

## AGBV 2023 FINAL REPORT

### Introduction

Mental health is an essential component of a multi sectoral response to GBV. While survivors' experiences vary, the impacts of GBV on mental health and psychosocial well-being can have far - reaching consequences for individuals, families, and communities. Psychological effects of GBV can include feelings of fear, sadness, guilt, and anger, as well as anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideas, and addiction.

Alongside social consequences, such as stigma, isolation, and discrimination, these effects can contribute to difficulties in maintaining or establishing relationships and disruptions to work, caregiving,

Addressing the mental health and psychosocial needs of survivors of GBV is critical to promoting healing, empowerment, and meaningful participation in economic, and civic activities. It was in this context that FWA organized 2 trauma healing workshops in Giheta commune for serious cases of survivors of GBV.

### Participation

Participation was 100 % for women.

Note that the Kibimba workshop was made up of 10 participants from Gitega and 10 others from Kibimba.

Locality	Men	Women
Kibimba	0	10
Gitega	0	10
Gishora	0	20
Total	0	40

## **The Impact of workshop**

### **➤ Participants saw themselves in the thematic of the workshop**

#### **• Trauma symptoms**

*“I grew up unhappy because I am an orphan. When I got married I hoped to find peace but it was the worst because I live in violence.*

*I live with an irresponsible husband. He doesn't take care of anything at home. He only comes home to eat. I have to work hard to have something to eat. What hurts me so much, is that he sells my harvest ; he sells bananas, avocados and other thing which are not yet ripe, he rents the land that I have to cultivate; I had a pig, and he sold it; He uses anything to complicate my life.*

*One day He beat a person, then the local authorities sanctioned him with a fine of 40,000 FBU because he didn't have the money, he gave my bean field.*

*I begged him not to give my bean field and I promised him to pay half of the amount. Then he raised his arm and told me to pray for his arm so that he would hit me seriously. This is how I asked him for forgiveness and agreed to pay the total amount to save my bean field.*

*I am always on alert when he comes in the house; I am always in a position to run; I often sleep at my neighbor's house now I count more than 40 houses where I have already asked to accommodate me. I change houses for fear that people will know what I am going through and start pointing fingers at me. I even sleep under the tree. I am a person who is always restless, I rarely find sleep, I don't want sex because of the grief.*

*I found myself with the symptoms of the trauma that you mentioned below. The fact of talking to people who have the same problem lightens the heart”.*

#### **• Johari's window**

*“My name is Jocelyne KWIZERA. When I had two years into my marriage, my husband asked me a question that turned my marriage down. This question was this: “What ethnicity do you belong to?” I answered him: “I don't know.”*

*As we saw in this module "Johari's window" the part that says: “Information about yourselves that others know but you don't know”. Other people told him that I am HUTU while it was my mother who was HUTU, and my father was Tutsi.*

*From that day he made a coalition with his mother and told me that I belong to a bad ethnic group, a cursed ethnic group, a criminal ethnic group that is why theirs cows died one by one because of me.*

*They took my luggage and threw them outside and I headed to my parents' house. When the local authorities found out the case, they imprisoned my husband, his brother and his mother. I was a student, I couldn't continue studying that year because of depression.*

*After 2 years we got back together, but he continued to mistreat me; he doesn't allow me to do a business while he doesn't give me money. I beg him to let me and he lets me do a business. In the evening he took all my money by force, and he threw my goods on the ground.*

*I knew that he had another wife. He did it under the pretext that I have daughters only. He told me that I was destroying their family. If I had braids He used to tear out them. I have a part in my head where the hair no longer grows because of this violence.*

*He wanted to sell our plot and I made a mistake to refusing this proposition. I paid that with insults and physical violence which lasted more than a year. He always remembered this case to beat me.*

*One day He told me: “today I will kill you” I was very depressed and I wrote on my WhatsApp status; “the one who loves me may he will raise my children” This is how my family knew that I was in danger and rushed to remove me and my children in his house.*

*After I left, He threatened my boss, telling him that He was the cause of our separation and the boss had to cancel my contract.*

*I started from zero and it was too hard for me. My husband sometimes came to take my children but now the children refuse to follow him.*

*It was a blessing for me to participate in this workshop I learned, I saw how to deal with depression I decided to take a step to heal and live.”*

### **➤ Self-esteem increased**

*My name is NININHAZWE Nadine, something which depresses me more than others thing is that I told to myself that I looked ugly because my husband never wants to be with me in public. In my first month of marriage I told him to go to church together and he told me that he will never go to church with me.*

*I really wanted to be together with my husband. One day I decided to go to the cabaret where he was. When he saw me, he left the place.*

*My husband has no worries about me even during childbirth; he never comes to see me in the hospital. Hunger may kill me many times If hadn't my mum.*

*All this left me with this feeling that I am ugly and I hate myself. I didn't want to go to church or other places, it is difficult for me to make me beautiful but this workshop really helped me. I saw that I was traumatized; I understood that I am not ugly but I am a victim of my husband's bad actions. I was glad when other women here said that I am beautiful I decided to love myself without anyone compliments.*

➤ **Workshop considered as a vacation moment for the participants**

*It was a pleasure to give us this opportunity as women victims' women of GBV. We cried together, we talked because there was time even after the workshop. In addition to that we had to change the place; we leave our daily lives to spend the day in something that refresh our mind.*

*I thank the one who invited me. I was a person who does not leave the house, the accompanist asked permission for me to come and being among you is like a retreat. I feel fulfilled and I am ready to face the difficulties of life with strength.*

➤ **A healing time**

*"For me, the workshop was a moment of total healing. I had a difficult time; my husband put me through too many things worst when I was very young because I married this man at 15 years old. He accused me that I am an adultery woman because I was bleeding for a long period due to the unbalanced hormones.*

*He put a child who lived in my house in a basin filled with water until he almost died. He had many wives and he used to beat me every day.*

*We divorced and justice service gave me a house which hurt him very much. He planned to kill me and I was leaving with fear. One day at night, he threw me into a ditch; it was only God who rescues me.*

*As you saw, I screamed with all my strength because my heart was too heavy. After my tears I felt healed, it was the first time I expressed myself about my case like that."*



## Recommendation

- Multiply these workshops because there are many victims of GBV in our communities

## Evaluation

In October and November an evaluation was made to see the impact of the activities made by our accompanists and the monitoring of the Income Generating Initiative of two groups at Kibimba and Kibogoye.

- **Faithful House approach impact in the community**

After the training, the accompanist had a mission to help the couples by using the approach. In these three month (October – December) more than 70 households were informed about the module and more than 30 households were transformed by this module.



Acc

*Accompanist's action on Faithful House approach in Community*



During the visit to Burundi of members of the QSN who came from Norway. An activity was organized to demonstrate through traditional dances, sketches, testimonies, and speeches the activities made by our accompanists in Giheta commune. It was on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The



purpose of the public event to raise awareness against gender-based violence (GBV). This event was organized by the FWA GBV survivors' accompanists. It took place in Giheta commune, Gitega province. The public event was honoured by two special quests from Quaker Service Norway (QSN)



From left to right: Arnstein Finset (QSN board chair), FWA legal representative and Leo (QSN Board member)











*Threatening his wife*



*Life has now changed with the help of GBV survivors accompanists*



**Happy birthday to Leo on October 18, 2023**

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Arnstein Finset (the QSN board chair) and Leonardus Jacobus Johannes (Member of the QSN board) visited the FWA office in Kamenge.



Meeting with FWA AGBV staff, GBV survivors Accompanists' representatives and QSN board representatives



*QSN at FWA office*



*Some of the FWA staff with guests from QSN*





- **Testimony about Faithful house approach**

We were a lifeless couple. Accompanist couple visited us and taught us about Faithful house approach. We appreciated this module very much and it changed us enormously me as a husband. I used to go home late and drunk. I didn't take care of my wife. The priority in my life was the beer, I did not respect my wife, there was no time in the house where we could sit and discuss regarding the life of our household.

After many visits and discussion about module with accompanists the life of our couple changed. Now we have more time together. We can walk in the street hand in hand like newlyweds. We tried to put our homes in order as the module said, we discussed future plans together, and even the people who looked at us are seeing that there was a change.

- **Testimony about trauma healing and IGR**

My name is NIYONSABA Concilie. I suffered too much violence in my couple. My husband beat me a lot. I had two children who required a special medical assistance; my husband did not care of those children.

Because of the pain I was tempted to commit suicide twice and people arrested me. I couldn't laugh, and if I was invited to a party I used to sit far from others.

God sent me FWA accompanists who came to assist us and invited me to the trauma healing workshop.

Now I can laugh, I can wash my clothes, you see that I am clean, the accompanists were able to convince my husband care about his children and now He helps me. In addition to that, I thank you very much for giving me a pig because it helped me by giving me manure and my harvest increased. Before I could sow 5kg of beans and harvest 3 kg. Soon my pig is going to have piglets and I am enjoying this blessing.





Again in the month of January 2024, two groups of GBV survivors were supported to promote their economic autonomy. The first group from Gitega commune was given si goats. Two will share one goat. When it multiply, each one of them will have one goat and the third one will be given to the FWA for the sustainability of this project. Sharing one goat as two GBV survivors is a way to keep in touch, sharing their stories and encouraging each other. This is the psycho-social aspect. On the other hand, it is a way to be economically independent as GBV survivors.









The second group from Kibimba was supported with three sewing machines, sewing threads, loincloths so that they can produce handmade warm clothes, tablecloths, loincloths bags. This will be a way to make money as a group of women. The main recommendation was that FWA supports them to do marketing of their products.







