

Towards a Global Compact on Refugees

Thematic discussion two: Measures to be taken at the onset of a large movement of refugees

**Palais des Nations, Geneva
17 October 2017**

PANEL 4: How can we address specific needs within large movements

German Intervention

Ladies and gentlemen,

Germany aligns itself with the statement given by the EU on behalf of its member states.

When we talk about specific needs or of especially vulnerable persons within large movements of refugees we need to be aware that we are not talking about a small group but about the majority of persons seeking refuge.

According to UNHCR figures more than half of the refugees worldwide are minors. About half are women and girls. They often face a high risk of becoming a victim of violence, exploitation or trafficking at home or on their way. Many refugees are challenged by disabilities or injuries acquired in their home-country or during their flight.

The New York Declaration therefore puts a particular emphasis on persons with specific needs and the CRRF calls for their identification in the registration process and adequate protection arrangements. We also commend UNHCR's efforts in removing barriers to inclusion in humanitarian responses, and in mainstreaming community-based and participatory protection approaches that are sensitive to gender, age and disability. At the World Humanitarian Summit Germany committed to ensuring that humanitarian programming is gender responsive and to only fund projects that include a gender analysis with sex and age disaggregated data by 2018. We furthermore Germany endorsed the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and committed toward its implementation.

Germany would like to see that the Global Compact on Refugees in its programme of action addresses the specific needs of refugees in vulnerable situations such as minors, especially

unaccompanied minors, women and girls, pregnant women, older persons, LGBTI persons, victims of trafficking or smuggling as well as victims of violence including sexual violence.

Of course this poses challenges especially while dealing with a large influx of refugees. Also in Germany in 2015 when large numbers of refugees arrived efforts of all stakeholders to provide adequate reception conditions for everyone were stretched to a limit.

Very quickly the German Government saw the need for strong initiative to support the protection of especially women and children refugees and introduced a range of measures built on one cornerstone: Cooperation - especially with the regional and municipal stakeholders and civil society organizations.

One example: Together with UNICEF and more than 20 additional partners from the civil society the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has worked on an initiative to protect women and children in refugee accommodations. In a total 100 refugee accommodations anti-violence coordinators have been established. The work they perform complies with the minimum standards for the protection of refugees in accommodation centers that were first published in 2016 and updated in 2017 to also comprise inter alia LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities. The cooperation with UNICEF also includes the establishment of child friendly spaces within refugee accommodations.

A further focus of the work of the German Government is awareness-building, empowerment and integration of women and girls. The according measures have been consolidated into a strategy with a gender equality focus and also involve close cooperation with civil society partners.

The lesson we draw from our experiences is that specific needs in groups of refugees are prevailing and they need to be taken into account from the very beginning in any large-scale refugee situation and in any stages of the registration, reception and - where applicable - integration process.

The “Global Response Group” that Germany proposed would of course take the needs of children, women, older persons, victims of violence or trafficking and other persons in vulnerable situations into account in all its actions.

We also strongly support the approach of UNHCR to cooperate with the relevant international agencies and non-governmental organizations with expertise to support the identification of persons with specific needs and to establish appropriate procedures and services.

Thank you.