



SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE MEETING IN SUDAN



The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Gender Team visited Khartoum, Sudan, from 30-31 October 2017 to discuss the multi-faceted issues related to Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in the country. It was noted that cases are frequently not reported to the police as a matter of urgency, with a number of cases recorded that had been handled as private matters or kept secret. The lack of safe homes for victims or survivors and the lack of services provided by one-stop centres was another major challenge, while at

the investigative level, the lack of sufficiently trained police officers and lack of evidence collection during investigations was also highlighted. In relation to cases that have reached trial level, the lack of lawyers to assist SGBV victims throughout the whole process in gaining access to justice through a legal aid department within ministries of justice was a concern, with this type of support normally only offered for specific criminal cases relating to murder and drugs. The lack of psychologists' reports in SGBV case files was also highlighted, as was the lack of coordination in establishing specialized court for SGBV cases and lack of information sharing between different stakeholders involved in fighting SGBV. On legislation, the existence of gaps in the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) law, especially for age group 18 to below 21, reflected the lack of protection for this age group.

Recommendations included increasing awareness on SGBV related issues, effective implementation of existing laws aimed at fighting SGBV and enactment of new ones, or amendment where necessary, and to accelerate the establishment of DNA laboratories at state level. The need to address SGBV issues relating to school curriculums, family and community education, media and legislation, and the need for the Government to review national legislation to ensure that it is in harmony with international and regional instruments, was also highlighted. The meeting was a valuable contribution to furthering awareness and increasing dialogue around SGBV within the Sudan.