



## COVID-19 and Gender Based Violence - Justice & Healing for Survivors of Sexual Violence!



Training male leaders in Bondo on SGBV and how men can help end violence against women and girls

Dear friends & partners,

As COVID-19 continue hitting hard across the world, our call and mandate to promote gender justice and equality among faith communities put us right inside the battle-field, to protect and support survivors of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), especially women and girls during pandemic lockdowns and other restrictive measures.

With the government's COVID-19 policies, protocols and guidelines, we have narrowed down to serve local communities in Kenya especially living in Bondo and Rarieda regions with a population of about 900,000 people, for impact and effective outreach.

Currently we empower local communities through capacity building and training targeting the following:

- a) Community Lead Actors (CLA) including gate-keepers and key opinion leaders such as priests and pastors (faith leaders), local administrative chiefs, teachers, and women leaders. This is leadership training initiative empowers local leaders on causes and impact of sexual gender based violence (SGBV). Currently we are engaging 60 male leaders from twelve community men's groups within Bondo on the best approaches in engaging MEN in order to end intimate partner violence (IPV), and violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- b) Youth groups through empowerment training on basic understanding on causes and effects of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), basic reproductive health education, and provision of sanitary towels to young girls. During these training, boys and girls are empowered in a safe space on issues around effects of teenage pregnancy, early marriages, harmful social and gender norms/stereotyping, gender based violence (GBV), and social/health impact of female genital mutilation (FGM). Through this project, we also provide limited funds to support education of young girls who are most needy and vulnerable. In the last two months, we have provided 200 girls with sanitary towels and reached out to 14 youth groups of about 960 people/youths in small groups. We also have 12 girls back in school through paying their school fees.
- c) We also work with survivors of sexual violence through our creative SCMRRI project. SCMRRI is **Survivors Case Management and Referral Support Initiative**, which traces and rescues survivors of sexual violence through creating community linkages for tracing and referral systems that support justice and healing for survivors. At the same time SCMRRI project prepares and empowers community lead actors (CLA) and survivors advocates to take lead in educating local communities on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) including rape, intimate partner violence, female genital mutilation, and child marriages.



Here is myself with **Faith** (not real name) together with her child and her mother at chief's camp in Bondo

With me in this picture is Faith (not real name) at Bondo Chief Camp, a 14 years old girl who was defiled/raped in March 2020 during COVID-19 lockdown at night in their kitchen at home and got pregnant. The baby in her laps is her seven months old daughter, and next to her far end is her mother. (Picture & story shared by survivors full consent)

Here is her short story. When Faith reached 12 years old, she began to menstruate (see blood) and her mother moved her bedroom to kitchen as a cultural requirement. Among the Luos of Kenya, traditional beliefs dictates that when a girl reaches puberty stage and the

moment she begins experiencing monthly period, she is not required to share the main house with the parents especially the father, and as a result, girls sleeping space are always moved to the kitchen for the said reason. This cultural practice is currently being faced out with new era of civilization. However many families in the rural villages still practice such traditions. This is the fate that befell Faith and she faced the consequences.

In our day to day work, we meet and work with survivors like Faith whose lives hangs in the balance and who needs our collective prayers and support, support that leads to healing and justice.

Will you support our initiative that empowers community leaders (CLA), youths, and survivors to lead change and healing in their local communities, and help end violence against women and girls?

To have a three days successful leadership training with a group of 40 participants (CLA or Youths) requires about **\$2,000**. Or to support a survivor through tracing, rescue, justice, and healing process requires about **\$500**. Or **\$10** to support young girl get sanitary towels for six months.

You can choose to support us by becoming our monthly donor or just you can just donate once.

Donate to us through **PayPal** or through **Global Horizon Inc.** If you live outside USA and prefer to donate through PayPal, please send us email [here](#) and we will direct you accordingly.

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Sincerely,

Rev. Dominic Misolo

**Executive Director**