

MALI

The Inter-Malian Dialogue concluded on 20 June 2015 with the signing of an Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali by the Government, the Plateforme and the Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA) which precludes amnesty for sexual violence. Insecurity within the country combined with factors such as fear of reprisals and lack of protection for victims, witnesses and the organisations that support them, has severely limited reporting of sexual violence.¹

1. What are the issues surrounding the stigma faced by survivors of sexual violence, their families, communities etc.

- Survivors often resist filing legal complaints or seeking care due to lack of confidence in the institutional response, and instances of pressure placed on victims and their families not to pursue justice.
- Support services for survivors are difficult to access, if they exist at all.
- Mali is a Muslim society (95%), with some fairly conservative ideas about the role of women, especially in the conflicted areas in the north.

2. Who is doing something already in these countries incl. FCO, DFID, Champion countries, local initiatives (NGO, government, leaders)

- The Government and the UN country team have worked together to train the national army, the police and the gendarmerie on conflict-related sexual violence.
- MINUSMA are in Mali to focus on, among other things, security, stabilisation and protection of civilians; the promotion and protection of human rights.
- EUCAP Sahel Mali are raising awareness and training on Human Rights and IHL and gender as well as training on Gender Violence and guidelines for handling victims of sexual violence.

3. Specific activities that need doing e.g. access to legal or medical care, judicial reform, evidence gathering etc.

- Gender expertise to be embedded in the monitoring and implementation committees of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali; urge the Government to adopt a law for the protection of victims and witnesses.²
- Assist in building the capacity of stakeholders on legal aid provision for victims of sexual abuse; provide technical assistance, through embedded expertise, on investigation and prosecution of sexual violence crimes to the judiciary; assist the government in reviewing the legal framework in relation to sexual violence.³
- Continue to urge the Government to develop a comprehensive national strategy to combat sexual violence and gender-based violence and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers so that services can reach remote areas.

¹ UN Secretary-General Rpt: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, March 2015

² SRSR Report: Conflict Related Sexual Violence 2016

³ Team of Experts: Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict: Table of Activities 2016-17

- Limited capacity of national institutions, including the judiciary, and the inadequacy of the legal framework continue to hamper efforts to address sexual violence.
- Ensuring adequate provision of legal aid for victims of sexual violence requires the review or strengthening of the current legal framework to ensure it provides for such assistance.
- Awareness raising is needed as well as legislation and better co-ordination between the ministries and judicial system.