

# Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

## Implementation Strategy Executive Summary



# Background

For the past two years, UNICEF and UNFPA, on behalf of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), have been leading the revision of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*, with the support and guidance of an inter-agency Task Team. Originally published in 2005, the revised and updated GBV Guidelines are an essential tool for humanitarian actors and communities affected by armed conflict, natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. The purpose of the Guidelines is to assist these actors in planning, implementing, coordinating and monitoring essential actions for the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence (GBV) across all sectors of humanitarian response.

To support effective roll-out of the revised GBV Guidelines, a well-conceived, well-resourced, longer-term implementation plan is essential. Recognizing this need, the GBV Guidelines Task Team has developed a detailed Implementation Strategy. This Strategy – informed by experiences and lessons learned across many humanitarian sectors – has been designed to maximize levels of interest and awareness around the GBV Guidelines in order to promote their sustained, systematic and long-term uptake by humanitarian stakeholders.

## Who the strategy is for

The primary audience for the GBV Guidelines is non-GBV-specialist stakeholders (both national and international) across all sectors of humanitarian response. By integrating the recommendations from the Guidelines into their response efforts, these stakeholders can significantly reduce risks of GBV for the populations they work with.

A global-level, inter-agency '*Reference Group*'<sup>1</sup> has been established with the purpose of operationalizing the strategy and leading and supporting the long-term implementation of the revised Guidelines. The Reference Group effectively serves as custodian of this strategy. Beyond the Reference Group, the target audience for the Strategy is the GBV AoR core membership who represent the lead agencies responsible for addressing GBV in emergency contexts.

At country level, the strategy will rely heavily on the GBV coordination mechanism and the leading GBV agencies that form that mechanism (national and international). The agreement of these actors in the field to take the lead in supporting other humanitarian sectors to implement the GBV Guidance in addition to their targeted GBV activities will be a necessary condition of operationalizing the strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Membership of the Reference Group includes: UNICEF, UNFPA, American Refugee Committee, Care International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ChildFund, International Medical Corps, International Organization for Migration, International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, Refugees International, Save the Children, UNHCR, Women's Refugee Commission and the World Food Programme.



# What's included in the strategy

The Implementation Strategy is organized around **one primary goal**: *to ensure that humanitarian programming in all emergencies is designed and implemented – across all sectors, through all stages and by all stakeholders – in a manner that substantially reduces the risk, promotes resilience and supports lasting solutions to the problem of GBV.*

Two overarching **strategic priorities** – *inclusivity* and *adopting a supportive communications approach* – inform all relevant aspects of how the Strategy is operationalized. *Inclusivity* means engaging all key GBV agencies and other humanitarian sectors/clusters in all aspects of the implementation process. *Adopting a supportive communications approach* means not being directive, but taking a partnership approach that prioritizes building relationships with key people and sectors. It means making materials and language for humanitarian actors highly accessible, emphasizing the benefits that come from addressing GBV through sector programming, and ensuring that the guidance is pragmatic.

The Strategy further details the main activities that will support sustained implementation of the GBV Guidelines. These activities are guided by the following **four objectives**:

1. *Humanitarian actors are aware of and support the GBV Guidelines, and management and leadership mechanisms for implementation are established globally.* This includes prioritizing the IASC endorsement of the Guidelines; disseminating them widely to maximize interest and awareness; establishing sustained leadership for their uptake and use; and engaging in advocacy with humanitarian leadership, sector lead agencies and humanitarian organizations.
2. *All humanitarian strategies and programming are planned, developed and implemented in accordance with the GBV Guidelines.* The GBV coordination mechanisms in target roll-out countries should lead and support implementation in-country, as well as ensure GBV experts are available to support roll-out. The Guidelines must be contextualized to different settings, and country-level trainings should be prioritized. Advocacy should also be undertaken, both globally and in-country, for the integration of the Guidelines throughout emergency preparedness and response assessments and plans.
3. *The GBV Guidelines are institutionalized and consistently used by donors, multilateral agencies, NGOs and governments.* Reference Group members, as the public 'face' of the Guidelines at the global level, must spearhead the use of the GBV Guidelines in their own agencies' global strategies and policies, and GBV AoR members more broadly must commit to the institutionalization of the Guidelines' recommendations. Humanitarian agencies should use the Guidelines to inform their funding proposal guidance, and key donors should adopt the Guidelines to inform their policies and funding criteria. Furthermore, governments should integrate the Guidelines' recommendations into their national policies and strategies for emergency preparedness and response.
4. *The extent of implementation of the GBV Guidelines across different humanitarian sectors is monitored and measured.* This requires first building an evidence base, and then monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Guidelines to address (1) the process of implementation and (2) the results in terms of more effective prevention and mitigation of GBV risks across all sectors of humanitarian response.



In addition to outlining policies, strategies and methods for ensuring implementation of the revised Guidelines across all humanitarian response sectors, the Implementation Strategy contains 14 Annexes that provide a range of tools and information for supporting various aspects of roll-out and implementation, including but not limited to: checklists on roles and responsibilities in-country; implementation staff Terms of Reference; translation guidance; contextualization guidance; a template for the documentation of case studies; and evaluation guidance and criteria.

The overarching goal of the GBV Guidelines is to achieve system-wide change whereby GBV-sensitive approaches and programming are consistently implemented across all humanitarian sectors from the very outset of every emergency. This Implementation Strategy is essential in supporting this goal and ensuring its actualization. If humanitarian actors across all sectors – as well as donors, multilateral agencies and governments – make a commitment to implementing the GBV Guidelines in their work, we will greatly enhance the safety and well-being of those we serve.

For more information and to download the full implementation strategy, please visit [www.gbvguidelines.org](http://www.gbvguidelines.org).



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