

How to support survivors of gender-based violence

A step-by-step Pocket Guide for humanitarian practitioners

In September 2015 the IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings (GBV Guidelines) were launched. Over the course of 2016 and 2017, the GBV Guidelines Implementation Support Team trained over 2,500 humanitarian practitioners in 11 sectors and 18 countries on how to reduce gender-based violence-related risks in their programming.

Across a diversity of contexts and sectors, training participants voiced their interest and need for concise, how-to resource on **how to support a survivor of gender-based violence (GBV) when there is no GBV actor (including a referral pathway or GBV specialist/focal point) in their area.** Upon consultation with other practitioners and coordination mechanisms, it is apparent that this challenge resonates in a diversity of settings and across multiple types of actors.

To fill this gap, a joint working group convened by the GBV Guidelines Reference Group and the GBV Area of Responsibility developed A Pocket Guide resource on how to support a survivor of GBV when there is no GBV referral pathway or GBV focal point (“Pocket Guide”), as a companion guide to the GBV Guidelines. This resource package was created using expertise from Working Group members, external reviewers and consultation participants in the last quarter of 2017; furthermore, the resource aligns with existing global tools such as the Shelter Cluster’s GBV Constant Companion.

The January 2018 version of the Pocket Guide resource package is a Version for Consultation designed to share with the broader humanitarian community to solicit feedback. The Working Group is undertaking planning to disseminate the resource package in order to facilitate input from a diversity of practitioners, sectors and settings.

About the GBV Guidelines

The 2015 GBV Guidelines (revised from the 2005 version) are a practical, field-tested tool that provides guidance for humanitarian actors and communities affected by conflict and natural disasters on essential actions to mitigate gender-based violence (GBV)-related risks – resulting in safer and more effective programmes. The GBV Guidelines are for non-GBV specialists, who can and should undertake actions within the day-to-day operations of their own sectors to reduce GBV-related risks. A three-year Implementation Strategy is being rolled-out to maximize levels of interest, awareness and uptake around the GBV Guidelines.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE POCKET GUIDE RESOURCE PACKAGE?

The goal of this resource package is to provide all humanitarian practitioners with concrete information in an easy-to-follow and easy-to-carry-guide on:

- How to support a survivor of gender-based violence
- Who disclosed to you in a context where
- There is no gender-based violence actor (including a referral pathway or GBV focal point) available in your area.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN POCKET GUIDE RESOURCE PACKAGE?

This resource has three components:

1. This Background Note

to introduce the resource and provide key messages for advocacy and coordination.

2. A User Guide, geared towards program managers, technical coordinators, team leaders and other similar practitioners in all sectors to aid in briefing and capacity-building their teams to use the Pocket Guide and support a survivor of gender-based violence in the event that a survivor discloses or seeks their support.

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3. A Pocket Guide, targeted towards frontline providers in all clusters/sectors, to use as an easy-reference on how to support a survivor of gender-based violence if a survivor discloses to them or seeks their support.

WHO IS THE POCKET GUIDE FOR?

The Pocket Guide is targeted towards non-GBV specialists who are on the frontlines of providing services to affected communities, including hygiene promoters, community health workers, camp managers, protection focal points etc.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE POCKET GUIDE?

The Pocket Guide is designed to be a practical resource when a survivor discloses their experience to any humanitarian practitioner. It includes an easy to read flow chart, quick reference Dos and Don'ts, and quick navigation to a step-by-step list of actions following a prepare, look, listen and link framework. The Pocket Guide integrates considerations for child survivors, adolescent girls, sexual and gender minorities/LGBTQI, survivors with disabilities and male survivors.

WHERE CAN I GET IT?

All three components of this resource are available in:

- > Hard copy as an easy-to-carry A5 booklet;
- > Online at www.gbvguidelines.org and www.gbvaor.net in high and low-res versions for printing; and
- > As an app with offline functions for your Android or iOS device—search for [x] in Google Play, iTunes.

Key messages for advocacy and coordination

1. Integrating GBV risk mitigation measures, such as those in the IASC GBV Guidelines, is not only a core responsibility of all humanitarian actors, it also improves the effectiveness of humanitarian response across all sectors.
 - a. In accordance with the “Do No Harm” principle and the IASC Centrality of Protection statement, humanitarian actors in all sectors have a responsibility to design and implement their programming in a way that minimizes GBV risks and ensures accessibility for vulnerable groups.
 - b. When programmes are safer and more accessible, more people benefit, and overall outcomes improve; on the other hand, failing to address GBV concerns compromises the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions in all sectors.
2. Pre-existing gender inequality makes women and girls particularly vulnerable in this type of crisis, increasing their exposure to multiple forms of GBV, including sexual violence, domestic violence, forced marriage and sexual exploitation and abuse.
 - a. When families are unable to meet their basic needs, women and girls are forced to employ dangerous coping mechanisms, increasing their exposure to GBV.
 - b. When women and girls are not provided with opportunities for meaningful participation, their needs and access to services are often not reflected in the provision of humanitarian aid

LOOKING AHEAD: In addition to collecting input and feedback to improve this pilot resource package, the Working Group is exploring how to provide further resources for scenarios where there are mobile services, services that require transportation to services, or virtual services like a telephone hotline or confidential online chat. GBV specialists are also exploring new service delivery models to respond, prevent and mitigate GBV. The joint working group seeks to further build out tools and resources to meet these needs.

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