

Response to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

The Challenge

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a recurring issue affecting women and girls in Ethiopia. The 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) report revealed that the number of people in need for GBV response is 6.4 million in conflict, draught and flood affected regions of the country.

Deeply engrained social and cultural norms contribute to high rates of child marriage, female genital mutilation, and intimate partner violence, among other harmful practices. Stigma and fear of retaliation often prevent survivors from reporting violence or seeking needed health, legal, and psychosocial support services.

The situation has been further exacerbated by the conflict in northern Ethiopia over the past two years. The UNSG February 2022 report indicated that SGBV was systematically used as a weapon of war, resulting in a surge of new cases needing urgent care.

However, funding and quality support services remain inadequate to address current needs. One Stop Centers (OSCs) located in hospitals exist but are concentrated in cities. Rural and marginalized survivors face immense barriers accessing response services. Many providers also lack training and resources for survivor-centered, compassionate care as well as supervision and psychological care for their frontline workers. Therefore, a more coordinated, multi-sectoral approach is needed to overcome stigma, capacity gaps, and funding constraints to reach those most in need.

Project Name	Response to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
Commissioned By	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implemented By	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Political Partner	Ethiopian Ministry of Health
Project Region	Ethiopia, in selected woredas of Amhara and Afar region
Project Duration	03/2023 -06/2025
Project Budget	EUR 4.2 million

Our Approach

The project aims to take an integrated, survivor-centered approach to improving access to quality SGBV response services.

It focuses on selected woredas in the conflict-affected Amhara and Afar regions and brings together a combination of interventions at health facility, community, and individual survivor levels:

- Strengthening the capacity of OSCs and primary health care units to provide compassionate, friendly, timely and survivor centered SGBV care through capacity development, staff care training, mentorship, and equipment.
- Engaging community leaders, religious leaders, women's groups, and youth to lead stigma reduction efforts through awareness campaigns, engagement programs, and community dialogues.

- Direct cash assistance for survivors of SGBV to cover costs related to transportation and additional treatment.
- Increasing socio-economic opportunities for survivors through livelihood grants, business skills training, life skill training and linkages to savings groups.
- Generating evidence on the barriers faced by survivors and effective response models to advocate for reinforcement of existing policies, funding, and coordination.
- Applying conflict- and trauma-sensitive approaches across all activities to uphold safety, dignity, and voluntary participation.

This multifaceted approach aims to overcome health system, social, and economic obstacles and empower survivors to access both immediate SGBV services as well as longer-term resources critical for recovery.





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Objective

The project has the below three overarching objectives to guide its integrated approach to improving access to SGBV services.

The first objective is to develop the quality and capacity of local health facilities and staff to provide timely, compassionate, survivor-centered care; this will be accomplished by conducting psychosocial skills training for OSCs and primary care staff, procuring essential medical equipment and consumables, establishing referral linkages between service providers, and supporting mobile outreach to expand service accessibility.

The second objective is to mobilize communities to transform harmful norms, increase service awareness, and prevent violence through meaningful engagement including awareness campaigns on gender equality jointly led by women's groups and local leaders, youth clubs and dialogues to promote non-violent conflict resolution, and inclusive committees to advocate against SGBV and assist survivors.

The third objective is to facilitate social reintegration and self-sufficiency for survivors through sustainable economic opportunities including livelihood grants and business skills training.

Pursuing change at the levels of health systems, communities, and individuals aims to address the multidimensional barriers survivors face in accessing essential, high-quality care.

Expected Result

Through its integrated interventions, the project expects to achieve results including:

- Improved psychosocial skills of health facility staff in providing survivor-centered SGBV care.
- Enhanced availability of and access to treatment supplies.
- Increased community awareness of SGBV issues and services through community engagement activities.
- Expanded engagement of community leaders, men, and youth in reducing SGBV stigma.
- Growth of women's vocational skill and access to income generation for survivors.
- Increased service utilization by typically excluded groups reflecting integration of leave no one behind approach.
- Positive trends in SGBV survivor health, safety, healing based on perceptions surveys.
- Government adoption of strengthened policy frameworks and coordination.
- Stronger coordination and referrals between local SGBV response organizations, and public service providers.

The results will contribute to more accessible, higher quality services for survivors, greater economic empowerment and social reintegration, and an improved enabling environment across policies, coordination, resources, and attitudes.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Response to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (RSSGBV) Project
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As at January 2024

Text RSSGBV

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On behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

In cooperation with Ethiopian Ministry of Health