

**“I don’t know who can help”**

***New research report uncovers sexual violence committed against men and boys by armed groups in Central African Republic***

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Media Contact:  
Charu Lata Hogg, All Survivors Project  
[+ 44 7906261291](tel:+447906261291)  
[hoggc@allsurvivorsproject.org](mailto:hoggc@allsurvivorsproject.org)

Los Angeles – All Survivors Project (ASP), hosted by the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law launches a [new report](#) detailing the underreported problem of rape and other sexual violence against men and boys carried out by armed groups in the recent conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR).

New research by ASP finds a discernible pattern of sexual violence against men and boys from 2013 to the present, which warrants urgent attention.

- Most cases have gone unreported, for reasons including shame, stigma, societal attitudes and shortcomings by state and international bodies.
- In the cases documented by ASP, sexual violence was most common during armed attacks or when men and boys were held captive by armed groups. As with women and girls, sexual violence against males is used to terrorise and humiliate perceived enemies. In some cases, it is carried out as a revenge for attacks by opposing armed groups.
- Four survivors said they were captured during armed attacks by members of armed groups, taken to makeshift military camps, held in squalid conditions and repeatedly raped over the course of many days. Two were forced to rape or commit other acts of sexual violence on fellow captives.
- ASP also compiled information involving cases of forced nudity, forced masturbation and of incidents in which men had their genitals beaten, mutilated and cut off, as well as other forms of harm including incidents in which women and girls were the primary victims of sexual violence, but their male relatives were forced to witness the attacks.

Meanwhile, NGOs, UN agencies and government bodies often fail to factor in male experiences in their response strategies for conflict-related sexual violence. Some of the most vulnerable children included boys associated with armed groups, yet they are not screened for sexual violence upon release.

“Sexual violence against men and boys is a serious blindspot in CAR” said Charu Lata Hogg, Director, All Survivors Project. “There is a working assumption among a number of protection experts and humanitarian service providers that sexual violence affects women and girls alone.”

Lara Stemple, Director of the Health and Human Rights Law Project at UCLA School of Law, said “To comprehensively address sexual violence in conflict, we must continue to fight for women and girls, while taking seriously the urgent needs of men and boys who are brutalized in conflict zones around the world.”

“Because this assault involves sexual assault of men and boys by other men and boys, the harms include long-term stigma of emasculation and loss of standing in their communities and families,” said Andrew Park, International Program Director of the Williams Institute.

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[ASP](#) seeks to ensure that all survivors of sexual violence in situations of conflict and displacement receive equitable access to services, remedies, and reparations. ASP has staff in Los Angeles and London.

[The Williams Institute](#), a think tank on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy located at the School of Law, University of California Los Angeles, is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research with real-world relevance.

[The Health and Human Rights Law Project](#) at UCLA School of Law seeks to improve global health by using a framework grounded in international human rights law. Through multi-disciplinary research, training and mentorship, the Project aims to examine the relationship between health and human rights and to foster the next generation of leaders working in this area.