

Additional Case Studies for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Training

These two additional case studies are intended to supplement the “Scenarios covering prohibited acts of Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse for the various categories of United Nations personnel.” While the previous scenarios demonstrate examples of prohibited acts under the current standards of conduct expected of all categories of UN personnel (civilian, civilian police, military observers and military members of national contingents) as set out in the UN Staff Rules and Regulations and/or the DPKO Disciplinary Directives. These case studies are extracted from 2004 journalistic reports and interviews in Congo and highlight the issues of vulnerability of the local population as well as the impact of sexual abuse and exploitation.

***Facilitator’s Note:** Ask a member of the group to read the following excerpts, taken from journalists’ interviews, followed by the discussion questions.*

1. Case Study: Based on journalist interview with “Chantalle in Goma”

“Since I first came to Goma last year I try to go out to the different bars. If it is a good night I will go with five or six men. Most of them work for the UN, or other foreign organizations here. If someone wants to pay me more than I will only go with one man for the whole night. If I find a good man he can pay me up to 20 USD for a whole night, but a bad one will pay only one US dollar. The price depends on the man’s heart. Sometimes I will go with the men only for a short time in the bars in town, or sometimes I will bring them back here. There is a mattress in my room and my four children stay in the room next door.

Recently things have got very bad in Goma. There have been a lot of soldiers around from different military groups and there are many bad stories about what they are doing and people are being killed and raped. If we don’t hear them shooting before seven o’clock in the evening, then we will go out to the bars to work. If I come back from the bars late and see that the soldiers are still around, I will go back to the bar and ask some of the UN soldiers to walk me home. If they do I will normally sleep with them for payment.

I go with UN soldiers because they are the ones with money and normally have condoms to wear. Now when I go to the bars, I don’t even ask where the man is from. I don’t care anymore. I see them and only think of the money they can give me. We go with the foreign men because they have the money.

I am from a small town near Bukavu originally, but have been in Goma for nearly a year now. My first husband was killed in the war, quite a few years ago. He was a soldier and caught in the fighting. My second husband left me last year. Our town was attacked by soldiers one night and they came to our house and raped me and my sister in front of our children. My husband was in the house at the time and the soldiers made him watch. After that he left me and the children for another woman.

I had to leave the village and go to Bukavu to find work because we thought the soldiers might come back and were scared to stay in our village. But life in Bukavu was very difficult. There

was no way I could find work to make money to buy food for my children. I heard that girls in Goma could make money from going with UN soldiers and other international people in Goma, so I decided to come here to do prostitution.

My oldest child is 15, one is 8 the others 5 and 3. We haven't eaten anything since yesterday because we have no money for food. School costs \$4 US dollars per month for each child. At the moment, I can only afford to send two of my children, one stays at home with the baby who is still too young."

2. Case study: Journalist Interview from April 2005 of Mrs. P, wife of a Protestant pastor, whose house, church and garden are contiguous to a MONUC contingent camp:

"Since we [she and her husband] returned in February 2004 from Beni [a town in north Kivu province] where we had fled during the war, we started noticing the presence of used condoms in our yard as well as nearby. This became troubling and annoying. Coming back from the outhouse at night, we would find soldiers from MONUC having sexual intercourse. In the courtyard, in the little garden next to it and even here in the church, we found used condoms everywhere. It is horrible. We have never seen such a thing in Bunia. The peanut plants in our garden around the house are constantly crushed by these invasions.

Wednesday of last week, April 14, while we were in the middle of a prayer meeting at about 3 p.m., a MONUC soldier was found behind our house having sexual intercourse. We feel bad that our yard which belongs to the church is used by MONUC soldiers for prostitution. My husband managed to pick up a jacket belonging to a soldier which we are keeping here as 'material evidence'. It was spread out on the ground next to the house under construction next to ours and may have been used as a groundcover. It was left when we chased them out of there.

These MONUC soldiers do not use rooms but prefer to use the fields, open spaces, houses under construction or toilets for the sexual activities.

When we try to blame the girls and women involved in this shameful work, they respond as follows, "How am I going to feed my children. It's my body, too bad for you." On the other hand, others say, "I would like to conceive a mixed-blood baby with these white people."

They come from all over, from all neighborhoods in Bunia and are of all ages, minors, adults and married women. Last week, the girl that my husband [caught and] beat was about 14 years old. Another time, my husband and I chased a woman, caught her and my husband started beating her. It was dark and when I managed to see who it was, I discovered that it was my own sister-in-law whose husband is in Beni.

A MONUC soldier has gotten into the habit of coming to bother me at the house when my husband isn't here. One day he came and said that I lied when I told him I was married. He held out \$2 (US dollars) and I said that I already had more money than that. He then said he would pay me \$3, then \$4 and seeing that he was insistent, I called over some young boys who live next door to have them make him leave the premises.

Every evening, even when it rains, it's a 'big market' here where you also find a lot of young boys pimping and girl prostitutes. It starts at about 5 p.m. and really gets going about 7 or 8 p.m. and then continues late into the night."

Possible discussion Questions for Case Study 1:

How has the conflict in Congo impacted on Chantalle's family life?

Chantalle's first husband was killed in the conflict. After her brutal rape by soldiers in her home that her husband was forced to watch, he abandoned her and their four children.

How has the conflict impacted on her community?

The conflict has destroyed lives, families and homes. Many men of the community have been killed leaving their widows and families behind without any support. Employment opportunities or any social infrastructure to support Chantalle within her community have been destroyed.

How has the conflict impacted on her responsibility to her children?

As a single mother, Chantalle is the sole provider for her children. She has no active support network and struggles to provide the bare necessities to her children.

Did Chantalle enter into prostitution in Goma willingly?

As a single mother of four children in war-ravaged country, Chantalle was forced to decide how she would survive and enable her children to survive. After leaving her small village for Bukavu, she realized that there were no employment opportunities. She traveled to Goma and considered prostitution her only answer for survival.

What actions should be taken against the UN soldiers who Chantalle has had sex with?

The UN soldiers should face disciplinary action for violation of the UN standards of conduct.

Possible discussion questions for case study 2:

What are your reactions to this interview from Congo? What elements do you find most revealing about the situation on the ground in the mission area?

What impressions of the UN are forming among this woman and other members of her community?

How do these impressions compare with the standards of conduct prescribed by the Secretary-General's Bulletin?