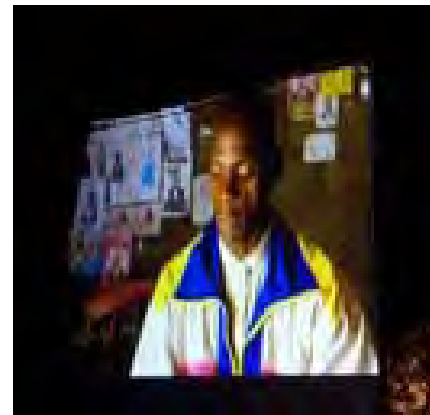


2011 INFORMING REFUGEES AND RETURNEES ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE FINAL EVALUATION

Informing Refugees and Returnees on Gender Based Violence in The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) aimed to better inform populations on how to prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and provide support for victims. The US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration provided support to Search for Common Ground (SFCG) that enabled the creation of a sensitization and dialogue strategy to reach out to returnees and adolescent youth. Through the twelve month project, SFCG implemented a series of activities that included Mobile Cinema Screenings and developing a radio program, *Uishi na Upende*, that dealt primarily with youth-related issues.

Search for Common Ground worked primarily towards “raising awareness around the causes of gender based violence and the mechanisms to combat it and support survivors of sexual violence.” The goal of the evaluation was to assess to what extent the project was able to achieve its objective. To measure the effectiveness of the project, pre- and post-studies were conducted among the participants of Mobile Cinema activities, and surveys were held for the listeners of the radio program. In addition to these surveys, the evaluation also employed focus group discussions and content analysis of listener feedback.



SFCG BUILDS AWARENESS VIA MEDIA AND DIALOGUE

In order to raise awareness, SFCG adopted a strategy which reached out to a mass audience and focused on effective sensitization and providing forums for dialogue. The Mobile Cinema activity involved screening films on SGBV in rural areas of the DRC, where film and television are not readily available. These screenings were a major spectacle and drew large crowds. After the screenings, discussions were held on issues related to SGBV. This is critically important in an area where such discussions are normally taboo. Facilitating dialogue that counters stereotypes and breaks down negative attitudes was an important element of this activity. By the end of the project, 41 public screenings were organized for returnees and community members in 4 out of the 6 territories in North Kivu, as well as in South Kivu. A total of 32,460 participants, 17,500 from North Kivu and 14,960 from South Kivu viewed the film. In addition, 21 sub-film activities were held, where various target groups, such as local authorities, police officers, soldiers, couples, and youth, gathered to have an intimate discussion of the films.

“I thank you for this radio program, which gives youth a means to express itself freely about sexual relations among young people.”

-A young listener of Uishi na Upende

SFCG also used radio programming to expand the reach of sensitization activities and further efforts to foster dialogue. SFCG employed a highly popular 20 minute radio magazine program, which is based on interviews and in-field round table discussions with 15 to 25 year old boys and girls. The 40 session-radio program was broadcasted on a total of 51 partner radios in the Swahili speaking zone of DRC and

addressed issues related to relationships, gender dynamics, and healthy sexual relationships, in a way which pinpoints the root causes of sexual violence within the civilian population. One of the key components of the radio program was that it got young people and adults to talk about healthy relationships between boys and girls.

SFCG RAISES KNOWLEDGE AND CHANGES ATTITUDES TOWARDS VICTIMS

Findings from the evaluation show that participants that attended Mobile Cinema screenings or listened to the radio program were better informed with regards to rights of victims. Participants were more likely to recognize that rape can be perpetrated by any individual, including members from foreign armed groups, members from national armed forces, or civilians. Radio program listeners were encouraged to discuss healthy relationship between men and women. Focus groups show that radio episodes addressing issues related to discrimination against women were particularly powerful in provoking reactions on these issues, with listeners condemning the perpetrators and supporting the victims. After witnessing the Mobile Cinema, 93% of those surveyed believed that victims of rape should speak out. They also recognized that rape affects the entire community and that collectively the community must come together to fight against SGBV.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of key recommendations for follow-up:

1. For greater impact, continue to implement a mixed strategy that encourages individuals to attend the Mobile Cinema and also listen to the radio program.
2. Increase the frequency and extend the scope of the broadcasting of the radio program, *Uishi na Upende*, so that it can reach a broader audience.
3. Include more females in the radio program, to ensure that girls' voices are adequately represented in the radio show.
4. Suggestions for future radio program topics include: the issue of sexual abuse and attendance records in Congolese schools, and the issue of poverty and unemployment among youth.

Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from "Informing Refugees and Returnees on Gender Based Violence: Final Evaluation." A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/drc.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at noatley@sfcg.org

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