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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (“MOU”)

THIS MOU is made and entered into on 16 October 2024 (“Effective Date”)

BETWEEN

QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON, a post-secondary educational institution operating under the laws of the Province of Ontario, Canada, having its research headquarters at 355 King Street West, 2nd Floor, Kingston, ON Canada K7L 3N6 (“**Queen’s**” and the Lead Applicant of a SSHRC Proposal);

AND THE FOLLOWING PARTNERS:

ABAAD RESOURCE CENTER FOR GENDER EQUALITY, 51 Bustani Street, Sector 5, Najjar Building, Furn Chebbak, P.O. Box: 50-048, Beirut-Lebanon

CENTRE DE RECHERCHE ET D’EXPERTISE EN GENRE ET DEVELOPPEMENT (CREGED) DE L’INSTITUT SUPÉRIEUR DE DÉVELOPPEMENT RURAL DE BUKAVU (ISDR-BUKAVU), 03, Av. Georges Defour, Q/Nkafu, C/Kadutu, Ville de Bukavu, RD Congo

CHS ALLIANCE, The Humanitarian Hub La Voie-Creuse 16 1202 Genève Switzerland

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY, a post-secondary educational institution operating under the laws of the Province of Nova Scotia, Canada, having its Office of Research Services at 6283 Alumni Crescent, Suite 231, PO Box 15000, Halifax, NS Canada B3H 4R2

ECOLE SUPERIEURE CATHOLIQUE DE DROIT DE JEREMIE (ESCDROJ), 38, Rue Brouette, Jérémie-Haiti (HT7110)

INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY IN HAITI (IJDH), 892 Plain Street, Suite 1, Marshfield, MA 02050

KOSOVO WOMEN'S NETWORK, St. Kadri Gjata II floor, no. 8 Prishtina, Kosovo 10000

MOSUCA, Siège derrière école Turque a lakouanga, Bangui, Central African Republic

SOFEPADI, 8, Mputu, Bankongolo, Bunia, Ituri, DRC

STEWAROWOMEN, Sudele, Hai Peace Residential Area, Plot Nos. 512 & 513, Block III, Tuba, South Sudan.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom

UNIVERSITY OF LEIPZIG, Universität Leipzig. Medizinische Fakultät
Abteilung für Medizinische Psychologie, und Medizinische Soziologie, Philipp-Rosenthal-Str. 55,
04103 Leipzig

UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA, Str. "George Bush", No.31, 10 000 Prishtinë, Republic of
Kosovo

YORK UNIVERSITY, Office of the Vice President, Research & Innovation, 904 Kaneef
Tower, 4700 Keele St, Toronto, ON Canada M3J 1P9

UNIVERSITY OF JUBA, University Road, Central Equatoria, South Sudan

PURPOSE:

This document is a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) and is not intended to create binding or legal obligations on any Partner or Partners.

The purpose of this MOU is to confirm the mutual interest of the Partners in a proposed research project entitled: RespondEr-Perpetrated Sexual ExPloitation aND Abuse in Humanitarian CRises - A Partnership for Accountability and Change (RESPONDER Partnership) (“**Research Project**”) under the direction of Dr. Susan Bartels (“**Project Director**” or “**Principal Investigator**”). Queen’s University will be submitting an application to the Partnership Grants Program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (“SSHRC”).

INTENTIONS:

- A. In support of the Research Project, Queen’s intends to submit a funding application (“**Proposal**”) to SSHRC under its Partnership Grants Program under the scientific direction of the Project Director.
- B. Each Partner has provided a letter of support (“**Letter of Engagement**”) to Queen’s for the proposal confirming its interest in participating in the Research Project and its commitment to make a cash and/or in-kind contribution to the proposed Research Project, should SSHRC accept the Proposal.
- C. SSHRC requires that, as part of the Proposal, Queen’s submits evidence of formal partnership in the form of this MOU which will be followed later by a Research Agreement that will set out the specific commitment and benefits, roles, responsibilities, sharing and management of intellectual property, risk allocation, confidentiality, publishing protocol and governance.
- D. The Partners acknowledge that such agreement and any specific undertakings are subject to the prior approval of each Partner through its internal governance process.

Therefore, each of the Partners hereby confirm to SSHRC, as of the Effective Date, as follows:

Proposed Research Project

- 1.1 The Partners have mutual interest in and will obtain a benefit by participating in the proposed Research Project.
- 1.2 The success of the Research Project will be dependent upon mutual trust, research integrity and good faith. Each Partner will endeavour to make resources available for the benefit of the Research Project in order to fulfill the roles and responsibilities identified in its Letter of Engagement, (subject to the project being approved by SSHRC and to any reasonable requirements as a condition of the acceptance of the Proposal).
- 1.3 Each Partner has read the Proposal and acknowledges the processes established for the Research Project - specifically:
 - I. Goal and Project Description
 - II. Description of Formal Partnership
 - III. Governance
 - IV. Training and Mentoring
 - V. Knowledge Mobilization Plan
 - VI. Expected Outcomes
- 1.4 The principles to govern the conduct of activities relating to the Research Project are:
 - a) Open communication and information exchange among the Partners, while respecting the proprietary and confidential information of all Partners;
 - b) Respect for all Partners as well as the contributions and skills each member offers to the Research Project; and
 - c) Public accessibility to the outcomes of the Research Project, subject to confidentiality agreements.

2 Knowledge Mobilization and Confidentiality

- 2.1 Notwithstanding a key goal of the Research Project is widespread knowledge dissemination, the Partners may wish to disclose information to each other in connection with the Research Project that is either non-public, confidential or proprietary in nature and as identified by the disclosing Partner to the recipients as confidential ("Confidential Information"). The recipient Partners shall safeguard such Confidential Information and shall not disclose it to anyone without a "need to know" within any of the recipient's organizations or, if to third parties, without appropriate confidentiality agreements being signed on the same terms. Each Partner shall protect the other's Confidential Information from disclosure for a period of three years from receipt. The recipient Partner's obligation shall not apply to information that is not disclosed in writing, is already in the recipient Partner's possession at the time of disclosure; is already in the public domain or later becomes part of the public domain by any means other than breach of this agreement by the recipient Partner; is received from a third party who has a lawful right to disclose it to the recipient Partner, free of any obligations of confidentiality; is independently developed by the recipient Partner without the use of any of the Confidential Information; or is required by law or regulation to be disclosed.

- 2.2 The Project Plan and any work product created is Confidential Information until the terms of publication are set out in a Research Agreement among Partners.

3 Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.1 It is expected that all Partners will make appropriate considerations for equity, diversity and inclusion in all partnership activities including but not limited to the design and conduct of research, mentorship, knowledge mobilization, and partner selection.
- 3.2 Partners will strive to create a quality experience for all of their fellow Partners by contributing to the creation of a safe, inclusive, and respectful relationship.
- 3.3 Training specific to equity, diversity, and inclusion through Queen's University (or an equivalent, agreed to organization) is required for all Partners.

4 General

- 4.1 This MOU may be executed by electronic signature software, or signed and scanned and emailed such that the separate versions will together form one document.
- 4.2 While SSHRC uses the terms 'partner' and 'partnership' in its grant program materials and the relationship of collaborative researchers is consistent with SSHRC's use of the term research 'partner' or 'partnership', the Partners acknowledge that this is not a joint venture among the Partners and no one Partner is an agent, employee, or legal partner of any other Partner. Each Partner is acting independently at all times with respect to its participation in the Research Project and in accordance with the oversight of its own institution. The Partners have not granted to each other any right or authority to assume or create any obligation or responsibility on behalf of or in the name of any other Partner, or to bind any other Partner in any manner whatsoever.

5 Withdrawal from the Research Project

- 5.1 A Partner may need to withdraw its participation from the Research Project. Prior to doing so it shall give (30) days Notice to the other Partners during which the Steering Committee shall meet to determine a plan for the completion of the tasks - either by bringing in a new Partner or by allocating them among the remaining Partners.
- 5.2 All other issues related to lack of participation or contributions among the Partners will be dealt with by the Steering Committee.

EXECUTED AS OF THE DATES BELOW:

ABAAD Resource Center for Gender Equality

Signed: *ghida anani*
ghida anani (Oct 17, 2024 16:07 GMT+3)

Name: Ghida Anani
Director

Date: 17/10/2024



Centre de Recherche et d'Expertise en Genre et Développement (CREGED) de l'Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu (ISDR-Bukavu)

Signed: *Marie-Rose Bashwira*
Marie-Rose Bashwira (Oct 22, 2024 09:56 GMT+2)

Name: Marie-Rose Bashwira Nyenyezi
Director

Date: 22/10/2024



CHS Alliance

Signed: *Twood*
Twood (Oct 17, 2024 13:07 GMT+2)

Name: Tanya Woods,
Executive Director

Date: 17/10/2024



Dalhousie University

Signed: 

Name: Marlies Rise
Assistant Vice-President, Research Services

Date: Oct 24, 2024

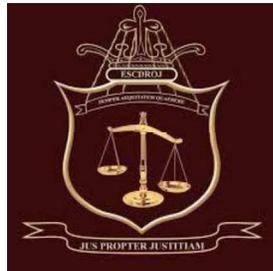


Ecole Supérieure Catholique de Droit de Jérémie (ESCDROJ)

Signed: 

Name: Bergemane Sylvain
Secrétaire Général

Date: 21/10/2024



Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)

Signed: *Brian Concannon*
Brian Concannon (Oct 22, 2024 11:11 EDT)

Name: Brian Concannon
Executive Director

Date: 22/10/2024



Kosovo Women's Network

Signed: 
[Igballe Rogova \(Oct 16, 2024 20:42 GMT+2\)](#)

Name: Igballe Rogova, Executive Director

Date: 16/10/2024



MOSUCA

Signed: 
[DJANGALA FALL Miriame Diane Ella \(Oct 17, 2024 09:50 GMT+1\)](#)

Name: DJANGALA-FALL Miriame Diane Ella
National Coordinator of MOSUCA

Date: 17/10/2024



MOSUCA

SOFEPADI

Signed: 
[LUSAMBA.S \(Oct 24, 2024 12:49 GMT+2\)](#)

Name: Sandrine Lusamba
Executive Coordinator

Date: 24/10/2024



SOFEPA**DI**

*Solidarité Féminine pour la paix et
le Développement intégral*

STEWARDWOMEN

Signed:  Josephine Chandiru Drama (Oct 16, 2024 20:31 GMT+2)

Name: Josephine Chandiru Drama
Director

Date: 16/10/2024



University of Birmingham

Signed:  Xavier Rodde (Oct 28, 2024 15:58 GMT)

Name: Xavier Rodde
Assistant Director (International Research),
Research Strategy and Services Division

Date: 28/10/2024



University of Leipzig

Signed:  Heide Glaesmer (Oct 16, 2024 18:28 GMT+2)

Name: Prof. Anja Mehnert-Theuerkauf
Head of the Department of Medical Psychology and Medical Sociology

Date: 16/10/2024



University of Prishtina

Signed: Arben Hajrullahu

Name: Arben Hajrullahu
Rector of University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"

Date: October 29, 2024



York University

Signed: David Phipps

Name: David Phipps
Assistant VP Research Strategy and Impact

Date: 23/10/2024



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON

Signed: Fouad Elgindy

Name: Fouad Elgindy
Director, Strategic Initiatives and Institutional Programs

Date: 29/10/2024



UNIVERSITY OF JUBA

Signed: _____



Name: Dr. El-Chol Lual

Dean, School of Law

Date: 28/10/2024



Prior Research Collaborations

Table 1 highlights 21 key research collaborations among RESPONDER partners over the past nine years, showcasing the primary collaborations most relevant to the RESPONDER Partnership.

Table 1. Examples of previous research collaborations between RESPONDER partners

	ABAAD	IJDH/BA I	SOFEPADI	STEWARDS-WOMEN	UoB	YU	UoL
<i>QU</i>	World Bank-funded research ^a	1) SSHRC Partnership Development Grant ^b 2) AHRC-funded research PaCCS; ^c 3) AHRC-funded networking grant ^d	1) SSHRC Insight Grant; ^e 2) FCDO-funded XCEPT project DRC ^f	FCDO-funded XCEPT project South Sudan ^g	1) SSHRC Partnership Development Grant; ^b 2) SSHRC Insight Grant; ^e 3) Welcome Trust-funded project; ^h 4) Queen's-funded Wicked Ideas project; ⁱ 5) FCDO-funded XCEPT project South Sudan ^g	1) World Bank-funded research; ^a 2) SSHRC Insight Grant; ^e 3) SSHRC PEG Liberia; ^j 4) SSHRC PEG Nigeria; ^k 5) FCDO-funded XCEPT project DRC ^f	SSHRC Partnership Development Grant ^b
<i>UoB</i>		1) SSHRC Partnership Development Grant; ^b 2) AHRC-funded PaCCS; ^c 3) AHRC-funded networking grant ^d	SSHRC Insight Grant ^e	FCDO-funded XCEPT project South Sudan ^g	-----	1) SSHRC-Partnership Grant; ^e 2) FCDO Platform for Action ^l	1) EU MSC doctoral training network; ^m 2) AHRC network ⁿ 3) Ralf Dahrendorf impact prize; ^o 4) Volkswagen-funded joint symposium 2015 ^p 5) Volkswagen-funded joint symposium 2017 ^q 6) Volkswagen-funded joint symposium 2022 ^r 7) AHRC-funded award-winning film ^s
<i>YU</i>	World Bank-funded research ^a		1) SSHRC-Partnership Grant; ^t 2) FCDO-funded XCEPT project DRC ^f		SSHRC-funded Partnership Grant ^t	-----	

Partners:

- Queen's University = QU (Canada)
- University of Birmingham = UoB (UK)
- York University = YU (Canada)
- Dalhousie University = Dal (Canada)
- ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality = ABBAD (Lebanon)
- Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti / Bureau des Avocats Internationaux = IDJH/BAI (Haiti)
- Solidarité Féminine Pour La Paix et le Développement Intégral = SOFEPADI (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- STEWARDWOMEN (South Sudan)
- University of Leipzig = UoL (Germany)

Funded Collaborative Research Projects:

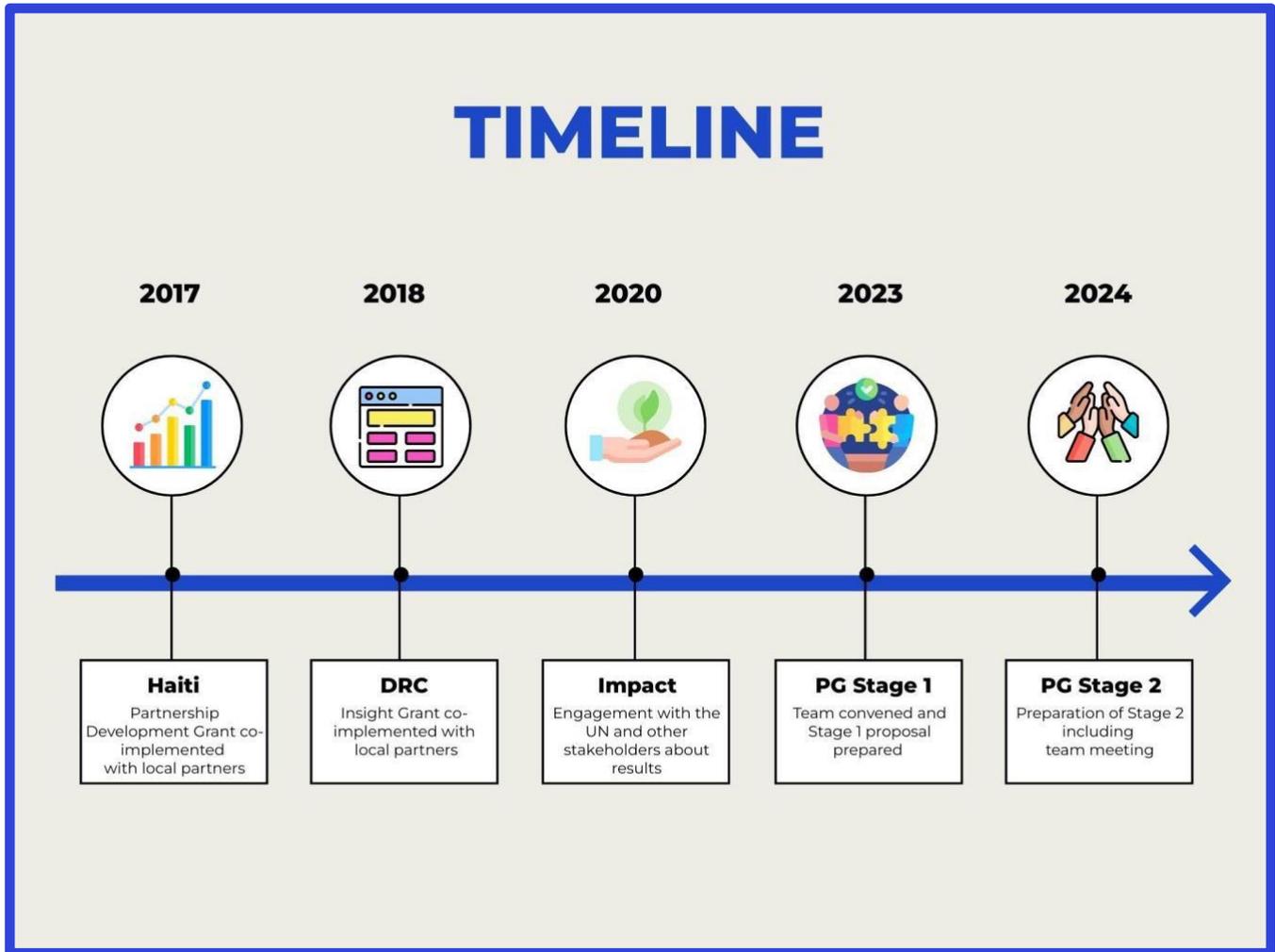
- ^a World Bank-funded research (2016-2021) investigating child, early, and forced marriage within the Syrian crisis
- ^b SSHRC Partnership Development Grant (2017-2022) investigating peacekeeper-perpetrated SEA in Haiti
- ^c AHRC-funded Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS) project (2016-2018) on peacekeeper-perpetrated SEA in Haiti
- ^d AHRC-funded networking grant (2016-2018) to bring together various stakeholders for a workshop on peacekeeper-perpetrated SEA in Haiti
- ^e SSHRC Insight Grant (2017-2023) investigating peacekeeper-perpetrated SEA in DRC
- ^f FCDO-funded project through XCEPT (2024-2025) studying the impacts of international military interventions on women and girls in eastern DRC
- ^g Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)-funded through XCEPT project (2024-2025) examining the impact of repeated cross-border migration on women and girls in South Sudan
- ^h Wellcome Trust-funded project (2016-2018): Life courses of Vietnamese GI-children: a comparative pilot study of three cohorts using Sensemaker and Cognitive Edge methodology
- ⁱ Queen's-funded Wicked Ideas project (2020-2023) reviewing training curricula delivered as part of SEA prevention initiatives
- ^j SSHRC-funded Partnership Engage Grant (2021-2023) on enhancing resilience among disadvantaged women and girls amidst COVID-19 in Liberia

- ^k SSHRC-funded Partnership Engage Grant (2023-2024) on transitional gender justice in North East Nigeria
- ^l FCDO Rapid Evidence Assessment on Children born of Conflict-related Sexual Violence (2023-2024) – led by the University of Birmingham with co-applicant Glaesmer (University of Leipzig) and co-applicant Bunting (York University) as external experts
- ^m European Union Marie Skłodowska-Curie (EU MSC) Innovative Training Network (2014-2019) doctoral training network on children born of war
- ⁿ Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) network (2011-2014): Their Crime is Being Born: Children born of war in the 19th century Children Born of War
- ^o Ralf Dahrendorf Preis of the German Science Ministry (2021) impact prize for use of theatre in knowledge mobilisation
- ^p Volkswagen-funded joint symposium (2022): Conflict-related Sexual Violence against Men and Boys
- ^q Volkswagen-funded joint symposium (2017): Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Unaccompanied Minor Refugees
- ^r Volkswagen-funded joint symposium (June 2015): Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Children Born of War – from World War II to current conflict settings
- ^s AHRC-funded film *The Wound is Where the Light Enters*, produced by Vardo Films, was awarded the AHRC Research in Film Award 2021. [Vardo Films](#), known for its focus on social-change media, will partner with the RESPONDER Partnership to create a participatory film on RP-SEA. This project will include training for graduate students on using media as a knowledge mobilization tool, empowering both students and community members to record footage and learn the basics of film editing. This approach actively involves participants in the production process, fostering engagement and effective knowledge dissemination.
- ^t SSHRC-funded Partnership Grant (2015-2020) hosted by York University and focused on conjugal slavery in war

Timeline

While Table 1 highlights prior research collaborations amongst team members, Figure 1 presents our Partnership’s timeline.

Figure 1. Timeline for the RESPONDER Partnership



Below we highlight 2 foundational projects that laid the groundwork for the RESPONDER Partnership: a SSHRC Insight Grant and a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant. We will conclude with key insights from our Stage 2 preparation meeting in Rwanda in early September 2024.

SSHRC Partnership Development Grant (2017 – 2022)

Collaborative Research on How Haitian Women/Girls Interact with UN Personnel

Our [research partnership](#), involving the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI)/the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), the Commission of Women Victims for Victims (KOFAVIV), the former Enstiti Travay Sosyal ak Syans Sosyal (ETS) School of Social Work, the University of Birmingham, and Queen's University, was implemented between 2017 and 2022. The project focused on the interactions between Haitian women and girls and UN personnel.

Collaboration Between International and Local Organizations



Logistics planning in Port-au-Prince before data collection, May 2017

This collaboration was crucial in ensuring that our research addressed local needs and was culturally relevant. Each partner brought unique insights and expertise, enhancing the overall effectiveness of our study. Leveraging our diverse backgrounds and experiences, we created a comprehensive approach that gathered essential data, and fostered trust and engagement.

Conducting Research in Complex Environments

Our mixed-methods study demonstrates our ability to navigate the challenges of conducting research in complex environments. We selected 10 UN bases in Haiti, ensuring a representative geographical and operational spread.



Tablets being prepped for data collection in Haiti, May 2017



Co-led team training in Port-au-Prince, May 2017

Training and Capacity Building

Before data collection, we facilitated a comprehensive training program for local researchers, equipping them with the skills needed to implement data collection using SenseMaker. This included training on research ethics, confidentiality, and the specifics of our mixed-methods approach. Moreover, we fostered a strong team atmosphere, encouraging collaboration and open communication among the research assistants to ensure a unified approach and to uphold the rigour of our research.

SenseMaker Data Collection

Data was collected in public spaces near 10 UN bases using SenseMaker to gather micro-narratives. Participants shared their experiences interacting with UN personnel, which we recorded and analyzed through interpretive questions that empowered participants to plot their perspectives about the experience shared.



Practicing delivering the sensemaking survey during training in Port-au-Prince, May 2017

Conclusion

This research was made possible through the collaboration of all partners, each contributing diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise to implement the project effectively and deliver new insights into the experiences of Haitian women/girls engaging with UN peacekeeping personnel.



Last day of team training in Port-au-Prince, May 2017

SSHRC Insight Grant (2017 – 2023)

A Partnership to Study Interactions Between Congolese Women/Girls and UN Peacekeepers

Collaboration Between International and Local Organizations

This [project](#) was a partnership between researchers at 2 local Congolese organizations, Solidarité Féminine Pour La Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI) and Multidisciplinary Association for Research and Advocacy in the Kivus by United Junior Academics (Marakuja), along with Queen's University, the University of Birmingham, and York University. SOFEPADI, a Congolese NGO dedicated to promoting the rights of women and girls, played a crucial role in ensuring the research was culturally sensitive and relevant to the local context. Marakuja is a non-profit organization that brings together a network of Congolese researchers with experience designing and implementing data collection in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).



Team logistics planning meeting in Goma, May 2018

Complex Research in Challenging Environments



Study tablets, referral cards, and other resources for data collection in Goma, May 2018

This research exemplifies our team's ability to conduct complex studies in challenging settings. We purposively selected UN bases in eastern DRC based on their size, years of operation, troop-contributing countries, staffing, and geographic variation. Our mixed qualitative-quantitative study was conducted from May to July 2018 across 6 locations, focusing on the interactions between local women/girls and MONUSCO (the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) personnel.

Training and Capacity Building

Prior to the launch of data collection, we hosted a 1-week training in Goma. Twelve researchers completed training on sensemaker methodology, research ethics, confidentiality, reporting adverse events, data upload and management, and participant referrals. Training also included role-playing to practice delivering the survey when faced with challenging circumstances.



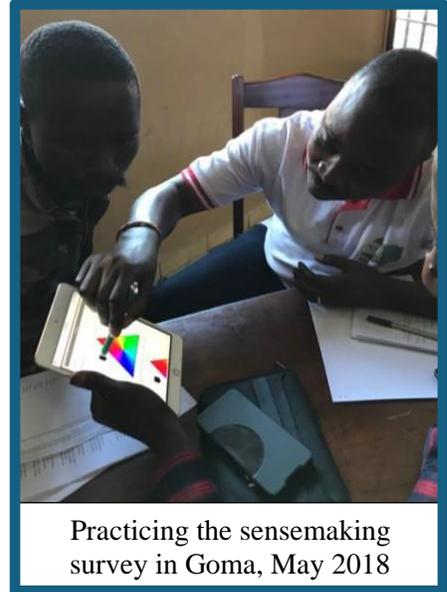
Role-playing during training in Goma, May 2018

SenseMaker Data Collection

Data collection occurred in public locations within a 30-km radius of the UN bases, using SenseMaker to extract meaning from micro-narratives. Participants shared short stories in Swahili or Lingala based on prompts related to their interactions with peacekeeping personnel, which were audio-recorded. Following this, they answered interpretive questions designed to quantify their experiences, allowing us to collect rich quantitative data alongside qualitative insights. Care was taken to avoid introducing reporting biases by keeping survey questions broad and not specifically addressing sensitive topics like sexual exploitation and abuse.

Summary

This research was made feasible through collaboration, with each partner contributing diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise to address the complex issue of SEA faced by women and girls in the DRC.



Practicing the sensemaking survey in Goma, May 2018



Final day of team training in Goma, May 2018

RESPONDER Partnership Stage 2 Planning Workshop Kigali, September 4-6, 2024



Team members from STEWARDWOMEN, SOFEPADI, and CREGED at the Partnership Stage 2 preparation workshop

The RESPONDER Partnership planning workshop was a collaborative effort involving partners from SOFEPADI, CREGED, IJDH, BAI, STEWARDWOMEN, the Kosovo Women's Network, MOSUCA, the University of Birmingham, and Queen's University, held in Kigali, Rwanda. This meeting focused on fostering team building and aligning our team on the purpose and key objectives of our Partnership addressing responder-perpetrated sexual exploitation and abuse (RP-SEA).

We engaged in in-depth discussions about our methodology, brainstorming potential challenges and effective mitigation strategies along with contingency planning for each context. Safety and logistical issues were thoroughly considered to ensure smooth implementation in diverse environments. As a team, we outlined expected outcomes, measurement criteria, and timelines to assess our progress. Additionally, we reviewed key aspects of the budget, ensuring it was equitable and aligned with our project goals. Decisions regarding the RESPONDER Partnership logo were also made, contributing to our collective identity.



Breakout session with team members from different organizations working together



Large group discussion at the RESPONDER Partnership Stage 2 preparation workshop in Kigali

The workshop was crucial in effectively establishing the foundation of our cross-sectoral research collaboration and allowed for knowledge mobilization planning to maximize impact across diverse communities and stakeholders. Leveraging expertise from various sectors will enhance the relevance and applicability of our research outcomes, translating insights into actionable strategies for greater change.



Team photo on final day of Stage 2 planning workshop

This collaborative effort underscores our solid partnership and demonstrates our capacity to implement rigorous research in challenging contexts, combining our collective knowledge and expertise to create meaningful impact in addressing RP-SEA.