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**Haitian Women and Girls Trading Sex to Survive
*Groups Release Report Analyzing Sexual Exploitation***

January 12, 2012—New York, NY—Two years after an earthquake devastated Haiti, a report detailing the impact of sexual exploitation on displaced Haitian women and girls has been released. The report is authored by MADRE, the Commission of Women Victims for Victims (KOFAVIV), the International Women’s Human Rights (IWHR) Clinic at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law, the Global Justice Clinic at NYU School of Law (GJC) and the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies at UC Hastings College of the Law (CGRS).

The drastic increase in sexual violence in displacement camps has been well documented since the disaster. But another face of the epidemic has emerged as a pressing issue: the sexual exploitation of displaced women and girls.

Displaced women and girls have lost family and community members, along with the protection and safety nets those relationships offered. Because of poverty and a lack of economic opportunity, many women and girls are forced to trade sex for shelter, money or even a single meal. In many cases, those demanding sex are the very people who hold themselves out as representatives of the people—members of camp committees.

The report was compiled based on interviews with Haitian women and girls who have either engaged in transactional sex or who know people who have. Information was also collected through interviews with Haitian government officials, service providers and women’s rights advocates. The report highlights current barriers to addressing sexual exploitation and offers recommendations to protect the human rights of women and girls engaging in transactional sex. In addition, the report offers a unique legal analysis of the protections available for women and girls who have experienced a wide range of human rights violations associated with sexual exchanges.

Marie Eramithe Delva, co-founder of KOFAVIV said today, “Displaced women and girls are being forced by circumstance into survival sex. It is an epidemic, but one that has gotten little attention from the Haitian government or international community.”

Lisa Davis, MADRE Human Rights Advocacy Director and Clinical Professor of Law for the IWHR Clinic at CUNY Law School said today, “International law recognizes that an individual’s decision to engage in sex should be the result of free choice. The majority of women and girls interviewed do not have a choice. They are displaced and with few other options. In turn, they are at increased risk of sexual violence and health threats. We must shed light on this crisis.”

Blaine Bookey, Staff Attorney for the CGRS said today, “Although almost all individuals interviewed for this report recognized that sexual exploitation is widespread, representatives of government agencies responsible for addressing sexual exploitation hold stereotypes related to gender and poverty that present an obstacle to implementing practical solutions. Beyond this, the Haitian government’s inability to develop a meaningful response to sexual exploitation is also due to a stark lack of resources. I am hopeful the report will help breakdown these harmful stereotypes and bring much needed resources to bear.”

Margaret Satterthwaite, Professor of Clinical Law for the GJC and Faculty Director of the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law said today, “Survival sex will not end until Haitian women and girls can access what they need to live. Haitian women want economic opportunities and the capacity to access basic resources. The international community should work closely with the Haitian government to create jobs, extend microcredit to women, and provide free education to all.”

Virtual Briefing: Join the authors of this report on Tuesday January 17 at 1 pm EST, for a conference call. RSVP at media@madre.org for call-in information.

To read the report in full, [click here](#).

Available for interview:

Marie Eramithe Delva (KOFAVIV) is a longtime advocate for human rights in Haiti. She is the co-founder of KOFAVIV, a grassroots women’s organization. She has founded numerous other associations and grassroots organizations prior to co-founding KOFAVIV in 2004. (Contact: Stephanie Küng 212-627-0444)

Lisa Davis, Esq. (MADRE and the IWHR Clinic at CUNY School of Law) was a co-author of the report and currently serves as the Coordinator for the Lawyers’ Earthquake Response Network (LERN) Gender Working Group. She is a member of the New York City Bar Association’s International Human Rights Committee and the National Lawyers’ Guild Haiti Subcommittee. Lisa is a Clinical Professor of Law for the International Women’s Human Rights Clinic at CUNY Law School. (Contact: Stephanie Küng 212-627-0444)

Blaine Bookey, Esq. (UC Hastings) was a co-author of this report. She has worked as a legal fellow with the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux where she helped launch the organization's Rape Accountability and Prevention Project. Prior to joining the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies as a Staff Attorney she clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. (Contact: 415-515-8956)

Margaret Satterthwaite (NYU School of Law) was a co-author of the report and has recently concluded a study on sexual violence in Haiti's IDP camps. She has worked for a variety of human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights First, and the Haitian Commission Nationale de Verité et de Justice, and has consulted with various U.N. agencies. She is a Professor of Clinical Law, director of the Global Justice Clinic, and faculty director of the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law. (Contact: 212-998-6657)