

Facilitator's Guide

Reporting on

Gender-Based Violence

in the Syria Crisis



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Terms and Abbreviations

GBV	Gender-Based Violence
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
RHRC	Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (formerly known as Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium)
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SOV	Survivor of Violence
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAW	Violence Against Women
VOV	Victim Of Violence

The phrases 'displaced communities' and 'populations affected by armed conflict' refer to refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees. These persons may be living in established camps or settlements, or they may be dispersed in urban or rural settings.



Foreword

Five years on, the Syria Crisis shockwaves still reverberate across an already volatile region. Syrian women bear the full hardship of this open-ended conflict, as they pay the price of social stigma and displacement inside the country and in the five neighbouring countries, which are now home to more than four million refugees. Almost always, they are affected by gender-based violence, which tends to increase in times of duress as familial bonds weaken as a result of forced migration and displacement.

Roughly 13.5 million people are affected by the Humanitarian crisis: almost half of Syria's population. This alarming number includes five million women of reproductive health and half a million pregnant women, according to UNFPA estimates released in December 2015. Battered women in war zones pay the price twice: incurring physical and physiological scars in addition to suffering the impact of social stigma in ultra-conservative societies.

In Jordan, a report by the United Nations Children's Fund revealed that nearly one in three marriages among Syrian refugees involved a person under 18. In Iraq's Kurdistan, a report by UN Women underlined that one in every five Syrian women received cash offers in return for sexual services.

Child marriage, early pregnancy, exploitation and high mortality rates inevitably attract the attention of journalists looking for news stories. This training course offers journalists knowledge, skills and tools to guide them in producing balanced, socially sensitive and non-provocative reports on gender-based violence.

While the media have a major role to play in tackling all types of violence, both traditional and new media in the Arab region continue to perpetuate stereotypes and generalisations about gender-based violence. Ethically flawed, unprofessional, and biased reporting can add to women's suffering inside their country and in refugee camps across the region.

In their pursuit of sensational news stories, journalists may smear the survivors' reputations or even jeopardise their lives, instead of highlighting their plight in a professional and responsible manner. Moreover, some journalists sometimes fail to link gender-based violence to human rights issues, gender equality, social norms and societal development. Unfortunately, this type of reporting does not encourage a deeper understanding of the best ways of addressing it. UNFPA aims to build the knowledge and skills of journalists on issues relating to gender-based violence in Syria and neighbouring countries.



Overview of Training Curriculum

The curriculum in this training manual enables you, the trainer, to conduct a three-day training workshop. If need be, the curriculum may be condensed into a two-day workshop. first part of the curriculum begins with training and group discussion about basic concepts and principles that will help participants develop a clear understanding of the meaning of the term 'gender-based violence'. The programme continues with detailed information about the consequences of gender-based violence and the survivor support services needed. You will also cover the causes and contributing factors, shining a light on prevention and how best to develop effective prevention strategies. The second part of the curriculum focuses on the ethical principles of reporting on gender-based violence, what to do and what to avoid. It also includes tips for the journalists to consider during the interview and when report on gender-based violence related issue.

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