



## State of Civil Society Report 2019 dialogues Tanzania

### 1. Background to the dialogue

#### Date of the dialogue

9 to 11 July 2019

#### Convening organisation/s

TATU Project, a CSO based in Tanzania, in collaboration with the French student association Sorbonne pour L'Organisation des Nations Unis (SONU)

#### Focus of the session

The dialogue took place during a three-day workshop that brought together policy practitioners and people from Msitu wa Tembo, the community where TATU Project works. The main aim of the workshop was to uncover the challenges to addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in Tanzania. Each day focused on a different key theme:

1. The current situation of women's rights in Tanzania and the legal avenues available to prosecute GBV
2. Children and how they can be affected by or protected from GBV
3. How men can be engaged in preventing GBV

### 2. Participants in the dialogue

#### Number of participants and gender distribution

**Day 1:** 20 – 15 female, 5 male

**Day 2:** 29 – 20 female, 9 male

**Day 3:** 26 – 15 female, 11 male

#### Specific groups represented

**Day 1:** Representatives of two local women's groups, the village's leadership, the District Development Officer, civil society actors focusing on key issues.

**Day 2:** Representatives from each school in the community, representatives from the village leadership, the District Development Officer, student representatives from the secondary school and representatives from the two women's groups, researchers from the University of Dar Es Salaam, civil society actors focusing on key issues.

**Day 3:** Representatives from the local motorbike men's group, representatives of the village leadership, the District Development Officer, representatives from local religious groups (Christian and Muslim), representatives of two women's group, researchers from the University of Dar Es Salaam, civil society actors focusing on key issues.



*Participants' presentation on their understanding of GBV*

### 3. Content of the dialogue

#### Issues or problems identified during the dialogue

- **Access to education for pregnant young girls:** The Tanzanian government has recently declared that girls who are pregnant must be banned from school. It was already challenging to support girls who are pregnant, perhaps against their own choice. During the workshop teachers explained that teenage pregnancy is an extremely sensitive topic and they had witnessed a teacher being demoted for letting a pregnant girl come to class.
- **Conjugal sexual violence:** Norms and taboos challenge women's right to choose when and how to have sex with their husbands. Women are pressured by their husbands to have sex, and specifically anal sex. This is an illegal act in Tanzania; however, according to the ladies in the room, many men request it from their wives. Families tend to suggest to their daughters that they need to comply with their husbands' sexual demands.
- **Access to justice for victims of GBV:** It has been challenging for victims of GBV to report and prosecute the crimes committed against them, as some judicial institutions in the community are managed by GBV perpetrators.



*Femme International's presentation on the links between menstruation and GBV*

### Civil society actions identified during the dialogue to address these problems

- **Lobby the government to ensure access to education for young girls:** Although they were quiet during the workshop, teachers have been identified as key actors to address the issue of pregnant girls' school attendance. The teachers committed to lobby the government to find solutions allowing pregnant girls to access education. Teachers were also identified as key actors to help raise awareness of GBV in schools by creating student groups and facilitating discussions.
- **Lobby policy-makers and government officials to ensure access to justice for victims of GBV:** During the workshop, one of the main causes perpetuating GBV identified by participants was the fact that some actors in charge of prosecuting perpetrators or providing support to victims are themselves perpetrators of GBV or can be corrupted. This makes the prosecution of GBV perpetrators unlikely; participants advocated for lobbying government officials and policy-makers to be exemplary.
- **Create GBV groups in the community to raise awareness on GBV and provide support victims:**

Various groups in the community committed to creating committees and working groups to raise awareness and address problems linked to GBV:

- (1) Following the workshop, community members who attended set up four groups under the leadership of the Ward officer for Msitu wa Tembo and Londoto; the Ward Education officer; the Msitu wa Tembo village officer; and the Londoto village officer, respectively. These groups sought to brainstorm solutions to address various issues related to GBV and ensure the implementation of the National Plan against GBV.
- (2) The teachers from Msitu wa Tembo Secondary School committed to forming a working group to brainstorm solutions for young pregnant girls. They also proposed to create a student group to raise awareness about GBV among students.
- (3) The representative of the motorcycle group, a group of 42 men in the village, committed to raise awareness against GBV and condemn violent behaviour within his group. He also mentioned the idea of including women in his group.

### Recommendations made for further civil society action to address the problems identified by the dialogue

- Participants repeatedly mentioned the need to better inform and educate their community members about GBV to fight norms and taboos conducive to GBV. They suggested to use media, in particular TV, to launch debates and inform about GBV. They also advocated for better advertising of the National Plan on GBV through the creation of information centres to inform people about the consequences of GBV.
- Participants highlighted the lack of access to justice by victims of GBV and some suggested that there are obstacles to reporting acts of GBV. They suggested a more reliable reporting system and advocated for creating safe places for victims of GBV.

### Recommendations for other stakeholders

- Another issue identified during the workshop was the lack of psychological support provided to victims of GBV. Participants therefore called for the involvement of more psychologists in caring for GBV victims.
- The lack of support for victims identified included access to justice. Participants advocated for establishing avenues to access justice within healthcare facilities specialised on GBV. Victims would therefore have access to all actors involved in victim support and prosecution in one place: police, psychologists, doctors, lawyers. So far, there is only one of this type of facility in the whole region.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was also identified as a long-standing practice among different tribes in Tanzania, which has proven challenging to stop. Participants advocated for raising awareness of the risks and consequences of FGM.



*NAFGEM Presentation on FGM*

### Additional reflections from the dialogue

Although the theme of the workshop was sensitive, the dialogue was open and most participants were actively involved in the debate. The most striking dialogue launched by participants focused on conjugal sexual violence, including mentions of women being forced



to engage in anal sex. A dialogue on this topic was unexpected in a socio-political context where the norm is that the finalities of women's sexuality are to please their husbands and reproduction.

#### 4. Further material

##### Quotes from participants

*"I understand GBV as violence. It is brutal, and it is done by some people in the community who go against human rights. An example of GBV is sexual violence, which is done mostly to the women. [...] I have learned that we have to give children freedom and I will go to different communities (like the Maasai) and tell them how to act and fight against GBV for both men and women. And it's important to say to the girls to go to school and not just take care of the livestock" - Ezekiel, member of Msitu Wa Tembo*

*"I hope, if God wishes, that we can get more seminars like this and invite more people from the community. I will not stay quiet and I have already shared everything I learned about women's rights with my community. We need more information like this"*

**A role play: Protest for women's reproductive rights to raise awareness of their reproductive rights, available [here](#).**



Non-violent communication training