reported to the chiefs and the women leaders in Mathiang (Warweng doesn't have women leader). According to them, the slow action was as a result of lack of policies put in place to address the issues of women. As a result, a few women resort to commit suicide due to frustrations. Warweng has no health facility so most people would go to Mathiang Payam for treatment when assaulted. Other survivor services were also not available (counselling services and PSS).

Summary of Findings

Women are not allowed to own land in the community and domestic violence was a common practice that seemed ingrained in the local culture. Practically there's no evidence of any rights that would be accorded to women in the community. Women would undergo domestic violence, intimate partner violence and sexual violence outside the home set up and there is little or no step that would be taken/holding perpetrators accountable. The women have no authority to participate and influence decision making on issues that would be affecting the society.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 There is need for women and girl's friendly spaces in Warweng Payam so women can go and express their issues and learn from each other's experiences
- 2 Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them on family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarreling or beating their wives.
- 3 There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in Warweng Payam to handle GBV cases.
- 4 There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on rights violations, GBV, negative cultural practices, behaviors and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership.
- 5 Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
- 6 Engaging women in small income generating activities to empower them and build their capacity would be key in ensuring their independence.
- 7 Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders, police personnel's, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary court.

Findings from Women FGD October



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

**Date: 16th October, 2020
Payam: Jangok
State: Upper Nile**

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 16th of October, 2020 in Jangok Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 women between the age of 24 and 40 years from 5 Bomas (Riangchusk, Wunthow, Tochwangthok, Lualthiang and Dulthiang). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

General Security

Women said their safety in Jangok Payam was not guaranteed. Movement from one place to the other during collection of firewood and fetching water was risky due to incidences of sexual harassment, sexual abuse and physical assault. According to them, there were a lot of GBV cases happening in the community and they gave an example that in July, 2019 a woman was raped by a man on her way from Warweng Payam to Jangok Payam though it was not reported. They added that rape cases were high though most victims never reported. This is because such an encounter was shameful especially when it happened to a girl. This would bring shame to the entire family because the girl would easily end up not getting married. A lot of risks were also associated with distribution of food and NFIs. Men hiding in the bushes were reported to snatch items from women after distribution especially the NFIs. According to the women, this would happen but never would it be followed up by the local authority. The elderly and persons with disabilities were however supported by family members to reach the distribution sites or sometimes family members would carry with them their distribution cards to receive the items on their behalf.

Economic violence was real and was reported to have badly affected women. Most of the time, the women would struggle to make ends meet probably by fetching firewood for sell in the local market so as to buy food for the children. When men return home at the end of the day, they shamelessly demanded a share of the small money they would have acquired from the market. Denying them would result into violence or even sometimes stopping the women from the business. Due to lack of other options, these women are forced to give in and share for the sake of the family. Because there was nobody to report to when such cases occurred, they recommended on the need to create awareness in the community on the importance of economically empowering and supporting women, sensitizing the community on the consequences of physical and economic violence, capacity building youth and men on the health and physical consequences of rape and establishment of a youth center to engage youth in constructive issues instead of idling in the market and drinking alcohol.

WASH related protection Concerns

Fighting at water points was a daily routine because there was only one borehole in Dulthiang Boma that served all the five Bomas in Jangok. Conflicts were said to arise due to congestion at the water point and by trying put some order into who had come first to fetch water. They also added and said they were using the water point to fight those who had wronged them especially neighbours so they would wait until they meet at the water point. Such issues were not reported because they were considered normal with women. Safety to the water point was however not guaranteed due to experiences of sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, Sexual exploitation and other forms of abuses from men, unarmed and armed youth, drug addicts and local traders. Due to lack of support in the community, most women wouldn't report such occurrences. They also said such issues were not handled with the privacy it deserved in the community because the issue would be talked about and the shame would be quite traumatizing and destructive to the victims. They however recommended awareness creation to sensitize the community on the effects of sexual assault. They also suggested the need for counselling services and PSS or organization to deal with such issues in the community.

Domestic Violence

Most domestic violence was said to involve husbands and their wives and not children. It was said that women would do everything including fetching water, collecting firewood, bathing children and cooking but the husbands would still come and beat them up without any reason. They said they were not complaining about it because culturally, it was a sign of love. Some women would even intentionally cause problems so as to be beaten up. They would then share with friends about the fight. The fights were therefore not being resolved in any way. They said the fights didn't need to be resolved especially the one between wife and husband because it was culturally accepted.

Intimate Partner Violence

The women said intimate partner violence was the order of the day. According to them, physical and sexual violence had now become part of life because of the frequency at which it was happening in the community. Men would force them into having sex even when they were not willing and there would be nothing they would do especially the alcoholic and drug addicts. They would instead be beaten up silently in the rooms. Such assault would not be reported anywhere because of their limited rights of expression and additionally, they would not report due to lack of established structures to handle their concerns with their husband.

Child Marriage

According to the women, forced and early child marriages were not very common in the community and had not been heard of for many years though their husbands/fathers to the girls were the final decision makers concerning any marriage arrangements in the family. They also added by saying that as women, they were never allowed to take any roles in such negotiations.

Decision Making at Home

Women said they were not allowed to participate in any decision-making process in the family. Perhaps when it comes to food and taking care of the children at home. They therefore would never attempt to make any critical decisions in the household because they already knew their limits and consequences when they went overboard.

Housing land and property

It was very clear from the women that Housing, land and property were things that men owned and not women. They further made clarifications on this by explaining that in case of an unfortunate death of a husband, all the property would be immediately inherited and controlled by a brother to the husband especially when the deceased didn't have a son at his death and the culture and laws of the society supported this type of arrangement. However, according to the women, this was unfair to the affected families because a lot of challenges would come along this. Children of the deceased most times experienced a lot of difficulties to cope with life and this was due to the denied access to their father's property. Due to limited options, many families would resort to venturing into other means of acquiring income such as collection and selling of firewood from the forest in order to buy food for the children and take care of other needs in the house. Women hence believed that the need for vigorous awareness creation in the community to at least advocate for the rights of women towards ownership of property, land and housing was a solution to take up. They also suggested on the need to capacity build men leaders, local authority, chiefs, opinion leaders and church leaders including women on the need to fight for the rights of the women

Role of Women in Leadership

It was reiterated that the community had had a belief since time in memorial that women could not lead. As a result, the local authority did not involve women in Jangok in any leadership position other than the Boma Women's Leader and based on the women information, this had been the case regardless of the level of education a woman would be having. When it came to community decision making, they said women were not involved in any way and issues related to marriage and cattle raiding were given as examples. In such meetings, women were never allowed to talk in fact, they were not expected to speak publicly in any community meetings. Culture was therefore a barrier towards effective women participation in meetings and including leadership positions i.e. it was said that their husbands would never allow them speak in any public gathering or talk in front of the people. "according to our culture, we have no rights. Our husbands decide everything concerning us" they said. Creation of awareness in the community on human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls, leaders and local authorities would help sensitize the community to understand the important of women involvement in leadership positions. They also suggested for frequent women empowerment trainings on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress mechanisms

It was learned that women had no one to talk to in the community when they have problems apart from very close friends or parents who most of the time never helped other than encouraging them to persevere. The women would also report to the Boma Women Leader but she would rarely assist or support due to strong cultural barriers that denied women the right of expression. This was said to have led into many cases of unresolved domestic violence/assault which had made women choose not to report similar occurrences because nobody cared or took them seriously. However, women who became physically assaulted or raped were said to be receiving help from a Relief International Health Facility, the only one in Jangok. Though, the women added that the issues were handled with a lot of privacy and were never reported especially those that involved rape due to the shame that came with it. They also highlighted further that the RI facility was accessible. The only problem was that there were no other facilities that supported women survivors with services such as Counselling and PSS.

Summary of Findings

GBV issues are common in Jangok Payam and women have got no rights over most issues. All payams were reported to have had cases of rape though the cases were less reported due to shame that victims experienced. Intimate partner violence is the order of the day since it seemed heavily supported by the culture. Safety of women was also not guaranteed due to sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence on the way either from fetching water or firewood. Their level of decision making was also very low, perhaps inside the house but not in the community issues. The women were also not allowed to take up any senior leadership positions and would not be allowed to talk in any public meetings. The women however mentioned that cases of forced child marriage were not very common in the community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 Youth and men need awareness and training on the negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
- 2 There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in Jangok Payam to handle GBV cases.
- 3 There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on human rights violations and GBV as well as challenge the negative cultural practices, behaviors and social norms that discriminated women and girls against land ownership and decision making.
- 4 Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 5 There is a need to establish more women and girls' friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other's experience.
- 6 Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 7 There is need to empower women through small income generating activities to improve their standards of living.

Findings from Women FGD November



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

**Date: 18th November , 2020
Payam: Mathiang
State: Upper Nile**

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 18th of November, 2020 in Mathiang Payam Community Centre. The discussion was attended by 12 women between the age of 24 and 40 years from 11 Bomas (Kuembor, New site, Paytath, Phalang B, Phalang A, Matar, Boryuwen, Palkach, Relbek, Palkach, and Mathiang Boma). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County, Mathiang Payam.

General Security

Safety in Mathiang Payam was not okay as per the women. Collection of firewood and fetching water were risky for women because they would encounter cases of sexual harassment and assault from drunk men and youths. They also reported other GBV related cases which used to happen on daily basis in the community, for example, they reported that on 14th October, 2020, a pregnant woman who was seven months in her pregnancy was raped by a drunk man on her way from Wunkir Boma to Mathiang Payam while returning from the forest after collecting firewood at around 6:27PM. This was reported to local authority who ordered police to go and search for the perpetrator, but they could not find him from the scene. The women FGD participants reported that there are other GBV related risks which are not even reported because authority seemed to be reluctant to take action on them when they were reported by the GBV survivors. This had contributed to less reporting of such cases to the local leaders including the protection unit/ police. Another factor that contributed to less reporting of such cases was negative traditional mind-set that looked at issues that affected women as normal.

There were other risks which were reported by the women to be affecting them and this was distribution of food and NFIs in Mathiang Payam. Women reported that when they go to receive food and NFIS, they experienced a lot of challenges that included; walking long distances, disrespect from men whenever they queued up even with expectant women. There was no particular arrangement for them including lactating mothers, people with special needs and the elderly. Women said that men used to beat them whenever they try to express their opinions when mistreated during food and NFIS distributions. Women also stated that there were no enough NFIs in Mathiang. A few were distributed by ADRA and they included blankets and soaps. Dignity kits which they considered very important for personal hygiene during their monthly periods also missed. Women participants requested CH to provide them with dignity kits, blankets, cooking utensils, water jerry cans for storing enough water and soaps.

The women also reported that the elderly and persons with disabilities were occasionally supported by family members to reach distribution sites and sometimes family members would carry their distribution cards with them to receive the items on their behalf. Women reported that economic violence was widely practiced by their husbands' almost on daily basis and this had badly affected them emotionally. As a way to make ends meet for their families, most women would run up and down gathering wild fruits and fetching of firewood for sell in the local market so as to buy food for their children. Unfortunately, men less supported this initiative and would authoritatively demanded to be shown the money that was generated by their wives through the selling of the items. Women who refused to cooperate on these demands were beaten seriously even in front of the children.

Women stated that they showed their husbands the money they had generated from selling of firewood to avoid being physically assaulted. Women complained that they do not have someone in the community to report GBV related cases in their families, and that is why they always give in to their husbands' demands even if they were against their will. They recommended that there is a need to raise awareness in the community on the importance of economic empowerment for women and supporting them when they are physically or emotionally assaulted by their men, this awareness should target mostly men who are married and youth should be capacitated on negative consequences of rape and establishment of a youth center to engage youth through indoor games and outdoor games plus other engagements on constructive issues instead of idling in the market and drinking alcohol.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Women reported that there used to be fighting every day at the water points among women and girls who used to go and fetch water for their households at the boreholes. Due to the limited boreholes in Mathiang, congestion was experienced during water collection on a daily basis. It was said that there was one borehole in each Boma that served an estimated 300 households. The shortage of enough boreholes is a contributing factor to women and girls fighting at the boreholes. Issues related to water conflicts used to be reported to water management committee in the community, but they seemed to take matters very lightly. Women said they raised the complains of water shortage due to lack of enough boreholes and daily conflicts at water points but no action had taken by the committee and this had angered the women and they stopped reporting cases to the committee since they seemed to be irresponsible with their don't care attitudes. Women and girls who came from far villages reported that their Safety to the water points was not okay due to experiences of sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, Sexual exploitation from local traders and other forms of abuses from drunk men and irresponsible youths who seemed to be drug addicts. Due to lack of support in the community, most women and girls did not report such occurrences although they were affecting them on daily basis. However, the women recommended awareness creation to sensitize the community on the effects of sexual assault and other forms of GBV related issues that were affecting women and girls in the community every day. They also proposed the need for group and individual counselling services and PSS targeting women, girls, men and youth in the community.

Domestic Violence

Women reported that domestic violence was normal and very common in Mathiang. They said they were overburdened with household responsibilities and duties such as fetching firewood, gathering wild fruits, cooking, looking after children etc. but when one's husband returned home at the end of the day while drunk, most of them would be abused and sometimes beaten up when they try to defend themselves. Most domestic violence was said to involve husbands and their wives and only on few cases would children be involved. They said they were not complaining about this domestic violence related cases because they were culturally acceptable and it was a sign of love for a woman to be beaten by her husband. "If your husband does not beat you people consider it that he does not love you according to our culture, for example, some women here in Mathiang intentionally cause problems in their homes so as to be beaten up by their husbands and then they feel good about the fight." One woman said. They would then share the story of the fight with their friends. The fights at household level were therefore not being resolved in any way in all Mathiang because the fights did not need to be resolved by outsiders especially the one between wives and husbands. This was culturally acceptable and considered as family matters that should be handled behind the doors.

Intimate Partner Violence

The women participants said intimate partner violence was very common in their homes and in the community as well. According to them, physical and sexual violence had now become part of life because of the frequency at which it was happening in the community. Men would force women to have sex with them even when they were not willing and there would be nothing they could do especially the alcoholic and drug addicts, if they refused, they would instead be beaten up silently in the rooms mostly at night while everyone had slept. Such assault would not be reported anywhere because of their limited rights of expression and additionally, they would not report due to lack of established structures to handle their concerns with their husbands plus negative cultural perception that recommended or condoned intimate partner violence.

Child Marriage

According to the women FGD participants, forced and early child marriages were not very common in the community this year, and had not been heard of for all these months though such marriages used to be arranged by their husbands/fathers to the girls who were the final decision makers concerning any marriage arrangements in the family. They also stated that as women, they were never allowed to take any roles in marital arrangements and negotiation which were considered as men responsibilities.

Decision Making at Home

Women reported that they were not allowed to participate in any decision-making process in the family affairs, and they only made decisions related to what kind of food to be cooked each day and taking care of the children at home. They therefore would never attempt to make any critical decisions in the household because they already knew their limits and consequences when they made decisions that could only be made by their husbands.

Housing Land and Property

Women stated it very clearly that issues to do with the Housing, land and property were things that men owned and not women according to their culture. They further made clarifications on this by explaining that in case of an unfortunate death of a husband, all the property would be immediately inherited and controlled by the elder brother to the dead husband especially when the deceased didn't have a son at his death and the culture and laws of the society supported this type of arrangement. However, according to the women, this was unfair to the affected families because a lot of challenges would come along this. Children of the deceased most times experienced a lot of difficulties to cope with life and this was due to the denied access to their father's property. Due to limited options, many families would resort to venturing into other means of acquiring income such as gathering of while fruits, collection and selling of firewood from the forest in order to buy food for the children and take care of other family needs in the house. Women hence believed that there is a need for strong awareness creation in the community to at least advocate for the rights of women towards ownership of property, land and housing. They also suggested on the need to capacity build men leaders, local authority, chiefs, opinion leaders, and church leaders including women on the need to fight for the rights of the women and other vulnerable groups in the Bomas and Payams.

Role of Women in Leadership

Women reported that the community had had a belief since time in memorial that women were not fit to hold leadership positions because they were considered lesser humans and not strong enough to make bold decisions when things get worse in the community. The women in Mathiang appreciated the current care taker commission and particularly the Payam administrator of Mathiang who had appointed 10 women to lead 10 Bomas in Mathiang. The local authority also involved women in Mathiang in any leadership position other than the Boma Women's Leader and based on the women information, this had been the case regardless of the level of education a woman would be having.

Following interventions by Coalition for Humanity, the situation in Mathiang Payam has now improved, some women are now being involved. Issues related to marriage and cattle raiding were given as examples where women were consulted, when such issues arose and there was need for collective decision by Payam leaders. In such meetings, women were allowed to talk in freely in any community meetings. Culture was therefore a barrier towards effective women participation in meetings as women stated during the discussion. They described their culture as something that only favoured men and not women when it came to leadership positions and decision makings in the community. "According to our culture, we have no rights. Our husbands decide everything concerning us" they said. Women proposed creation of awareness in the community on respect for human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls and leaders and local authorities would help sensitize the community to understand the important of women involvement in leadership positions. They also suggested for frequent women empowerment trainings on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress Mechanisms

Women regretted that they had no one to talk to in the community when they have problems apart from very close friends or parents who most of the time never helped other than encouraging them to persevere. The women would also report to the Boma Women Leader but she would rarely assist or support due to strong cultural barriers that denied women the right of expression. This was said to have led into many cases of unresolved domestic violence/assault which had made women choose not to report similar occurrences because nobody cared or took them seriously. However, women who became physically assaulted or raped were said to be receiving help from a Relief International Health Facility, Women Aid Vision, and Coalition for Humanity in Mathiang. Though, the women added that the issues were handled with a lot of privacy and were never reported especially those that involved rape due to the shame that came with it. They also highlighted further that the RI facility was accessible. The only problem was that there were no other facilities that supported women survivors with medical services but group and individual Counselling and PSS used to be provided by WAV and CH GBV focal points.

Summary of Findings

GBV issues are common in Mathiang Payam and women have got no rights over such issues. All Bomas were reported to have had cases of sexual harassment, physical assault, and abuses though the cases were less reported due to shame that victims experienced when others learned about such cases. Intimate partner violence is the order of the day since it seemed heavily supported by the culture and women seem to feel comfortable about it. Safety of women was also not guaranteed due to sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence on the way either from fetching water, gathering wild fruits, or collecting firewood. Their level of decision making was also very low, perhaps inside the house but not in the community issues. The women were also allowed to take up any senior leadership positions and were allowed to talk in any public meetings nowadays compare to the past when they used not be allowed to be leaders and part of decisions making in the community. The women however mentioned that cases of forced child marriage were not very common in the community.

Conclusions and Recommendations


- 1 There is need to raise awareness for the youth and men and also train them on the negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, rape, and economic violence.
- 2 There is a need to strengthen case management and psychosocial support services which used to be provided by WAV and CH through their GBV focal points in Mathiang Payam to handle GBV cases effectively.
- 3 There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on respect for human rights violations and GBV issues as well as challenge the negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminated women and girls against land ownership and decision making.
- 4 There is need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders, police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 5 There is a need to establish women and girls' friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other's experience.
- 6 Men who are married need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 7 There is need to empower women through small income generating activities to improve their standards of living

**WOMEN RIGHTS VIOLATION, PROTECTION ASSESSMENT,
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