

South Sudan - Child Protection Sub-Cluster Snapshot on Needs and Risks of Sexual and Physical Violence for Children - March 2014



Baseline Data

Baseline Indicators on Sexual and Physical Violence for children

Child Marriage (before 18 years) (SSHHS 2010)	% of girls aged 15-19 years married or in union	39%
	% of girls married before 15 years	7.3%
	% of girls married between 16-18 years	45.2%
Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (SSHHS 2010)	% of disapproval of FGM/C for girls and women	80%

Sexual abuse and exploitation: Boys but mostly girls are commonly abused by teachers, commanders, leaders, cattlemen and other male peers. Children have revealed that abuse takes place at home, on the way to and from school, during market days, at the water pump and during social gatherings such as “drum and dance”. CPUs within the police services report that 75% of recorded cases involve rape. In most cases perpetrators are known to the victim and include family members and neighbors. Most incidents go unreported. There is no reporting mechanism in place for girls who have been sexually assaulted to report cases. Because of the stigma attached to rape and single motherhood, girls tend to avoid talking about it or seeking treatment.

Domestic Violence: The perpetrators of domestic violence against girls tend to be fathers and brothers, and the reason usually raised is related to poor performance of the housework.

Gender Based Violence: Inter and intra-tribal violence has increased since 2009 with the deliberate targeting of villages with women and children making up the majority of victims, especially at water points, in fields while cultivating food, while collecting firewood, and when walking between villages. Women and girls are now being sexually assaulted during cattle raiding. Violence and sexual harassment by militia and the military are common.

Child and forced marriages as a survival strategy: Since the bride's family customarily receives a substantial bride-wealth (consisting of cattle) from the groom's family, the pressure to marry off girls is strong and the bride's family has an interest in marrying girls to the highest bidder. Furthermore, since the bride's family must repay the dowry if the couple divorces, girls are pressured to remain married, regardless of the abuse they may suffer.

Sexual Violence and Conflict: Rape and grave sexual violence has been reported in relation to inter communal violence and disarmament programs with a strong likelihood of under-reporting.

Sexual Violence and Exploitation (2014 Emergency)

Sexual and gender-based violence have been reported in **locations with active hostilities, during displacement and in the internal displaced sites (both in government and opposition areas)**.

- A lot of violated children and women, beaten up, shot at and raped during the fighting and while escaping. HRD is investigating who committed sexual violence such as rape, forces abortions and sexual harassment.
- Women and girls felt very insecure when they had to flee their homes and sleep in the bush under trees where they were easy target for sexual violence. Key informants confirmed that women and girls were raped and some died.
- Women and children are often left behind to take care of the basic needs as the men veer out in the bush to defend their respective communities thus exposed to attacks during the conflicts.
- In Malakal, MSF said displaced residents are reporting the killings and rapes of patients inside the only functional hospital in Malakal.

Moreover, increased economic pressures also led to protection risks, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and other forms of gender-based violence.

Physical Violence (2014 Emergency)

The crisis has been marked by wide-spread abuses against civilians, including women and children, committed by all parties to the conflict. Thousands of people – both civilians and combatants – are feared to have been killed, either in cross-fire or targeted violence.

There are **reports of killings and harassment in several locations**, including credible reports of civilians being targeted and attacked based on ethnic identity. In Bor, more than 40 corpses of children have been collected so far. In End February, cattle raids, child abduction and fear of rebel attacks have hit Twic East County in Jonglei, forcing the civilians to flee the areas to Lakes state.

Furthermore, families who have been unable to shelter in UN bases and who are isolated from other displaced communities have distinct physical protection needs.

There is also an increased tension among displaced communities with increased outbreaks of violence. Sporadic **issues of violence against IDP children in host communities have been reported**. Engagement with all actors to find constructive solutions to de-escalate tensions is on-going.