



Consultative Forum Thematic Meeting on gender-related persecution

Discussion Paper

Workshop 2: Mitigating the risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in reception facilities.

Background

It is well-documented that the risk of SGBV is exacerbated in displacement contexts for various reasons, including the breakdown of community and social protection mechanisms, separation from family, lack of access to basic needs and services, increased vulnerability and dependence, and - in relation to reception facilities - lack of privacy and overcrowding. In any emergency response, there will also be groups of at-risk individuals who are more vulnerable to GBV than other members of the population. This could be for various reasons, including gender inequality. Humanitarian response needs to be mindful of the protection rights and needs of these at-risk groups and how these may vary within and across different humanitarian settings.

GBV risk mitigation refers to actions that are taken in each humanitarian sector to reduce risks and exposure to SGBV. Integrating GBV prevention and mitigation into humanitarian interventions requires anticipating, contextualising and addressing factors that may contribute to GBV. Risk factors will vary according to the setting, population and type of GBV. While GBV prevention activities aim to address the root and underlying causes of GBV (eg. attitudes, beliefs, norms and structures that promote gender-based discrimination and unequal power), GBV risk mitigation aims to reduce the risk of exposure to GBV by addressing contributory factors.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee has developed Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, including measures to reduce the risk of SGBV. In this session participants are encouraged to consider specifically what risks displaced populations face within reception facilities in Europe, specific actions which may be taken to mitigate these risks as well as challenges in implementing these actions. Reference should be made to the “essential actions” sheet for the shelter, settlement and recovery sector.

Structure of the workshop

The workshop will be opened with a presentation by UNHCR (+/- 20 min). Subsequently, the group will be split in two and each group will discuss the key challenges, good practices as well as possible recommendations that can be made in order to mitigate the risks of SGBV in reception facilities (45-60 min). The group will then convene back in plenary setting and will report and discuss the outcomes of the group discussions (30 min).

Key questions to be discussed:

- What SGBV-related risks are frequently reported in reception facilities and how may they be addressed?
- Which groups are potentially at heightened risk of SGBV?
- What are good practices which participants have observed that are effective to mitigate these risks?
- What challenges are faced in SGBV risk mitigation in Europe?
- Consider what recommendations can be made in relation to SGBV risk mitigation within reception facilities to NGO counterparts, Member State authorities, EASO and other EU institutions/agencies.