

ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2016
Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery:
New York Launch of the Inter-agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

Inter-Agency Standing Committee and Inter-Agency Reference Group for the Gender-based Violence Guidelines

Tuesday, 28 June, 18:15 – 19:30
Conference Room 1, United Nations Secretariat, New York

This side event will launch a tool to reduce vulnerability and risk of affected populations to gender-based violence, directly in keeping with the theme of this year's ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment: *Restoring Humanity and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.*

Background and objectives

This official HAS side event will be the formal New York launch of the new Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action* ("GBV Guidelines"). The GBV Guidelines provide practical recommendations for *all* humanitarian response sectors to prevent and reduce the risk of GBV in their work – building on the fundamental humanitarian principle of do no harm, and providing stakeholders with a key tool to help them achieve the core commitments made during the World Humanitarian Summit.

Globally, one in three women will experience sexual or physical violence in her lifetime¹. These risks are even higher in crisis-affected settings, due, for example, to the breakdown in family and social support structures, risks associated with accessing basic needs (using the latrine, collecting water or firewood, etc.), the lack of privacy and protection in camps for displaced people, the expansion of armed elements and generalized chaos.

In humanitarian response, ALL actors – regardless of sector – have a role and a responsibility to ensure that their programming does all it can to prevent and to reduce the risk of gender-based violence (GBV). These responsibilities – based on the fundamental humanitarian principle of do no harm – are also fully in keeping with the Agenda for Humanity's core responsibility 2: Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity (specifically the goal of eradicating sexual and gender-based violence and treating survivors with dignity), as well as core responsibility 3: Leave no one behind (specifically the goal of empowering and protecting women and girls).

The GBV Guidelines are a practical, field-tested tool that recognize the particularly high risk of GBV in crisis-affected settings, and provide step-by-step guidance for humanitarian actors and communities affected by conflict and disasters on essential actions across all sectors of humanitarian response – resulting in safer and more effective programmes.

¹ World Health Organisation (2013), *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence.*

The Guidelines have been endorsed by the ERC, the IASC and the key cluster and sector lead agencies, making them the accepted standard for GBV prevention and risk mitigation in humanitarian contexts globally. The Guidelines are a key tool to support practical achievement of the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS).

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Discussion points

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested points:

1. Reassert the need at all levels for actors and sectors to engage in GBV prevention and risk mitigation activities as well as the need for practical guidance to reduce the GBV related risks of affected populations, promote their resilience, and aid recovery.
2. Increase awareness of the GBV Guidelines among donors, affected country governments, UN agencies, implementing partners and civil society as the new standard that can support all actors to realize the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit.
3. Call upon senior political and humanitarian leadership to incorporate the GBV Guidelines into institutional policies, and to use the GBV Guidelines to support programme implementation across all levels and sectors of humanitarian response.

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations

This event builds on the momentum generated by the World Humanitarian Summit to create high level political and humanitarian leadership support for the GBV Guidelines and encourage global leadership to establish mechanisms to implement GBV prevention and risk mitigation actions across all levels and sectors of humanitarian response, including and especially the key actors represented in the panel: donor and affected country leadership; UN agencies; NGO implementing partners and civil society.

Format

Video followed by Interactive panel discussion

Chair/Moderator (TBC)

Panel composition:

- Representative from Permanent Mission of Ecuador (TBC)
- UNICEF Senior Leadership
- United States ECOSOC Ambassador Mendelson (TBC)
- Senior representative of the International Rescue Committee (TBC)
- Representative from women’s civil society organization (TBC)

Background Material

www.gbvguidelines.org

Contacts

Erin Patrick, GBV Guidelines Inter-agency Coordinator, gbv.guidelines@gmail.com, +1 917 963 1788

Olivia Headon, IASC Secretariat, headon@un.org, +1 917 367 5242