

# Through Our Eyes: Participation for Social Change

**Through Our Eyes** is a participatory communication project addressing the critical issues of gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices within conflict-affected communities. This initiative has enabled local teams in Liberia, Rwanda, Southern Sudan, and Uganda to carry out sustained sensitization and outreach through use of community media. The project dynamically engages community members and expands awareness and use of GBV response and prevention programs, including legal aid, counseling, and medical services for survivors. The project aims to transform socio-cultural norms that sustain gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices. In late 2009, the “Through Our Eyes” project will be initiated in Thailand – where similar methodologies will be used to respond to the complex needs of conflict-affected populations.

In each site, ARC partners with community-based organizations/ women’s associations, enabling them to strengthen both internal capacity and outreach capability through sustainable participatory communication approaches.

## PROJECT SITES AND BENEFICIARIES:

- **Liberia:** returnees, formerly displaced persons, community members
- **Rwanda:** Congolese refugees
- **Southern Sudan:** returnees, formerly displaced persons, community members
- **Uganda:** internally displaced persons living in the North
- **Thailand:** Karen and Burmese refugees from the conflict in Myanmar

## VIDEOS PRODUCED INCLUDE:

- Rape is Not a Family Matter
- Legal Justice: Take Rape to Court!
- Consequences of Forced Marriage
- Stop Wife-Beating!
- The Importance of Girls’ Education
- Women are Not Slaves
- Widow Inheritance
- All is Not Lost: Fistula in Liberia



## Testimonials from Video Team members:

“Usually in our setting, in the Liberian setting, Liberian women don’t really speak in public, especially when the men are around. Whenever they gather, they don’t speak openly. But if you take the video to the community and do a playback, the women see themselves sometimes in the picture and they don’t care who is around. They will speak their mind...and you will see their emotion. And one thing I really love about that is that it empowers our sisters, our mothers, to speak for themselves, to express their feeling about the level of violence against them, and the way out....The video can mobilize the community for itself”

-Albert Pyne, Liberian Video Trainer, March 2009

“My participation has had an effect on me personally majorly because the community considers me nowadays as a role model...many people in the community are able to contact us for whatever services we are giving...”

- Wani Robert, ARC Behavior Change Communication Officer

### THROUGH OUR EYES HAS:

- TRAINED OVER 40 LOCAL VIDEO TEAM MEMBERS WORLDWIDE
- PREPARED 4 LOCAL MASTER TRAINERS (video team members from Southern Sudan, Uganda, and Liberia) WHO HAVE CONDUCTED TRAININGS IN OTHER PROJECT COUNTRIES

### AND HAS ENABLED COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO:

- PRODUCE OVER SIXTY LOCALLY MADE VIDEOS
- CONDUCT HUNDREDS OF VIDEO PLAYBACKS (2 per week per project site)