

JCC PROJECT-NIMULE TOWN, MAGWI COUNTY APRIL-JUNE 2022 QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

STWARDWOMEN with funding from UNDP is implementing a six months project titled “Enhancing provision of legal aid services in Nimule, Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan.”, The overall project objective is to provide legal aid including legal representation, legal awareness and legal advice to vulnerable groups including women, girls, SGBV survivors, elderly and returnees in Nimule Town, Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan. The main activities are establishing one justice and confidence centers (JCC); capacity building of traditional authorities, women leaders and community paralegals; legal awareness raising through home to home visits, dialogues and live radio talk shows; mediation of cases by traditional chiefs and provision of legal representation to vulnerable people through statutory courts.

Overview of current context

In April 2022, there was intercommunal violence in Nimule that led to massive population displacement from all the Bomas of Mugali and the neighboring villages of Nimule with thousands in dire need of emergency. The violence also led to killings, torturing and raping of women and girls. All the displaced population took refuge in Nimule Town and currently camping in Anzara Christ Church compound. Following the influx of the IDPs to Nimule, the Relief & Rehabilitation Commission-RRC convened an emergency meeting on the 9th May 2022 for the humanitarian agencies to address the needs of the IDPs. Protection concerns identified in the meeting were shelter, security, tents, mosquito nets, blankets, PSS materials, torches, solar lamps, sanitary pads. Nine bomas namely Masindi, Bilinya, Ganzi, Avumadri, Sau, Melijo, Jelei and Olikwi with 1869.

30,254 people have been reached through;

1. A half day project inception meeting with 20 key stakeholders in Nimule Town;



20 (15M, 05F) participants attended the meeting. The different stakeholders promised to work hand in hand with STW for the implementation of the project. STW needs to allocate a budget to cater for cases management of GBV survivors. Protection and GBV clusters promised to hold meetings with all the head of organized forces to make follow-up of GBV perpetrators who are armed.

2. Training for 2 community-based paralegals on specific laws, justice and human rights issues, and the legal system;



Two community paralegals were trained on documentation of human rights abuses, violations and GBV issues. The community paralegals agreed to mobilize community members for awareness on human rights and GBV related issues.

3. Training of 9 (6M, 3F) traditional leaders and women leaders on GBV legal and policy frameworks in Nimule Town, Magwi County;



Participants (6 traditional chiefs and 3 women leaders) were trained on on GBV legal and policy frameworks including mediation of cases. STW signed MOU with the participants as family courts. The role of the family courts it to hold mediation meetings to resolve family disputes in a speedy and fair manner. The participants showed interest of maintaining family court beyond the project cycle.

4. Mediation of 40 cases by the family/customary courts;



Four cases were mediated successfully by the family courts namely alcohol issue, theft of 3 chicken by a neighbour and 2 family neglect issues.

5. 1 Justice and Confidence Center was establish in Nimule, Magwi County to support survivors;



Key stakeholders and community leaders are already been oriented about the existence of the JCC in Nimule so as to pass the message to the community members to receive legal services.

6. Conducting neighbourhood assembly legal awareness raising sessions through home to visits;



6 neighbourhood assemblies were conducted with 172 (48M, 81F, 25G, 18B) participants reached with 18 participants as PWDs (5W, 8M, 2G, 3B). The sessions increased reporting of cases at the JCC with 43 cases registered, special protection unit and family courts. With more awareness sessions conducted on legal issues, more people will gain knowledge and peacefully claim their rights.

7. Conduct monthly live radio talk shows on justice, GBV and human rights in Nimule Town Council, Magwi County;



Two radio talk shows were conducted. The first talk show was on violence against women and girls and its negative effects and listened to by an estimated number of 15,000. There were 05 callers, 02 female and 03 males. Listeners encouraged early intervention by actors when violence occurs; authorities should get tougher with perpetrators of violence; there should be political will to end violence against women and girls.

In the second radio talk show was on the constitutional right to bail. The estimated number of listeners was 15,000. There were 11 callers with 7 text messages received. The listeners requested for other live radio talk show on the same topic.

8. Provision of legal advice/counseling/referral services at the JCC to 200 people;

43 cases namely were registered at the JCC and SPU namely domestic violence (12), robbery (2), incest (2), child abuse and family neglect (9), rape (4), adultery (2), early marriage (1), theft (1), abortion

(1), suicide (1), wife desertion (5), cheating (2) and malicious damage to property (1). Out of the 43 cases registered at the JCC, domestic violence was the most rampant case and three rape cases were registered and referred to the police.

9. Regular visitation to the police and prison detention centers conducted to identify survivors who need bail;

The visits to the police led to police bonds being granted to 4 suspects (M3, F1). The suspects bailed were able to join their family members while waiting for their trial.

Achievements;

- There is increased awareness and understanding on access to justice among 172 women, girls, SGBV survivors, elderly and returnees and other vulnerable groups participated in the legal awareness raising sessions in the community. The sessions have enhanced reporting of cases at the JCC, family and statutory courts, thereby leading to peaceful resolution of disputes.
- The capacities of 2 community paralegals and 9 traditional and women leaders were also built as family courts through trainings. The trainings equipped the community paralegals with legal knowledge to positively pass the same knowledge to their communities so as to allow vulnerable persons to claim their rights. The family courts on the other hand are able to mediate and resolve minor cases in their community and refer cases of serious nature to relevant authorities.
- There is increased victims' participation in the trials during informal processes. This is seen with increase in cases mediated from zero in May 2022 to 4 in June 2022. This means that victims of violence and conflict are slowly reconciling with perpetrators and their communities.
- Victims of violence and conflict will recover from mental trauma through provision of counselling services at the JCC. His time round, 43 survivors received counselling for various cases.
- STEWARDWOMEN participated in the radio talk show on bail with the police investigator and the boma chief of Anzara. This has strengthened the coordination and collaboration efforts among the

local government and community leaders in the promotion of human rights awareness and ensuring accountability for wrongs committed by perpetrators.

Challenges encountered during implementation;

- Limited reporting of GBV cases by the community to the police due to fear of being highly charged during filling of cases.
- There is slow response to GBV cases by the justice chain actors.
- Increase in number of GBV cases in the IDP camp due to frustrations by men who have lost livelihoods.
- Some women in the community still do not know about their human rights and are not bothered.
- Lack of financial support for cases management in police and PPA while filing of cases.
- Abrupt price impressment due to the insecurity has affected budget approved
- Some of the targeted beneficiaries went to exile due to the recent insecurities.

Recommendations;

- STW should look for more funding to extend the period of the current project which is changing the life of the community positively.

THE END

