



Gender Transformation & Empowerment

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Assessment of GBV in Lamwo and Pader Districts

UGANDA WOMEN'S NETWORK

2011



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) would like to appreciate the time of all the resource persons who accepted to be respondents to this study. Special appreciation goes to the district partners, CSO's and the local Government. Lastly, special appreciation goes to UNFPA for the financial support towards the completion of the assessment and to Betty Akullo the resource person who put the publication together.

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Background of Uganda Women's Network

Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) is an advocacy and lobbying network of national women's NGO's and individuals, operating in Uganda. It was born out of the East African Women's Conference held in Kampala in 1993 in preparation for the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995. Uganda Women's Network membership is comprised of national Women's organizations and individuals. UWONET is a registered Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with a Secretariat in Uganda.

In November 2011, UWONET commissioned a study on gender-based violence in Pader and Lamwo districts to examine the magnitude of GBV, available services, accessibility of the services and possible interventions.

The specific objectives of the study were;

- To assess the magnitude and common forms of GBV in the two districts.
- To assess the knowledge levels of the communities and service providers in preventing and responding to GBV.
- To identify current services being offered by CSO's and Government agencies in addressing GBV, constraints that impede accessibility of

GBV services and how cases are handled.

- d. To identify possible interventions mechanisms to reduce or prevent GBV and other gender inequalities.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Study Approach

An interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from key informants. A documentary review was conducted to synthesize existing literature on gender-based violence particularly in Northern Uganda. Focus group discussions were used to collect data from community members who included men, women, girls and boys.

2.2 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the main themes outlined in the specific objectives: magnitude, common forms of GBV, knowledge levels, current efforts by CSO's and government agencies in addressing GBV, legal system, and recommendations to address GBV. This study was done in Pader and Lamwo districts.

In Pader, the study covered four sub counties which include; Pader Town Council and Sub Counties of Pajule, Lamiyo and Omot while in Lamwo the study covered the sub counties of Lamwo town council, and Sub Counties of Padibe East and Padibe West. Key informants included women councillors, health care providers, Police, women leaders,

local council members, religious leaders, clan leaders, elderly, leaders and staff of international NGOs, CSOs and CBOs offering redress services to survivors, medical staff, district leaders and technical staff at the district and Sub-County level. In Pader, 2 FGD's were held with women and men. A total of 48 key informants were reached (24 women and 24 men).

3.0 Context Analysis

Pader and Lamwo are part of the districts in northern Uganda that experienced conflict by the Lord Resistant Movement (LRA) rebel group against the Government of Uganda for over two decades. The people in the named districts and northern Uganda in general have suffered gravely from conflict over a period of two decades. This conflict led to changes in the social and cultural norms over time as a result of long-lasting displacement that created fertile ground for exploitation and violence. Idleness, redundancy and unemployment in the camps coupled with a high level of frustration that are believed to have contributed to drug and alcohol abuse, lawless behavior and extreme violence against women and girls¹. Many young people have lost respect for their culture and for elders. These young people also did not know what 'normal' life is about and many parents have lost authority over their children.

3.1 Policy and Legal Framework for Redressing Gender-Based Violence in Uganda

Uganda has made significant progress in securing and improving the legal status and rights of women through law reform and policy formulation. Uganda is signatory to a number of human rights instruments which promote women's rights, i.e. the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child among others. As a sign of its commitment, the government of Uganda has enacted some laws and adopted sectoral policies and strategic plans to remove obstacles that hinder women's full attainment of their legal status and enjoyment of their human rights.

The 1995 Constitution of Uganda provides for equality between men and women, affirmative action to address any imbalances between men and women, equal opportunities for men and women to realize their full potential, equitable access to and control over productive resources, and outlaws all customs and practices that negatively affect the status and welfare of women. The government of Uganda has also enacted various legislation to help protect the rights of women including the Equal Opportunities Commission Act and the Domestic Violence Act, Anti FGM Act, Trafficking in Persons Act.

¹ See Suffering in Silence (2004), a study commissioned by the Gulu District Sub Working Group on SGBV, page 11

In addition, the Penal Code Act Cap 120 and its amendments provides for the different offences recognized in Uganda and the maximum sentences or punishments.

3.2 Analysis of Gender based Violence in Uganda

Gender based violence is often used interchangeably with the term “violence against women”, which under article 1 of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UN DEVAW) (1993) is defined as:

...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.

In Africa, studies done in Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda show that 42%, 40% and 46% of women in these countries respectively were physically abused by their partners (Kaye 2000). A survey in Kenya of 612 women in one district found that 42% of women had been beaten by a partner and 58% reported being beaten often. Likewise, a survey done in Zimbabwe in 1996 found out that 32% out of 966 women had been subjected to physical abuse by a family or household member since the age of 16 (UNICEF, June 2000).

A study done in Uganda by Slum Aid Project (2000) indicates that domestic violence is prevalent and the majority of victims are women

and children. The majority of the victims of spousal violence are women and children, although recent studies indicate that there is a significant level of violence committed by women against men (EASSI, 2004). Examining GBV broadly, UBOS (2007) indicates that it is wide spread in Uganda. Available literature for example Concern World Wide study on GBV in 2009 indicates that war situations increase the vulnerability of women and girls to gender-based violence.

4.0 Key Findings

a) Knowledge of GBV in the community

There is notable understanding of GBV in the community though not comprehensive enough. During FGDs, respondents understood GBV by describing one or two forms. They accorded GBV to mean verbal abuse, quarrels, neglect of the family, defilement, rape, taking away one's property without his or her consent, land grabbing from widows and beating. Some of the respondents attributed GBV to be polygamy, infecting someone with HIV and AIDS, restriction of one's movements without justifiable reasons, lack of appreciation of one's effort, refusing to pay school fees, heavy consumption of alcohol and shouting at children by teachers as GBV. In one FGD with women aged 20 – 45 years in Pader, GBV was described to be quarrels between a husband and a wife due to alcohol consumption. They reported that men often fight their spouses after

getting drunk while another FGD in Lamwo with women described GBV as misunderstanding between a man and a woman that results to beating of the woman.

b) Nature of GBV

FGD's with women in Pader revealed that both men and women suffer acts of GBV though more women experience more forms of GBV as compared to men. The most common acts perpetrated against women in all the settings included denial of control over productive resources, denial of control over benefits from productive resources, forceful withdrawal of money from the wife by the husband, refusal to provide basic necessities of the home by the husband, destruction of household possessions and sale of productive resource like land and cattle without the consent of the wife.

In Lamwo, one key informant revealed that GBV escalates during harvesting season mainly due to struggles between partners on how to control the sale of harvests. Other forms of GBV mentioned was polygamy, where most men prefer to have more than one wife and many children which factor is a cause of conflicts in many homes, physical violence (Fighting between partners), child neglect, sexual violence in form of defilement and rape, emotional violence in form of verbal abuse, irresponsible behaviors especially on the part of men who neglect their families, land wrangles.

Case study of Auma

Since I got married, I have never enjoyed peace in my home said Auma not real (not real name). I am a married woman, 47 years old and am blessed with six children and my husband Okidi not real (not real name) is 54 years old. After our marriage 33 years ago, my husband wanted me to produce a child every after one year, one day he told me that since he married me and took animals to my parents I should also give birth to children just like the animals he took home as my bride price. He also denied me freedom to practice and use family planning methods and when I resist, *“he beats me like I don’t have blood in my body. Not only that, he values me like his assets. He has never at any one time asked me what I think about the resources we have like the agricultural produce and animals. One day, he took one of the cows and sold it without telling me, when I asked about it he told me that I was his wife and I have no say whatsoever on anything since he married me. I live in fear all the time because I do not want to provoke his anger.*

This year he brought another wife and I just saw the woman in my compound, when I asked him, he told me that he had brought another woman to tame me since I am fond of asking him a lot as if he is not my husband. Since then, he does not share a bed with me but comes to my place to ask for food”.

I have this life and I am growing older in this situation. When I learnt of an organization working on human

rights called WORUDET, I went to their office to seek for support. When he learnt that I went to WORUDET he became very furious and he ordered me to leave his home and go where I came from. My life is very miserable I need someone to support me and rescue me from this condition I am under going.

c) Main causes of GBV

The study also established the main causes of GBV in both districts. The findings show that the causes were very similar in both districts. Key informants mentioned alcoholism as a driver for fights and quarrels in many relationships. Both women and men were reported to be consuming alcohol. The Community Liaison Officer at Lamwo Police Station, Mr. Oola Gaetano mentioned that poverty is a major cause of GBV; he reported that in most cases, a man uses poverty as a tool to suppress a woman. In poverty situations, people tend to have many misunderstandings leading to fights among partners in intimate relationships.

Other causes of GBV mentioned during FGD with women in Pader included polygamy, power differences between men and women, lack of understanding and respect amongst partners, denial of access to benefits from productive resources, infidelity and adultery, influence in affairs of a family by family members, HIV and AIDS infection causing mistrust and quarrels, disability after marriage, land wrangles and questioning a man’s behaviors.

Many men had resorted to over drinking alcohol to cope with the hardships experienced during the war. Drunkardness was also attributed to redundancy experienced by men due to displacement in IDP camps said one key informant from Lamwo district.

FGD discussion with men in Pader district indicated that the major causes of violence included lack of respect by women, desertion on the part of women, refusing to have sex, discrimination of step children by women, use of family planning method without a man’s consent, overdrinking on the part of women, human rights laws which makes women big headed and uncontrollable.

In-depth interviews with key informants in Pader revealed that alcoholism, poverty, overburdening women with domestic work, failure to provide basic necessities for the home by the husband, lack of respect of partners, denial of access from productive resources, HIV and AIDS Infection, land wrangles, extra marital affairs and polygamy as the major causes of gender based violence. The following are some case studies of women in the community.

Magnitude of GBV

During discussion with key informants including the police and health care providers, it was noted that they did not have a systematic way of data collection and storage on GBV. Most of the data available

was disorganized and not easily available. This was noted at the police post in Omot. While the in charge of the health centre III was asked to provide their files for GBV cases received, referred and those that had been full addressed. The service providers in question have poor documentation and filling system for their work on GBV.

According to the Community GBV Counselor at Padibe East Sub County, fighting between spouses is very common; she mentioned that she knows about 30 households experiencing violence in her sub county. Every month, she receives at least 4 cases of GBV though many cases end up un- reported.

Records from the Pader police station indicate that the most commonly received cases as domestic violence (fighting between spouses) defilement and child neglect, women being the major victims. Between March 2011 and October 2011, Pader Police station had received 100 cases of domestic violence of which 53 case were taken to court while others were referred to Local councils and to CSO's working in the district.

In addition, records from Pader Health Center III between October and November 2011 indicate 11 cases of defilement and 23 cases

of assaults from women. All the perpetrators of this violence were men.

According to the Grade One Magistrate in Pader district, 79 cases of simple defilement (defilement of children below 13 years of age) were registered in court, 32 of aggravated defilement (defilement of children below 13 years of age), 2 cases of attempted defilement and 1 rape case. However, most of those cases have not been prosecuted because of lack of logistics including transport and inability of victims to give evidence in court, poor investigation by the police.

The table below illustrates the different forms of GBV suffered by women, girls, men and boys in both Pader and Lamwo districts.

Women and girls	Men and boys
■ Verbal abuse for example using shameful languages like abusing the private part of one's mother ■ Denial of control over productive resources, ■ Denial of control over benefits from productive resources, forceful withdrawal of money from the wife by the husband, ■ Refusal to provide basic necessities of the home by the husband, ■ Destruction of household possessions and sale of productive resource like land and cattle without the consent of the wife. ■ Defilement ■ Rape ■ Fighting with the first wife or other wives when a man brings a new woman. ■ Refusing a woman to practice use of family planning methods ■ Restricted movements. ■ Marital rape ■ Denial of opportunity to study	■ Verbal abuse ■ Fighting ■ Lack of respect by women ■ Denial of sex and food by their spouses ■ Demanding money from a man who has no means of getting income. ■ Sexual exploitation ■ Denial of freedom of choice ■ Indecent assault ■ Punishment by parents, police, LCs forced labour ■ Denial of parental care ■ Denial of the right to participate in family decision making ■ Denial of food

Case Study

My name is Atim Caroline aged 37 years. I live at Paiula parish Pajule Sub-County Pader district. I have been married for over 15 years and have 5 children. My husband Mr. Okidi John Bosco used to be a good and gentle man before we went to the internally displaced people camp. During the 20 years insurgency, when the war was at its peak we decided to go to the camp where people had nothing to do but drink especially men, because of being idle my husband started drinking to the extent that sometimes he urinates on himself as a result of his drinking habits. He then became so violent to me and to other family members. He has since continued to drink and when he is drunk, he demands for sex which I always refuse. When I refuse he beats me in front of the children because we are living in one single room. I reported the matter to the clan leaders several times but he has failed to change.

I then decided to ignore him because I did not want any more troubles with him however, one day my husband came back home very drunk he got me asleep, he woke me up demanding for sex

but because I was very tired after a long days work in the garden I refused to meet his demands, he struggled and beat me almost to death. In the morning, I was rushed to Pajule health centre III when I recovered I decided to go back to my parents home.

My father gave me a piece of land to cultivate but my brothers keep saying I should go back to my husband because that is where I belong. My husband has been demanding for his bride price yet the bride price was used by my same brothers to marry. My brothers are not happy that I have returned home because they also do not have the money to support me to return the bride price, am working hard by brewing alcohol, one day I will be able to return my husband's bride price so I can live in peace.

My name is Ajok Helen 30 years old a resident of Otok parish Pajule Sub-County in Pader district, I and my husband were married for over 10 years and we had five children. Unfortunately my husband was killed during the 20 years insurgency in northern Uganda by the Lord Resistance

Army (LRA) in an ambush along Gulu-Pader road.

Before my husband died we worked so hard and opened a shop at Pajule trading centre, bought five cows and fifteen goats and a plot of land at Pajule Trading centre.

when my husband died, my in-laws turned their back on me and started mistreating me because I refused to inherit one of them, my brothers in-law started calling me names, accused me of stealing and selling my late husband's property illegally. I tried reporting the case to the clan leaders but they told me it was not a crime for my brothers in law to have authority over my late husband's property because in the Acholi traditional culture a brother in law has rights to own their late brothers property for the purpose of protection since women are weak and unable to protect property. I have also reported the matter to the police but they have never given me a final answer to my problems. I feel so much pain since I worked so hard with my late husband to acquire these assets.

5.0 Available Services

From the discussions with key informants, it was noted that there are some CSOs that are working to address GBV in the two districts though their scope of work is limited to only a few areas or Sub Counties while others are in the process of phasing out. The table below illustrates GBV services existent in the districts.

a) Lamwo District: Services being offered

CSO	Service
IRC	Community Counseling, reproductive health, provision of PEP, ECP and examination forms
Baylor	Provision of in service training and supply of ARV
ASVI	PMTCT services
OXFARM	Economic empowerment of women groups through improved technology
KIWEPI	Women Empowerment Project, awareness on GBV psychosocial support to survivors of GBV
NUMAT	Awareness creation and support to health units through provision of PEP, capacity building of health personnel on GBV
ASVI	PMTCT
Food for the Hungry	Prevention activities including awareness, training of local leaders and economic support women and girl
KICWA	Reception, rehabilitation and reintegration centre for formerly abducted children and their families

Pader District Services being offered

CSO	Service
COOP I	Medical and psychosocial support, hot line for victims of gender based violence and awareness creation
War Child Canada	Legal services to survivors of GBV
WORUDET	GBV prevention and economic empowerment of women and girls
Food for the Hungry	Prevention activities including awareness, training of local leaders and economic support women and girls.
Christian Children Fellowship	Education and psychosocial support, child protection, reception centre.
War Child Holland	Awareness on protection of children and education.
Uganda Land Alliance	Land rights awareness and legal redress.

The Gender Office

The Gender Office in both districts provides information and training to stakeholders on UNSCR 1325 at district level, creates awareness and sensitization on the importance of involving women in peace building processes and the need for their active participation in security decision making at different levels. The office also co-ordinates partners and service providers engaged in GBV activities. The Gender Officer in Lamwo reported that they lack equipment that relates to normal office running. These equipments, includes; computers, stationeries and also lacks facilities such as transport and communication, financial support to enable them run office programs and activities.

Legal Services

The police in both districts reported that their main role is prosecution of GBV cases, mediation and awareness creation through community policing, community dialogues, counseling and referrals of survivors of GBV. The police in Lamwo reported that they collaborate with some service providers especially KIWEPI, Food for the Hungry, NUMAT and health personnel while in Pader the police refer some cases to COOPI, Food for the Hungry, Christian Children Fellowship, WORUDET, War Child Canada and Uganda Land Alliance. These NGO's support the police in community policing and with logistical support for example fuel to facilitate their movements

and photocopying of PF3 forms. During one of the FGD with women in Pader, they revealed that much as the police is an institution that is supposed to protect rights of women they are not so easily reliable. They complained of corruption and bribery by the police and LCs.

One woman in the FGD lamented that "they never help in cases of domestic violence instead they alert your husband that he has been reported to the police by the wife!

In Lamwo district, one woman revealed that police are found of bribery and that most women do not report to the police because the police frustrate them and at times, they release the perpetrators as soon as they arrest without proper communication to the complainant.

While another woman in the FGD said that the police only respond to those who are badly hurt or with grievous assaults and neglect the other cases because they think they are small and negligible

On the other hand, the police reported that their major challenge hindering effective service delivery is inadequate financial and logistical support for example lack of fuel, means of transport and stationeries as well as frequent transfers of trained police officers to other station while some Police Officers do not have the skills in handling GBV matters. They revealed that sometimes they are forced to give charge sheets to the complaints to photocopy and this has caused the community to call them corrupt.

We give the forms to the complaints to photocopy, they call us corrupt, and they are branding us corrupt for nothing" said the OC Station Lamwo district

The Magistrate in Pader reported that lack of transport, and inadequate funding as their major challenge. People who are on remand need to be tried, this means that the magistrate has to move to the prisons on a regular basis, the vehicle available is very weak and little money is sent from the headquarters to maintain it. In addition, the majority of the women who have registered cases with the court are not used to court processes, the witness fear to give evidence; they think that once a case is reported it means it has been dealt with, they do not know they are supposed to follow up. On the other hand, the investigations by police take long due to inadequate logistics and at times the cases are dismissed for lack of prosecution in addition to poor investigations by the police because of inadequate investigative skills.

Health Services

At Padibe Health Center 1V, the midwife mentioned that the unit provides services including VCT, PEP, ECP family planning and referral services to other CSO's including NUMAT and Village Health Teams. The health unit also has community a trained GBV counselor based at the health unit whose role is to provide counseling to victims of GBV. However, it was noted that most of the health workers are not trained

on GBV but are expected to render services to survivors of GBV. It was also noted that some of the victims of sexual violence are ignorant of the prescribed timeframe of 72 hours for administering PEP and they tend to come after the time has passed.

The Clinical Officer from Pader district reported that they have various constraints that hinder effective handling of survivors including lack of skills in handling GBV survivors particularly those who have suffered rape and defilement. He revealed that it is requirement that all medical forms for survivors should be filled by a trained medical officer; this requirement makes the other health care providers to fear documenting cases of such nature. He also mentioned that late reporting by survivors of sexual violence prevents administration of PEP and sometimes they fail to provide evidence in court due to late reporting in addition some of the survivors' parents negotiate with the parents of the perpetrators hence making follow up of these cases very difficult.

Local Council Services

There was general contradiction about the services offered by LCs in the community. FGD with women in Lamwo district noted that Local Councils are supporting the community in mediating cases of domestic violence and land matters. However some key informants

thought that LCs lack information on GBV and in most cases, they demand for money from survivors. It was reported that some LC's ask between 2,500 to 5000 shillings before hearing a case.

In another, FGD in Lamwo with women they reported that some LCs are not making a difference in addressing GBV because they try to shield perpetrators of defilement while others delay justice for the survivors. They always ask for money whenever their services are required and are easily bribed said one FGD member.

It also revealed that LCs cannot execute some of the decisions because have limited powers and sometimes the perpetrators do not take their words seriously, because they know the LC's have no power.

LC's fear to lose votes and their lives, they should always be reminded of their roles, they should be trained on women rights and the law, they should be taken for exposure visits to learn from others and they should hold regular meetings with the community members to address GBV issues said one key informant from Lamwo. During an interview with the

LC's in Pader, it was noted many LC's are not aware about the laws governing GBV and called for trainings to help them adjudicate such cases.

I have never seen even a copy of the Domestic Violence Act that people talk about, how can I handle cases effectively yet I do not know my powers and roles, asked the LC one Lagwai zone A, Pader District.

Cultural and Religious services

It was noted that cultural and religious leaders are playing a key role in addressing GBV. In Pader the Rwots besides mediating cases of domestic violence are disseminating gender related information to the community; they counsel and make referrals to other available services including hospitals, police and to local council authorities. The religious leaders are creating awareness drawing from the teachings of the bible.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Action to address challenges

The following are some of the recommendations from the community.

- The LCs are the gate keepers of the community, they should be more proactive in addressing domestic violence by carrying home visits and having discussions with families, they should also carry out sensitizations during monthly meetings on domestic violence and peace building, they should develop bye laws with community members and they should follow up cases referred to the police on behalf of the complainants.
- Trainings: Strengthen capacity of gate keepers such as LCS, Police, elders and clan leaders, Probation and welfare and CSO, in handling GBV. From the study, it was revealed that survivors of GBV seek redress mainly from these leaders and these leaders are the most recognized institutions charged with the role of ensuring that GBV survivors seek justice and other necessary assistance.
- The community need to be sensitized on the dangers of GBV and more awareness should be targeted at men. From the study, it is reported that the majority of the perpetrators are men. The men could be trained as peers to help reach out to the other men in the community. They should also be trained on how to deal with aggression and make them reflect on issues of gender.
- Women and men should be empowered economically through income generating activities. The government should support the SACCO in the community to enable women benefit from IGA activities and also involve women in women saving groups which will help create acceptable space where women can meet and exchange experiences.
- Train women in decision making and leadership: This will help in reducing violence; they will be respected and will be able to make decisions that prevent violence.
- Alcohol consumption was highly noted as a big driver of GBV in both communities, the community suggested that the government should devise ways of regulating alcohol consumption. This can be through formulation of each district bye laws on alcohol and also through intensive sensitizations on the dangers of alcohol consumption.
- There is need to have sustained effort in creating awareness on GBV. The key informants and the people interviewed through FGD called for awareness to make the community understand GBV and its impact using strategies such as drama performances and community dialogues.
- The community leaders are not informed about the new legislation on GBV; there is need to support them through creating awareness on the law and to provide them with copies of the law. The community members too need to be sensitized on the legislation for them to claim their rights.

List of key informants interviewed in Lamwo District

No.	Name	Designation
1.	Lalam Irene	Senior Nurse Health Center IV
2.	Hon. Ocen Richard	Vice Chairperson LCV
3.	Achan Christine	Midwife Padibe Health Center IV
4.	Akera Alex	Community GBV counselor attached to Padibe Health Center IV
5.	Anek Cony	Woman Leader
6.	Okello Brian	Religious Leader
	Otukene Betty	Nurse
7.	Akidi Rosalba	Community member
8.	Adong Mercy	Youth Representative
9.	Otim Benard	LC representative
10.	Mr. Abonga	OC. Station Lamwo district

List of key informants Interviewed in Pader District

No.	Name	Title
1.	Okot David Edward	Magistrate Grade 1
2.	Lucy Amito	Gender Officer
3.	Ayo Alice	Police-CFPU
4.	Mr. Luciamoi	Clinical Officer Health Center 111
5.	Jennifer Ajilong	WORUDET staff
6.	Rev. Father Paul Ocen	Religious leader

Supported By;



Published by:

Uganda Women's Network-UWONET

Plot 198 Old Kiira Road Ntinda - Kampala, Uganda

Phone: +256 414 286 539,

Email: info@uwonet.or.ug

Website: www.uwonet.or.ug

Blog: <http://uwonetnews.blogspot.com>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/uwonet>

Twitter: @uwonet