

# **Checklist for Action**

## *Prevention & Response to Gender-Based Violence in Displaced Settings*

*Adapted from a checklist developed  
by UNHCR, Geneva, 2003*

Gender-Based Violence Global Technical Support Project  
RHRC Consortium/JSI Research and Training Institute  
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## Coordination and Planning

- Create an interagency working group of partners and stakeholders to develop a plan of action, implement, monitor, and evaluate.
- Appoint a focal point for the implementation of a plan of action and follow-up of the plan.
- Advocate and agree with WFP and NGOs on distribution standards and codes of conduct for employees aimed at effectively outlawing abuse of power whereby entitlements are withheld, only made available conditionally, or used to coerce or induce sexual favors.
- Establish regular coordination meetings with all actors to ensure concerted effort in prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV).
- Review existing budgets/projects with a view to incorporate the recommendations of the working group.

## Staff Awareness Raising and Training

- Launch Code of Conduct; train all staff on it.
- Establish a training strategy for the situation on GBV (who needs to be trained in what) and implement the plan.
- Ensure that all relevant guidelines and reference material are made available in the field site (in appropriate languages).
- Train and sensitize all staff, security agents, health workers, social counselors, leaders, and other relevant actors.

## Staff Management Responsibilities (Accountability)

- Managers must ensure that training plan is implemented.
- Ensure individual responsibility for promoting gender equality.
- Review recruitment procedures to ensure increased female deployment at all levels.
- Ensure that the code of conduct is adhered to by all staff.
- Promote the development of internal cultures within agencies for abuses to be reported in a confidential manner and acted on immediately.
- Ensure that international staff, managers, and heads of offices make regular visits with refugees.
- Introduce rotation systems of existing field staff taking into consideration continuity, staff morale/motivation.

## Prevent GBV by Providing Adequate Humanitarian Assistance and Services

### Needs Assessment

- Identify and agree on appropriate assistance and protection standards in all sectors that respect refugees' dignity, address basic needs, and have a positive impact on the prevention of all forms of GBV.

- Commission a survey by sector to ascertain minimum standards as per UNHCR guidelines.
- Develop and implement a training plan for various groups of refugees, include gender and human rights awareness.
- Strengthen the mass info systems to ensure that all refugees receive information pertaining to their lives in the camps, rights and duties, etc.

### *Community Involvement/Consultation*

- Increase regular meetings in camps involving international staff in which individual refugees can raise their concerns in a private manner.
- Establish “children’s forum” in the camps and continue to sensitize and give increasing responsibility to the youth through the effective working of youth groups or clubs responsible for security, education/skill training, recreational activities, equally for boys and girls.
- Confirm/identify the community focal points and redefine their roles for increased community participation, including promotion of the role of women in all aspects of the camp life, in particular, distribution of food and non-food items.
- Work with refugee committees to ensure that they establish their own code of conduct and respect it.

### *Monitoring and Evaluation*

- Review, adapt, and monitor distribution systems and other services to ensure that everyone has free access to rightful assistance and that abuse is prevented.

## **Put in Place Systems to Respond to the Needs of the Survivor**

- Establish a confidential reporting system for individuals to report cases of GBV.
- Work with the community to identify/create safe space for reporting (e.g., drop-in centers).
- Each sector must design and implement appropriate response mechanisms based on the needs of survivors, namely, health, legal/justice, psychosocial, safety (see below).

## **Sector-by-Sector Actions for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence**

### *Food*

- Review the composition of the food basket and undertake an assessment of food quantities, food accessibility, cultural food practices, and additional food needs.
- Ensure refugee women’s involvement in the food distribution process.
- Ensure that proper monitoring is in place.

### *Logistics*

- Ensure that appropriate means of transportation are provided to vulnerable beneficiaries and that appropriate escorts are provided where necessary to provide security.

### *Household Assistance*

- Provide clothing, including underwear, and shoes for refugees (with priority granted to refugees at risk, such as adolescent girls).
- In order to reduce the need for firewood and girls'/women's exposure when collecting, provide fuel-efficient stoves to the households.

### *Water*

- Ensure that water points, latrines, and other facilities (schools, health posts, etc.) are located in secure areas and that they are within easy walking distance from private shelters.

### *Sanitation*

- Promote family latrines for refugees through the provision of adequate tools and material: target one latrine per family,
- Sanitary facilities, in particular bathing areas, should be well demarcated and separated for female/male.

### *Health*

- Involve female and male community members in addressing issues of reproductive health (RH) and harmful traditional practices, e.g., female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation, prostitution, abuse of girls and boys.
- Identify and train young women to be able to identify the RH needs of exploited young women for referral to health posts.
- Develop a mechanism to ensure confidentiality through which men and women can channel their opinions on how to improve or make the RH services more accessible.
- Intensify the dissemination of information and promote the use of RH services through the use of radio, schools, health and social clubs, peer education, and community health workers.
- Strengthen collaboration and coordination among all sectors and implementing partners in addressing GBV with emphasis on the needs of the survivors; e.g., case management, advocacy, emotional support.
- Work with and train all health personnel to ensure full understanding of the relationship between GBV and other health problems.
- Provide sanitary packs to all women and girls of reproductive age.

- Provide comprehensive health care that is easily accessible.
- Medical examination and treatment should be performed by trained staff, ideally from the same sex as those in need of the service.
- Appropriate protocols and adequate equipment, supplies, and medicine should be used to do the following:
  - Conduct examination
  - Treat injuries
  - Prevent disease, including sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS
  - Prevent unwanted pregnancy
  - Collect forensic evidence
  - Document, collect, and analyze incident and treatment data for monitoring and evaluation
  - Refer and provide transport to appropriate levels of care when needed.
  - Provide follow-up care and monitor the health needs of survivors.
- Identify and design strategies to address contributing factors, such as alcoholism.
- Testify in court about medical findings if survivor chooses to pursue police action.
- Collaborate with traditional health practitioners to identify, report, refer, and provide adequate primary-level support to survivors.
- Ensure equal access to health care for women, men, and adolescents and quality of service provided.
- Collaborate with health-facility staff, traditional practitioners, and the community on training and sensitization.

### *Infrastructure and Shelter*

- In cooperation with refugees, review special shelter needs in light of GBV concerns and ensure privacy for each family. Distribute additional plastic sheeting and other construction material as required.
- Ensure access to assistance for shelter construction for those unable to construct shelters for themselves, especially female-headed households.

### *Community Services*

- Develop mechanisms to ensure systematic monitoring of specific needs of the most vulnerable persons and of solutions that are being implemented to address these needs.
- Identify, train, and support community-based support workers to help survivors by providing emotional support, information about choices and services available, referral, and advocacy.
- Develop women's activity/support groups or support groups specifically designed for survivors of sexual violence and their families.
- In collaboration with health actors and refugee women, establish "drop-in" centers where survivors can receive confidential and compassionate listening, counseling, information, support, and advocacy.

### *Education*

- Promote an increased level of school attendance at the primary level.
- Adapt existing education programs to see how they can address the issue of child sexual exploitation (life skills training, peace education) and detect problems children may be facing.
- Build safeguards into education structures to ensure that sexual exploitation does not take place within the school system, e.g., pay close attention to recruitment and monitoring of teachers, increase number of female staff.
- Institute and enforce code of conduct for teachers.
- Raise awareness among the refugees to understand the importance of education for all children and adolescents, including and especially girls.
- Provide school uniforms and supplies and cover examination fees for refugee children when this is required by educational institutions.
- Establish non-formal education/vocational training programs targeting those most vulnerable to gender-based violence and other forms of abuse.

### *Income Generation*

- Implement income-generating activities for refugee parents, women-headed households, and others who are among the most vulnerable to sexual abuse.
- Identify means by which income-generating activities can respond to non-food items needed, i.e. purchase soap from refugee soap makers.
- Increase funding where possible for micro-finance, include refugees and returnees into national micro-finance programs.
- Strengthen agriculture programs to ensure refugees have access to appropriate food supplements.
- Actively encourage refugees to have their own kitchen gardens.

### *Legal Assistance and Protection (including Refugee Security)*

#### ***Legal Environment***

- Promote the definition of a “child” as anyone below the age of 18, as established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- Provide identity cards for all registered refugees.
- Undertake a review of the existence and implementation of adequate national legislation ensuring protection of women’s and children’s rights on one hand and prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence on the other.
- Lobby governments to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to sign and ratify the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Lobby governments to ensure that abuses by national police and security forces are prevented and effectively prosecuted if they occur.

- Work with Human Rights Agencies to create an environment for changes in legislation and the policies of Government on child and women protection issues.
- Use guidelines and legal services in partnership with local lawyers' associations, female lawyers' associations and other advocacy groups when appropriate laws do not exist.

### ***Legal Justice (police and national courts)***

- Whenever possible, engage same-sex advisers, interpreters, and police interviewers for following up on reports. The absence of a same-sex interviewer should not, however, prevent follow-up action: Opposite-sex interviewers are just as good if they act compassionately and sensitively.
- Advise the survivor on the consequences of her decisions and the importance of taking legal action against the perpetrator.
- Counsel the survivor on the applicable law, procedures, evidentiary requirements, and likely time frame of a court proceeding.
- Prepare the survivor about what to expect in court, the type of questions likely to be asked, and the general insensitivity she may face along the way.
- Accompany the survivor to the police station and court.
- When appropriate, allocate resources for mobile courts to make the legal system more accessible in remote locations.
- Ensure that the rights of the survivor are promoted and protected through the legal process.
- Follow-up closely with the police/prosecutors to ensure rigorous prosecution of sexual and gender-based crimes, with minimal delays and disruptions to the process.
- Follow-up with the court and offer basic support if needed.

### ***Legal Justice (traditional and customary law)***

- Should the survivor wish to pursue justice through traditional and customary laws, the protection officer should ensure that the procedures and processes are fair and just.
- Track cases in which traditional and customary laws are used.

### ***Security***

- Organize training and sensitization for security enforcement agencies on gender-based violence, CRC, national laws, reporting and referral mechanisms, as well as prevention at field level.
- Undertake a security assessment to identify risk factors in the camp and its surroundings and address the potential risks appropriately.
- Request the authorities to establish and/or strengthen police posts in all camps, including regular patrols, in order to increase camp security and protect refugees.

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