

Consultation 1 – Zero Draft of Global Compact of Refugees

Agenda Item 1: the programme of action and the principal modalities for burden- and responsibility-sharing

National Arrangements and Global Platform –

- Essential that any refugee policy making bodies – such as suggested Steering Groups, global platforms – include GEWGE capacity. Also crucial that they have representation from women’s civil society – including from refugee populations.
- As per language of introduction, any host country *comprehensive plan [para 15]* must be *informed by the imperatives of promoting GEWGE*. Any plan must be evidence based, utilizing SADD and include gender analysis to identify and address the specific needs of refugee women, girls, men and boys (WGMB).
- Member state and donor participants must ensure that GEWGE is adequately prioritized and resourced through their contributions and funding criteria.

Solidarity Conferences –

- Essential that solidarity conferences include GEWGE capacity. Also crucial that they have representation from women’s civil society – including from refugee populations.
- Language that calls on reporting on progress must include *age, gender and diversity perspective [para 17]* is well noted, but it is crucial that specific goals, objectives and outcomes that reflect this *age, gender and diversity perspective* are developed in advance so that progress can be monitored and tracked.

Additional Funding and Efficient Use of Resources –

- Funding agreements must support GEWGE commitments laid out in *comprehensive plan* – including both mainstreaming of GEWGE throughout the response and in targeted action that addresses the specific identified needs of WGMB.
- Funding must be made available to strengthen partnerships with and build the capacity of local women’s and youth organisations to assist and represent refugee populations and address the intersecting barriers to promote gender equality in displacement contexts.
- Opportunities developed with the private sector [para 22] must be inclusive.

Multi-Stakeholder Approach –

- [Para 26] consultations to include women and youth in assessing and planning response plans is most welcome. Their inclusion in *key fora, institutions and decision making processes* is likely to require specific funding to facilitate this.

Agenda Item 2: support for the application of the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF):

Reception and Admission – (c.f. UNW GCR Position Paper for detailed recommendations) –

- *Immediate reception arrangements*
Most asylum seekers will arrive under difficult circumstances at reception points. Women and girls – especially those unaccompanied, may be particularly vulnerable at this juncture. The reception

conditions they meet can dictate their long-term outcomes and future prospects, as well as their how well their immediate needs are addressed:

- Ensure all entry systems are protection-sensitive and gender responsive.
- They must recognize all forms of GBV as a right to asylum.
- Ensure that arrivals have immediate access to the differing and gender-specific humanitarian and protection services they need whilst being processed as asylum seekers.
- Ensure that all staff at reception and detention centers are trained in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

- *Safety and Security* –
 - Mitigate the risk of SGBV at reception or detention centers by ensuring conditions that respect the safety and dignity of all accommodated there. Gender segregated and hygienic toilet and washing facilities (including adequate sanitary supplies) and sleeping arrangements for unaccompanied women, men, girls and boys should be provided.
 - Ensure adequate numbers of trained female staff – including case-workers, interpreters and security staff are available at all times to liaise with arrivals and support women and girls through the registration process and in referring them to protection and humanitarian services. Separate and private facilities for the interviewing of women and girls should be available and used.
 - Ensure that all staff at reception and detention centers are trained in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and that a standardized, zero-tolerance formal code of conduct is set in place. All accommodated at the centers should be made aware of their rights and the zero tolerance of any SEA by staff or others accommodated at the reception/detention center. An easily accessible, anonymous and confidential complaints mechanism must be in place.

- *Registration and Documentation* –
 - Register all women and girls as individuals. Adult women should be registered independently from their husbands and/or other male family members, though systems should link families together once registered.
 - Ensure the widest protection of the family unity of asylum seekers. Provide safe spaces for women and children and family spaces.

- *Addressing Specific Needs* –
 - [Para 43] states “support **could** be provided for” a number of essential services etc. This must be “**should** be provided for”.
 - No mention of LGBTI needs.

- *Identifying international protection needs* –
 - [Para 45] *asylum capacity support group* must include GEWGE capacity

Meeting Needs and Supporting Communities

It will be essential to provide host countries the technical support they need to ensure the adequate integration of gender and women’s empowerment into the assessment and planning for anticipated, or after the fact, arrival of large refugee movements. They will also need support for national and local authorities to ensure that the needs of all refugees – including women and girls – are adequately identified and addressed.

- *Education, Livelihoods and Health*
 - Include women’s leadership and participation in the implementation and delivery of services to refugee communities.
 - Ensure that women are included in all cash-based intervention strategies in a manner that are gender transformative and will not heighten their exposure to the risk of GBV.
 - Identify sustainable and appropriate livelihood opportunities for women that are feasible and viable. Consult with women and girls to determine the type of marketable skills they would like to acquire. Provide women with the necessary skills training to access such opportunities.

- Provide services to assist with the care-duties which may impede women’s ability to work.
- Where feasible, remove any legal restrictions that impede women’s access to legal formal employment – including recognition or fast-tracked conversion of educational and professional qualifications.
- Provide sexual and reproductive health services and rights education for adults
- *Supporting Communities*
 - Work with national authorities to build their capacity across all sectors to be able to address the economic, social and protection needs of all refugees, including those specific to women and girls. These would include immigration authorities, police, judiciary, education, ministries etc.
 - Strengthen partnerships with, build the capacity of and provide funding to local women’s rights and youth organisations to assist and represent refugee populations and address the intersecting barriers to promote gender equality in displacement contexts.
 - Assist government authorities to integrate the specific needs of women and girl refugees into national development plans, and if relevant, humanitarian response plans.
 - Support gender-transformative community programmes that seek to prevent SGBV.
 - Consider the impact of displacement on men’s gender roles, identities and relations and engage men and boys as partners for gender equality.
 - Assess the absorption capacity of host communities to make sure that hosting arrangements will not cause harm to host communities and potentially cause resentment towards the refugees. If possible, provide support to the host community, where they have similar needs (water, food, sanitation, etc.). Assistance to women refugees – such as cash based transfers, livelihood opportunities etc. – should have visible and tangible social and economic benefits to the host country and communities.

- *Civil Registries*

In many societies, women’s identity is linked to the males in their lives – husbands, fathers, sons – and in a refugee context they can find it difficult to prove or establish their own identity. This can create challenges in finding durable solutions.

- Assist women and girls to obtain essential documentation to establish their identification and legal ownership of assets – birth certificates, marriage certificates, land-deeds, passports etc.
- Women and girls should have independent access to their own personal identification and travel documents.
- Women’s ability to acquire a citizenship or residency status and pass it on to their children must not be associated or dependent on the corresponding status of a male relative.

- *Gender*

- [Para 63] states “this **could** include measures...”. This must be “**could** include measures...”
- Does not include language on the self-reliance and empowerment of women and girls to enable them to build a future of their own choosing, freeing them from dependence and vulnerability.
- In many cases, ensuring women’s contributions and increased self-reliance will lead to positive social and economic outcomes not only for themselves, but for their families, communities and host countries as well, meaning more effective and cost-efficient service delivery.

Solutions

For many refugee women and girls, repatriation is not a viable option and permanent settlement in their host country, or an alternative country, may be the only solution that offers meaningful protection and a durable solution. Women can face challenges in finding durable solutions, due to restrictions such as their ability to obtain a divorce, or the custody of their children, or the lack of documentation to prove their status in these regards. Such limitations can put women and children at risk by offering them little option but to remain in hazardous circumstances in their country of origin/first country of asylum, or by forcing them to embark on dangerous journeys to reunite with family members already living in safety.

- *Voluntary Repatriation –*

Ensure that displaced women are afforded an equal voice in the creation of conditions that would help refugees to return in safety and dignity to their countries of origin – including peace negotiations, formulation of political solutions, humanitarian, reconstruction and recovery assessment and planning. Risk of GBV should be included as an allowable reason to decline repatriation.

- *Rights and information*

Provide accessible, relevant and actionable information on all options for durable solutions – be it voluntary repatriation, resettlement and other legal pathways – to all refugees, including women and girls, so that they can freely make informed decisions.

Protect the rights of all refugee women to independently choose their own durable solution based on the options available to them. Prevent gender discrimination leading to decisions being conferred upon them by a husband or other male family members.

- *Other pathways* - Ensure that any innovative or temporary resettlement options offered by third-countries – such as private sector sponsorship, medical/humanitarian evacuation, academic leave of stay etc. – are also accessible by women and girls and offer options for keeping families together.

Agenda Item 3 – Follow Up Arrangements

- *Assessment and Response Planning* - Providing the international protection and humanitarian services that adequately meet the rights and needs of all asylum seekers requires an evidence based understanding – under-pinned by gender analysis and disaggregated data - of the gender-dynamics that affect the displacement contexts for each refugee population.
- *M&E and Indicators* – Ongoing monitoring of the Plan of Action and the CRRF, at all levels, should include indicators measuring the extent that commitments to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment are being realized. Monitoring of individual CRRFs should track funding made available specifically for programming that specifically target women and girls.