



## **MOVING FORWARD: A PROGRESS REPORT**

### **Introduction**

AllianceDARC was formally launched on 9 June 2006 after some weeks of planning and consultation. This report presents what we have done over the past approximately six months. AllianceDARC is predominantly voluntary based – reliant on people who share our motivation to do something to tackle sexual violence. We would like to thank our volunteers, our individual and institutional supporters, and our founding donors. Their technical, material, financial and moral backing has made it possible to come so far.

### **Why do we exist?**

Sexual violence is a brutal crime. It affects millions - mostly women and children - in war and disaster zones around the world. The vast majority of rape survivors - caught up in conflicts and crises - receive little or no sustained help because conventional programmes have limited coverage or are difficult to access by those in desperate need.

Most raped women in most circumstances of armed conflict or crises have no means to get heard, and no access to justice. Where legal remedy and protection are theoretically possible, the rule-of-law system can work perversely to add insult to injury. There is widespread impunity. Prevalent attitudes range from denial of the magnitude of the problem, to disbelief, blame transference, or downright resignation and even cynicism.

There is increasing global awareness of the problem. But words must turn into focused action, and much more must be done to extend the range of endeavours against sexual violence. A particular feature is the limited involvement of men as leaders, advocates, and activists: men's involvement is crucial.

### **What do we want to do?**

The Alliance's mission is straightforward:

*We bring practical help to women suffering from or threatened by sexual violence in conflicts and crises, and, thereby, we seek to prevent such further violence.*

AllianceDARC was instigated at the inspiration of Dr Mukesh Kapila whose personal experiences as a senior official with the United Nations, and previously with the UK Department for International Development, motivated this call for more direct and concerted action to address sexual violence and exploitation.

AllianceDARC serves its collaborating partners. Our basic approach is to facilitate, promote, and expand their outreach to achieve four strategic objectives:

- Rebuild broken lives
- Redress wrongs and bring personal safety
- Report reality
- Reduce future sexual violence, especially through mobilizing Men

## **Rebuilding broken lives**

What we want to do: Through supporting local partners in the expansion of tailor-made provision of healthcare, psychosocial, and livelihood support, AllianceDARC helps raped women to quickly recover their physical health, re-establish emotional and mental equilibrium, repair social links with those around them, reduce stigma, and restore self-confidence- so as to face the future with dignity and self-respect.

What we are doing: Our first project through *Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI)* helps rape survivors in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. AllianceDARC has brokered funding for SOFEPADI, sourced originally from DFID and provided technical assistance for this project. This provides basic medical, psychosocial, and legal support to rape survivors in the Bunia area. It is also raising awareness about rape as a punishable offence, and contributing to social attitudinal change by increasing knowledge on women's human rights. As a related benefit, the project contributes to information collection on sexual violence, sexually transmitted infection and HIV/AIDS, including through training local NGOs and international agencies so as to better document the prevalence and impact of sexual violence.

Our second project is through *Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)*, the continent's first home-grown humanitarian organization working in 12 countries with refugees, displaced and others in desperate need due to conflicts and disasters, including Darfur and northern Uganda. AllianceDARC is using Swedish Government funding to help AHA to design the integration of sexual and gender based violence programming into their work thus expanding our outreach. Roll-out of this programme across Africa will depend on available funding.

## **Redressing wrongs and bringing personal safety**

What we want to do: AllianceDARC helps to re-establish access to personal justice for raped women, and to foster personal safety and security for women at serious risk of sexual violence in conflict situations.

What we are doing: A partnership with the *University of Geneva Centre for International Humanitarian Law (CUDIHL)* has been established. Through this, AllianceDARC will support the review of best international legal practices and review obstacles and barriers that prevent survivors' access to personal justice. This includes an analysis of prevailing legal frameworks in priority conflict and crisis countries and the identification of precise legal and judicial reform measures in specific contexts. This will enable tailored, practical support to survivors and their families to receive redress at the same time as countering the impunity of the perpetrators of sexual violence.

## **Reporting reality**

**What we want to do:** AllianceDARC promotes the concept of a sexual violence global reporting system. This includes the independent determination and dissemination of specific facts, figures and analyses that focuses attention on situation-specific causes and the precise response and prevention measures required.

**What we are doing:** Our first project is developing a common methodology for a community-centered reporting system and seeking to roll this out in at least two conflict-affected areas. Resourced with funds originally from DFID, the method examines sexual violence in relation to setting, context, perpetrators, vulnerabilities, risks, and outcomes. As data coverage increases it should allow audit of protection and assistance activities. With a larger dataset collected over time, the system will have certain predictive value and would provide early warning by early identification, for example, of particularly high risk contexts and vulnerabilities, in parallel with an understanding of the intent of perpetrators. The system will ultimately be a tool for preventing and monitoring sexual violence, and improving assistance. Design to date has benefited from consultations with experts and field practitioners. Project results will provide input for the sister project below.

Our second project is funded by Sweden and implemented by our partner *The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)*, a major output of which is compiling, analysing and reporting existing data on sexual violence. The project has already produced and disseminated a discussion paper, "Sexual Violence in Conflict: Making Data Work for Change", and a bibliography of data sources, "Documenting Sexual Violence in Conflict: Tools and Methods"<sup>1</sup>. These are useful reference for people working in this area. The project is now gearing up to produce a "Global Report on Sexual Violence" to be published in 2007.

## **Reducing future sexual violence**

**What we want to do:** AllianceDARC works with partners to galvanise the international community for effective action to counter sexual violence in conflicts and crises. The intended consequence is to encourage a culture shift in prevalent norms and to create a productive programming climate.

**What we are doing:** AllianceDARC has been active in fostering dialogue and partnerships at United Nations, NGO and other fora. Highlights include attendance at the Brussels Symposium on Sexual Violence and Beyond (June 2006); the NGOs platform at UNHCR Executive Committee (September); the 2nd Meeting of the Human Rights Council with the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (September); and the Health Cluster of the Interagency Steering Committee (October); and planning for the forthcoming WHO meeting on ethics and safety of sexual violence research (November).

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<sup>1</sup> These are available on the AllianceDARC website, [www.alliancedarc.org](http://www.alliancedarc.org).



## **Alliance development**

AllianceDARC relies on and works through institutional partners. Institutional collaborators include:

- ***The Aegis Trust***
- ***Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)***
- ***Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI)***
- ***The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre)***
- ***The Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)***
- ***The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)***
- ***The International Centre for Migration and Health (ICMH)***
- ***The International Organization for Migration (IOM)***
- ***World Vision International (WVI)***

To date, some US\$300,000 has been mobilized. Foundation support has come from the **Government of Sweden**, **Pfizer Inc.** and **the Pears Foundation**, with additional project funding from DFID. This has been supplemented by contributions from individual members and several fundraising events.

The latter have also provided a platform for creating awareness on sexual and gender violence issues, including through a growing mail-list of over 1500 people:

- ***Sofa Night*** was a Stellar Productions troupe evening of dancing performance (June).
- ***Real Men dontdothat*** was an evening of blues rock with Craig McConnell and Powerplay.
- ***Exhibition of Paintings on the “Biology of Love” by Robin Coupland*** was hugely popular, with proceeds from the sale of this stunning, original art generously given to AllianceDARC
- ***Moderato con Brio*** a concert of operatic singing by Kirsty Griffiths (October)

The AllianceDARC website ([www.alliancedarc.org](http://www.alliancedarc.org)) went live in June, and has made available a donations facility and membership registration. It is regularly updated with latest information on the Alliance, news from members, and events. The final design of the website incorporating a mechanism for sexual violence reporting is scheduled for completion in November. Thanks to our volunteers, AllianceDARC information has been translated and made available in Arabic, French, Russian, Portuguese and Spanish languages. Alliance members have also promoted us through their own websites<sup>2</sup>. The Alliance featured on a programme on sexual violence in Africa, by a London-based radio station<sup>3</sup>.

**The AllianceDARC 2% Club** The AllianceDARC is seeking partnerships with small businesses. Clients of business who have joined the 2% Club are invited to contribute 2% of their payment to support AllianceDARC. One professional shiatsu business is currently a member of the 2% Club and discussions are taking place with professional hairdressing and photo shooting businesses. The Alliance officially recognizes and

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<sup>2</sup> See for example AllianceDARC web pages on IOM, DCAF and Aegis Trust web sites.

<sup>3</sup> GFM radio [www.gfmradio.com](http://www.gfmradio.com)

promotes 2% Club businesses through fundraising events and other promotional activities.

## **Management & governance**

AllianceDARC operates from a small office in the Geneva premises of the International Organization for Migration where the Alliance Coordinator and the Project Officer for the Sexual Violence Tracking project are located. We benefit from IOM's status as a privileged international organization. Our accounting is carried out by IOM in accord with its established international standards.

The statutes of AllianceDARC have been formulated and are currently being finalised. A constitutive meeting will be held as soon as possible to complete the process of formal registration as a charitable association in Switzerland.

The statutes call for an **Executive Committee**, and members who have agreed to serve *ad personem* are:

- **President:** Baroness Emma Nicholson of Winterbourne, Member of European Parliament; Vice Chair, Committee on Foreign Affairs and Member of Human Rights Subcommittee of the European Parliament.
- **Secretary/Treasurer:** Nichole McGarry, Coordinator, AllianceDARC
- Martin Griffiths, Director, Humanitarian Dialogue Centre
- Dr Mukesh Kapila, Special Representative of the Secretary General, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Dr Rama Mani, Director, Institute of Cultural and Ethnic Studies, Sri Lanka
- Dr James Smith, Chief Executive, Aegis Trust
- Fred Tanner, Director, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
- Dr Dawit Zawde, President, Africa Humanitarian Action

An **Advisory Committee** is also being constituted. Members include Brunson McKinley Director General IOM, Theodor Winkler, Director DCAF, and Manuel Carballo, Executive Director ICMH.

A **Core Technical Expert Group** meets regularly to progress project design and review developments.

Our Legal Counsel is Mr. Fernand Chappuis.

## **Future plans**

We have moved forward as best as we can, with the capacities and resources available to us. For the immediate future, our priorities are:

- Progress field projects that are underway and develop new ones guided by our four objectives;



- Expand outreach, for example through a new *Geneva Forum on Sexual Violence*, as a periodic roundtable to share experience and innovation. This will be co-hosted by GCSP and IOM;
- Widen our donor base: the core basic costs of AllianceDARC will be capped at approx US\$ 150,000 per annum, with additional funds going to funds projects and activities; and
- Finalise governance arrangements.

For further information, please contact:

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