

# MODULE 8

## VULNERABLE GROUPS



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### Summary

This module emphasises group work to raise awareness and pool the knowledge of the participants on **special protection rights and needs related to gender, age, and, if time permits, on disability and health status** (such as those **refugees with HIV/AIDS** who are discriminated against).

Through three different **group exercises**, the participants guide each other in learning about the rights and protection concerns of these refugees, with **a focus on children and women**.

This process of dialogue and discovery is supported by brief overview presentations and access to key learning materials that participants can consult during the training session and that they can use to support their work when they return home.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify different groups of people who may have specific vulnerabilities;
- Identify some of the specific protection needs of refugee children, adolescents, and women;
- Identify some of the specific rights of refugee children and women.

### Key Messages

- The rights and protection concerns of all refugees have been specifically acknowledged in a number of national and international laws. There is an abundance of sources to guide humanitarian workers on how to identify and develop responses to the specific protection concerns related to gender, age, and ability or health status;
- All children have specific protection needs because they are developing physically and emotionally. All children are at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, which can occur within the family and community;
- Refugee children face additional protection problems related to the causes and consequences of displacement. Refugee children separated from their parents or primary caregivers need immediate attention and protection;
- Specific protection problems arise within the female refugee population due to the overwork, deprivation, and exclusion that result from discrimination by all actors, including humanitarian agencies;
- Programming for those refugees with special protection needs should involve the participation of all parts of the community, and they should support family, community, and other networks of care providers. Programme design needs to be responsive to other daily demands made on women, which may limit their participation.

### Preparation

- **Read the materials** in the optional Gender-Based Violence (GBV) module to ensure that the issues are clear. If GBV issues arise in this session, it would be advisable to defer them until you do the GBV module to avoid repetition of the same messages;
- **Photocopy** “Handout 2 - Statements on Women and Form for Responses”.

### Note to trainer

- ✓ *This module aims to cover an enormous amount of material. It will be your decision to either run this module over a **double session** or **select only the activities** you think suitable for your audience and context.*

Module 8 Breakdown		
Timing	Method	Resources needed
Activity 1 - Identifying Protection Needs Related to Specific Groups	10'	Group exercise
Activity 2 - Refugee Child Protection	40'	Group exercise and presentation
Activity 3 - Protection Concerns for Women	40'	Group exercise and presentation
Optional activity 1 - Ella Case Study	60'	Case study
Optional Activity 2 - Improving Protection for Refugee Women and Children	40'	Group exercise
<b>Total: 90 minutes without the optional activities + 100 minutes of optional activities</b>		Module8.ppt Coloured post-it notes or coloured paper and tape Handout 1 - Protection of Refugees Who Are Elderly, Disabled, or Have HIV/AIDS Trainer Guidance 1 - Activity 2 - Child Protection Sample Feedback Handout 2 - Statements and Form for Recording Responses Trainer Guidance 2 - Activity 3 - Possible Comments and Suggestions Handout 3 - Ella Case Study

**Sources**

The following are sources that relate to **the protection of refugee children**:

- Action for the Rights of Children (ARC) training programme put together by Save the Children, the UNHCR, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UNICEF. The training programme is easily accessible on CD-ROM, in PDF and Word format, so users can select and adapt the materials to use as a reference, for training materials, to support project proposals, or to build the capacity and resources of local partners. For more information or to acquire ARC resources, contact ARC Project Co-ordinator, Case Postale 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland. See [www.savethechildren.net/arc](http://www.savethechildren.net/arc).
- Rachel Hodgkin and Peter Newell, *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, UNICEF, 2002. See, especially, Chapter 22 on refugee children.
- Celia Petty, Mary Tamplin, and Sarah Uppard, *Working with Separated Children: Field guide, training manual and training exercises*, Save the Children, 1999.

The following are sources that relate to **the protection of refugee women**:

- *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva 1991.
- *Protecting Refugees: A Field Guide for NGOs*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva 1999. See the sections “Protecting Refugee Women” and “Protecting Refugee Children and Adolescents”.
- Susan Forbes Martin, *Refugee Women*, Zed Books, 1991.

The following is a source that relates to **human rights and disability**:

- Gerard Quinn and Theresia Degener, *Human rights and Disability: The current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the context of disability*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva 2002.

Activity 1 - Identifying Protection Needs Related to Specific Groups			
Timing		Method	Resources needed
Group exercise	5'	Group exercise	Handout 1 - Protection of Refugees Who Are Elderly, Disabled, or Have HIV/AIDS
Brainstorming	5'	Brainstorming in plenary	
<b>Total: 10 minutes</b>			

**Note to trainer**

- ✓ *Make this a **snappy exercise**, as it is designed mainly to provide the link between the protection needs of all vulnerable groups (such as the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS, ethnic minorities, etc.) and protection needs relating specifically to women and children.*
- ✓ *If you feel there will be **sensitivities regarding age**, then ask the group to line up in order of birth months, with January at the front of the line and December at the end.*

**Group exercise (5 minutes)**

**Ask the group** to line up in order of the year of their birth, with the oldest at one end of the line and the youngest at the other end.

**Once the group has formed a line**, split them into smaller groups.

**You want to be left** with six small groups, so the number in each group will depend on the total number of participants.

**Give each group** one of the following identities:

- Elderly;
- Children;
- Women;
- Survivors of violence;
- People with physical or mental disabilities;
- Ethnic minorities.

**Ask each group** to answer the following question from their identity perspective:

- What are your expectations of NGOs to provide for your specific protection needs?

**Allow groups five minutes** to discuss.

**Brainstorming (5 minutes)**

**Ask each group** what their specific expectations include.

You may **look for some of the following issues**, although this list is not exhaustive, and expect many more issues to arise:

- Elderly (someone to carry their food and water, access to health care, access to a community centre);
- Children (education, play areas, reunification services);

- Women (physical safety, access to post-natal care, to be near water and fuel, opportunities for income-generating activities);
- Survivors of violence (access to counselling, specific health-care support);
- People with physical or mental disabilities (access to specific health care, activities with the community to support integration);
- Ethnic minorities (physical safety, representation, appropriate opportunities to practise faith or culturally based activities).

**Explain** that, whilst there is a myriad of groups that have specific protection concerns, women and children are the largest (approximately 80 per cent) groups, which is why this module concentrates on the specific protection needs of refugee women and children and their entitlements under international law.

If you think it is appropriate, **distribute** “Handout 1 - Protection of Refugees Who Are Elderly, Disabled, or Have HIV/AIDS”.

Activity 2 - Refugee Child Protection			
Timing		Method	Resources needed
Group exercise	20'	Group exercise	Module8.ppt
Feedback	10'	Plenary	Coloured post-it notes or coloured paper and tape
Presentation on child protection	10'	Slide presentation	Trainer Guidance 1 - Activity 2 - Child Protection Sample
<b>Total: 40 minutes</b>			Feedback

**Note to trainer**

- ✓ *This session relates to **children**.*
- ✓ *The approach is designed to **pool participants' knowledge** and to elicit their various perspectives on the protection of refugee children. There are a **few variations** that can be made to this session as follows:*
- ✓ *Groups can be asked from the start to decide whether they will focus on children. They can be asked to define these terms for themselves.*
- ✓ *An alternative task for the optional group work could be: looking at the levels of care and obligations for the child; choose one threat and describe how, in your context, children are, or could be, protected against this threat at each level.*
- ✓ *If you are using this approach, it may be desirable to focus on threats and lessen or leave out the earlier group work on rights, duty-bearers, and differences in relation to adults.*
- ✓ *If the group shows that it has knowledge of children's rights and you are pressed for time, the PowerPoint presentation can be left out and the discussions lengthened.*

**Group exercise (20 minutes)**

**Introduce** the session by saying that it is a fun activity aimed more at raising awareness than at supplying answers to protection questions.

**Divide the plenary** into four groups.

**Provide each group** with a piece of flip-chart paper and ask them to draw a child in the middle of their flip-chart pages.

**Give each group** one of the following questions to write at the top of their page:

- What rights does this child have?
- Who are the duty-bearers in relation to this child?
- What makes this child different from an adult?
- What additional threats might he/she face as a refugee?

**Each group should brainstorm and write answers** to the questions on post-it notes (or pieces of coloured paper) and stick these around the child.

**Allow the groups five minutes.**

Then **ask the groups to move** to the next flip chart and add to the previous groups' answers.

**Repeat this process until** all four groups have visited all four flip charts.

**The trainer should circulate amongst the groups** to guide them if they get stuck.

**Feedback (10 minutes)**

Refer to "Trainer Guidance 1 - Child Protection Sample Feedback".

Stick the flip charts on the wall and allow people to survey them.

Allow participants to share any observations on the content of the flip charts and any links that they see between them.

Remark on anything that has been left off the flip charts.

Ask:

- Which threats are present in this context?
- What mechanisms are in place for monitoring the protection problems of children?
- Having noted what makes children distinct from adults, did you think of anything that they share (rights, intelligence, will, etc)?

**Presentation on child protection (10 minutes)**

Note to trainer

- ✓ Throughout the presentation, acknowledge, and make links to, the points already raised by participants in the **previous exercise**.

**Slide 1: Vulnerable groups****Slide 2: Levels of care, levels of obligation**

The "Levels of Care - Levels of Obligation" diagram depicts how families are the basic unit of society. In almost all cases, the family provides the best environment for meeting a child's developmental needs. In addition to providing care and protection, the family is where children learn how to behave with other people, where they discover their family history and the language and customs of their community.

The **primary responsibility** for ensuring children's survival and well-being lies with parents, family, and community.

The **national and local authorities** are responsible for ensuring that children's rights are respected. Any external assistance should aim to increase the community's capacity to meet children's protection entitlements.

In some cultures, **the family** is defined as the child's immediate relatives: their parents and siblings. In other cultures, the family is defined by a **much broader extended family** that includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, and more-distant relatives within a clan, village, or community. Ways of caring for children may vary, but all societies recognise that the natural unit for the development of a child is the family. This is why **re-establishment of family links** is so important.

The international level also provides protection for the child in the form of legal standards, many of which have been enshrined in national legislation as outlined in the following slide.

**Slide 3: Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Protection standards for **refugee children are defined in national laws and regulations** based upon international refugee law, human rights law, and (where it applies) international humanitarian law, not only by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). One example is that, between

the Fourth Geneva Convention, Protocol I and Protocol II, there are more than twenty provisions that give special protection to children affected by armed conflict.

**The rights in the CRC are indivisible, and it should therefore be read and referred to in a holistic fashion.** The four core principles of the CRC are:

- **Children should not suffer discrimination** (this has obvious implications for refugee children, who are often considered as a category apart from other refugees);
- **In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration;**
- **Children have a right to survival and development;**
- **Children have a right to participate in decisions that affect them.**

**Slide 4: Why is the CRC so useful?**

The CRC offers the **highest standards of protection** and assistance for children of any international instrument. The CRC is the **most widely ratified international instrument** in the history of the world, with only the United States and Somalia having not ratified. The CRC has no derogation clause, which means that **it applies all the time, to all children with no exception.**

Activity 3 - Protection Concerns for Women			
Timing		Method	Resources needed
Group exercise	20'	Group exercise	Module8.ppt
Feedback and comments	5'	Plenary	Handout 2 - Statements on Women and Form for Responses
Presentation on protection of refugee women	15'	Slide presentation	Trainer Guidance 2 - Activity 3 - Possible Comments and Suggestions
<b>Total: 40 minutes</b>			

**Note to trainer**

- ✓ *The activities relating to **refugee women** aim to provide an explanation of why refugee women have special protection needs and to give participants an opportunity to explore some protection entitlements of refugee women.*
- ✓ *The group exercise is **primarily an awareness-raising exercise**, which also highlights the social dynamics that affect women’s vulnerability. It is intended that, through discussion, participants should share and increase their understanding of protection concerns relating to women.*

**Group exercise (20 minutes)**

**Divide the participants into groups** of five or six.

**Ensure** a mixture of men and women.

**Ask each group** to assign a rapporteur to note the points raised by the group and facilitate the feedback to the plenary.

**Distribute** "Exercise 1 - Statements on Refugee Women".

**Give each of the participants and rapporteurs** in each group "Handout 2 - Statements on Women and Form for Responses". It is comprised of a list of statements on refugee women and of a form they can use to record the key points of the discussion.

**Ask the groups to answer** the following questions:

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? (Give examples from the given context to support your opinion);
- Does this lead you to any conclusions about how NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement can protect women refugees?

**Allow groups 20 minutes** for discussion.

**Feedback (5 minutes)**

**Take feedback** in plenary. **Invite one group to lead the feedback** on the first question by presenting their comments and examples for one statement. **Ask other groups to add** further comments and suggestions.

As the discussion unfolds, **keep a running record on two flip charts**: one labelled "examples", the other labelled "suggestions for Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and NGOs".

Should you wish to point out key issues that are not identified by the groups, you can do so at the end of the discussion on each statement or at the end of the feedback session by using "Trainer Guidance 2 - Possible Comments and Suggestions".

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**Presentation on protection of refugee women (15 minutes)****Note to trainer**

✓ Use this *short presentation* to reinforce points raised in the previous exercise.

**Slide 5: Protection of refugee women**

Refugee women have **specific protection needs** due to their position in societies, as well as additional protection needs due to their particular vulnerability at each different stage of their displacement.

**Binding norms defined in national and international law establish rights** for the treatment, protection, and care that all women are entitled to.

**Slide 6: Protection problems during displacement**

Refugee women face protection problems specific to different phases in their displacement.

**Slide 7: The rights of refugee women**

The rights of women are enshrined in the following conventions:

- 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol;
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the two Additional Protocols of 1977;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, etc.

**Slide 8: Participation promotes protection**

Programmes to improve protection of refugee women should **always involve their participation**.

**Slides 9 and 10: Key messages 1 and 2**

Within refugee populations, particularly exposed sub-groups exist, such as **female heads of household** who might be assuming new roles and additional responsibilities as a refugee.

When working with refugees, **programme design needs to be responsive to the other demands made on women's time**, as well as acknowledge the social constraints they may be under.

**Gender-based violence is a grave protection problem**, and it occurs at all levels of society and is directly linked to women's unequal status.

Overwork, deprivation, and exclusion are common protection problems faced by women refugees as a result of **discrimination by all actors**, including humanitarian agencies. **Sufficient, well-designed assistance** for refugee women can reduce this exposure.

The protection problems faced by refugee women can be largely unknown to agencies that seek to protect them and sometimes to the refugee groups themselves.

**Not hearing about issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination does not mean they are not happening.**

**Refugee women can be a key source of protection for themselves and others.**

Optional Activity 1 - Ella Case Study			
Timing		Method	Resources needed
Introduction	5'	Presentation	Handout 3 - Ella Case Study
Group work	30'	Case study	
Feedback	25'	Plenary	
<b>Total: 60 minutes</b>			

**Note to trainer**

- ✓ *This session is designed to help participants address the special refugee protection issues relating to women, adolescents, and children. Its starting point is a **case study of an adolescent female refugee named Ella** who faces problems specific to female adolescents.*
- ✓ *Using the refugee experience and the tool for refugee protection analysis in **Module 3**, participants are invited to identify the threats Ella faces and to highlight the sources and actors of protection she may call upon to ensure her safety.*
- ✓ *Participants will be able to **gain a broader picture** of refugee protection problems, allowing them time to reflect on other issues, such as coordination, access to/sharing information, etc.*

**Introduction to the case study (5 minutes)**

Ask one of the participants to name the phases of the refugee experience described in **Module 2** on refugees and displacement.

Divide the participants into groups of four or five. Ask each group to select a rapporteur to provide the plenary with feedback. **Distribute the case study and explain** that it features a female adolescent refugee who encounters a host of problems that raise protection issues. **Give each group** several sheets of flip-chart paper and coloured markers.

Ask the groups to read the case study and then answer only two questions from the list of four:

- With reference to the phases of the refugee experience, what threats did Ella face?
- What sources of protection should have been available to her? Which duty-bearers did or did not protect her?
- What protective mechanisms are or are not in place to address Ella’s situation? How do the different actors with protection responsibilities relate to each other?
- Which measures should have been taken to protect Ella?

**Group work (30 minutes)** - Allow 30 minutes for discussion.

**Feedback (25 minutes)**

Each rapporteur should be given five minutes to present the findings of the group on the questions they chose to answer. **Other groups** that dealt with the same question are invited to **add observations and comments** that have not been mentioned yet. Elicit questions and clarifications from the plenary as suitable.

**Reiterate briefly the key messages** relating to **vulnerable groups**.

**Highlight the various recent initiatives** undertaken to address, prevent, and remedy sexual exploitation and abuse of refugee and internally displaced women and children by humanitarian workers and peacekeepers (e.g., the June 2002 Plan of Action of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises).

Optional Activity 2 - Improving Protection for Refugee Women and Children			
Timing		Method	Resources needed
Group work	20'	Group work	Module8.ppt
Feedback	20'	Plenary	
<b>Total: 40 minutes</b>			

### Note to trainer

- ✓ *Use this optional activity if you want to focus on **specific practical concerns for women and children in the context.***

### Optional brainstorming (20 minutes)

Divide the participants into groups of four or five.

Show Slide 11.

Ask the groups to brainstorm and answer the questions.

### Slide 11: Group work

How can we improve protection for refugee children and adolescents?

- Within our own organisations?
- Within our existing programmes?
- Through links with other organisations?

### Group work (20 minutes)

Allow 20 minutes for discussion.

### Feedback and wrap-up (20 minutes)

**After brainstorming, each group can report back to plenary.** This can be a source of confidence-building in their level of knowledge and their ability to create a plan to change how they work in protecting child and adolescent refugees. The feedback should be noted and mentioned during **Module 10**.

**Provide an opportunity** for any closing comments or questions and **emphasise key messages** as necessary.

**Handout 1 - Protection of Refugees Who Are Elderly, Disabled, or Have HIV/AIDS**

Special protection concerns arise in relation to refugees who are elderly, disabled, or who have **HIV/AIDS**. Protection and assistance programmes should take their specific concerns into account as an essential component of the overall protection of refugees.

In general, concerns for the elderly, disabled, or those with HIV/AIDS include persecution, discrimination, and the inability to live in dignity, with their human rights respected. The challenge for humanitarian workers is to make the link between protecting the rights of the elderly, disabled, and those with HIV/AIDS and effective programmes as part of their overall refugee protection work.

As in many other areas where people are discriminated against because of their identity, it is important to actively monitor and intervene if any discriminatory practices arise.

The UNHCR adopts a rights-based approach in all its programmes and protection activities related to these groups and has produced some helpful information. The UNHCR and other sources that should be regularly checked include:

- *HIV/AIDS and Refugees: UNHCR's Strategic Plan 2002-2004*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1 January 2004;
- Paul B. Spiegel and Alia Nankoe, "UNHCR, HIV/AIDS and refugees: lessons learned", in *Forced Migration Review*, 1 January 2004;
- Paul Harvey, "HIV/AIDS: What are the implications for humanitarian action?: A Literature Review", Overseas Development Institute, 1 July 2003;
- Ann Smith, "HIV/AIDS and Emergencies: Analysis and Recommendations for Practice", Overseas Development Institute, February 2002.

In relation to the elderly, see especially **The situation of older refugees** (EC/48/SC/CRP.39), which includes a discussion of factors affecting the situation of older refugees, including social disintegration; protection concerns for unaccompanied elderly refugees; negative social selection in camps and collective centres, where the young, healthy, and able-bodied are the first to depart, leaving behind the more vulnerable members of the group, including the elderly and the disabled; chronic dependency in many refugee situations, which produces, over time, a residual caseload of solitary older people who have not found a durable solution; and how older refugees can be valuable resources for their communities, transmitters of culture, skills, and crafts, so important to reaffirm the traditions of the dispossessed and displaced. The report also suggests ways to integrate the elderly in all aspects of programme planning and implementation.

**In relation to disability, you can refer to:**

- Gerard Quinn and Theresia Degener, *Human rights and Disability: The current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the context of disability*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva 2002.

**Trainer Guidance 1 - Activity 2 - Child Protection Sample Feedback****What rights does this child have?**

- Right to family unity and tracing services;
- Right to education;
- Right to play;
- Right to health care and services;
- Right to psychosocial recovery;
- Right to food and physical well-being;
- Right to safe housing;
- Right to enjoy his or her own language, culture, and religion;
- Right to have a nationality;
- Right to own property;
- Right to equality before the law;
- Right to life;
- Right to development;
- Freedom of movement;
- Right to seek asylum;
- Freedom from harm;
- Right to work.

**Who are the duty-bearers for this child?**

- Parents;
- Siblings;
- Family/extended family;
- Guardians;
- Foster parents;
- Friends;
- Neighbours;
- Clan/tribe
- Host-country security services;
- Donors;
- Host-country community organisations;
- Media;
- Psychiatric institutions;
- Religious groups;
- Politicians;
- Social workers;
- Community leaders;
- Doctors/nurses/dentists;
- Lawyers;
- NGOs;
- Red Cross;
- Us;
- UNICEF and UNHCR;
- Drug pushers;
- Government;
- Teachers;
- Private organisations;
- Orphanages;
- Employers and traffickers.

What makes this child different from an adult?

- Age;
- Expectations;
- Needs;
- Skills;
- Life experience;
- Education;
- Lack of maturity;
- Different social pressures;
- Vulnerability;
- Employment opportunities;
- Health problems;
- Responsibilities;
- Different rights, laws, and conventions applicable;
- Legal status;
- Decision-making power;
- Capacity for self-protection;
- Sexuality;
- Risk of accident;
- Physical difference;
- Emotional make-up;
- Vaccination;
- Need for love and care;
- Risk of malnutrition;
- Risk of violence.

What additional threats might he/she face as a refugee?

- Infections;
- Disease;
- Forced labour;
- Harmful traditional practices;
- Early/forced marriage;
- Pregnancy;
- Poverty;
- Slavery;
- Hunger;
- Parents' expectations;
- Disturbance of personal development;
- Psychological and physical trauma;
- Abuse;
- Forced conscription;
- Malnutrition;
- Trafficked into sex and/or work;
- Accidents in the workplace;
- Forced to engage in illegal activities;
- Lack of education;
- Torture;
- Discrimination;
- Sexual harassment and exploitation;
- Lack of opportunity to develop;
- Separation from family ;
- HIV/AIDS;
- Rape;
- Drug abuse.

**Handout 2 - Activity 3 - Statements on Women and Form for Responses**

Statements	Comments and Examples	Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement
<p>Women refugees experience protection problems because they are not registered or counted as people in their own right.</p>		
<p>Domestic violence is the most common form of gender-based violence.</p>		
<p>Women are excluded from programmes because they have too much else to do.</p>		
<p>The protection problems of refugee women are mostly hidden.</p>		

Statements	Comments and Examples	Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement
<p>For refugee women, participation itself promotes protection.</p>		
<p>Women are more vulnerable when they have been separated from their men.</p>		
<p>Refugee women who do not receive sufficient assistance are exposed to physical danger.</p>		
<p>Refugee women are often unable to provide protection either for themselves or for others.</p>		

**Trainer Guidance 2 - Activity 3 - Possible Comments and Suggestions**

<p><b>Statement 1: Women refugees experience protection problems because they are not individually registered or counted as people in their own right.</b></p>	
<p><b>Possible comments and examples</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women who are registered as a dependent of their husband are more likely to experience discrimination in the distribution of goods, since they may be partly diverted by their husbands for sale or exchange.</li> <li>▪ Restrictions on women’s freedom of movement can also result from failure to register them and to provide them with registration or identity papers.</li> <li>▪ This can also expose unregistered women to abuse and detention by authorities.</li> <li>▪ Lack of proper registration for women can lead to unrecorded births and protection problems for children.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Retain disaggregated data and maintain a demographic profile of the vulnerable population by gender and age.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that women receive registration documents in their own names on arrival, during asylum, and during repatriation/integration.</li> <li>▪ Ensure registration of all births in the country of asylum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statement 2: Domestic violence is the most common form of gender-based violence, and refugee women are vulnerable to it.</b></p>	
<p><b>Possible comments and examples</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gender-based violence (GBV) includes violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.</li> <li>▪ GBV occurs at the family, community, and state levels, and it derives from women’s unequal status in society.</li> <li>▪ Domestic violence is often said to be the most common form of GBV. Other forms include female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, early marriage, rape, incest, forced prostitution, coercion, harassment, etc. All of these forms of violence flow from women’s unequal status in society.</li> <li>▪ GBV is often hidden since, in most forms, it is a taboo subject and by talking about it a victim can sometimes further endanger herself.</li> <li>▪ GBV is generally divided into three categories, including domestic violence, violence in the community, and state-condoned violence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish advice centres and/or help lines for women at risk of domestic violence.</li> <li>▪ Empower women through education, and build networks so that they are not forced to endure damaging domestic situations through lack of choices or autonomy.</li> <li>▪ Sensitise men to women’s rights and violence, as well as to their role in stopping violence against women.</li> <li>▪ Use community structures to intervene in situations of domestic violence.</li> <li>▪ Lobby the state to live up to its obligations to prevent and punish violence against women.</li> </ul>

<b>Statement 3: Women are excluded from programmes because they have too much else to do.</b>	
<b>Possible comments and examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many women in the world have a triple role: working on reproductive, productive, and community tasks. Refugee women are no exception.</li> <li>▪ Refugee women can experience a change in their roles whilst a refugee and have an increase in workload due to changing gender roles.</li> <li>▪ The demands on women’s time can inhibit their ability to access services or benefit from assistance and/or protection programmes.</li> <li>▪ Programmes can exacerbate stress for refugee women by neglecting their multiple roles, for example, forcing them to leave their children in order to attend training sessions, collect firewood, or turn up for distributions.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organise the timing and location of programmes to accommodate women’s role as caregivers.</li> <li>▪ Work with women and men to find ways of evenly distributing and/or sharing tasks, alleviating women of some of their workload.</li> </ul>
<b>Statement 4: The protection problems of refugee women are mostly hidden.</b>	
<b>Possible comments and examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection problems can be wilfully ignored by refugee communities, humanitarian agencies, and humanitarian actors where they challenge cultural norms and taboos of either the country of asylum or of origin.</li> <li>▪ Protection problems can also go unnoticed where they conform to accepted behaviour: discrimination, cultural practices (forced marriage, FGM), etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide confidential legal and medical services to women refugees.</li> <li>▪ Provide confidential counselling services to traumatised victims of violence.</li> <li>▪ Ensure separate interviews for arriving refugee women, with a female interviewer sensitive to gender issues.</li> <li>▪ Establish mechanisms such as women’s groups to serve as a forum for discussing sensitive issues and finding solutions.</li> <li>▪ Monitor known incidents of physical attacks on women refugees.</li> <li>▪ Disaggregate data by age and gender in all assessments, monitoring, and reporting.</li> </ul>
<b>Statement 5: For refugee women, participation itself promotes protection.</b>	
<b>Possible comments and examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Internal protection problems are often due as much to people’s feelings of isolation, frustration, lack of belonging to a structure or society, and lack of control over their own future as they are to any other form of social problem.</li> <li>▪ Participation helps build the values and sense of community that contribute to reducing protection problems.</li> <li>▪ Allowing refugee women to identify their protection problems for themselves and suggesting appropriate solutions is more efficient than attempting to identify these problems and solutions on their behalf.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure participation of women in planning and implementation or assistance, services, and protection measures.</li> <li>▪ Implement lobbying and capacity-building initiatives to ensure that women refugees are represented at community, government, and intergovernmental levels.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statement 6: Women are more vulnerable when they have been separated from their men.</b></p>	
<p><b>Possible comments and examples</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some refugee women experience protection problems (deprivation, coercion, and violence) at the hands of those closest to them. The family, the community, and the state are all potential abusers, as well as potential providers of protection.</li> <li>▪ However, refugee women who are detained amongst strangers and/or where traditional social protection systems no longer exist may face greater dangers than those living amongst families and friends.</li> <li>▪ Unaccompanied women and female heads of households generally have special protection needs, such as separate and secure shelter.</li> </ul> <p>The breakdown of traditional structures in society can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An increase in workload or doubling of tasks: a refugee woman with children has to collect firewood and water, attend distributions, and access services such as health care and training, as well as perform all other tasks in the household, including childcare.</li> <li>▪ A lack of means to express opinions and needs. Refugee women are often excluded from representation and input into programme design, where they lack traditional, informal means of making themselves heard, such as through their husbands.</li> <li>▪ A lack of preventative and remedial protection against violence and abuse, which was previously offered through traditional social networks and customs, such as informal tribunals, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prevent or remedy separation in arrival and registration interventions except when women are fleeing violence in the family.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that single refugee women and households headed by women gain access to food, shelter, health care, clean water, firewood, etc.</li> <li>▪ Encourage border staff and others who receive and deal with refugees to use female personnel when dealing with unaccompanied women refugees.</li> <li>▪ Initiate/support efforts to preserve or restore family unity.</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the formation of women’s groups and other social mechanisms to replace the support and information network of the family where this is lacking.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statement 7: Women refugees who do not receive sufficient assistance are exposed to greater physical danger.</b></p>	
<p><b>Possible comments and examples</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women refugees who are unable to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves and their children will be more vulnerable to manipulation and to physical and sexual abuse in order to obtain such necessities.</li> <li>▪ Inadequate assistance measures are therefore not just a protection concern in terms of a being a violation of, or failure to fulfil, women’s rights, but they can compound other protection concerns, such as physical security.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide adequate and timely assistance to women refugees.</li> <li>▪ Monitor distributions to ensure that women benefit.</li> <li>▪ Prioritise distribution of material assistance with a strong physical protection correlation, such as shelter, firewood, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statement 8: Women refugees are often unable to provide protection either for themselves or for others.</b></p>	
<p><b>Possible comments and examples</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women refugees are often responsible for the day-to-day care of children, the sick, and the elderly. This makes them a key provider of protection for others.</li> <li>▪ Women refugees often have information about protection issues for themselves and other groups that is not known by male refugees or children.</li> <li>▪ Women refugees can protect themselves if they have access to the information and resources they need to do so.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions for NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent movement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In order to ensure that women refugees can best protect themselves and others, they need awareness-raising programmes, capacity-building programmes, and access to the necessary information and resources.</li> </ul>

**Handout 3 - Ella Case Study**

Ella is a 16-year-old Faya girl who is attending school in country Y. Her school is attacked by Morlo rebels, who massacre the students.

Ella survives but is left for dead by the soldiers, lying amongst the bodies. Once the soldiers have gone, she picks herself up and flees the war zone, heading for country Z. When she arrives at the border, she is seized by the soldiers, gang-raped, and then abandoned.

Upon regaining consciousness, Ella decides to head for country W, where she successfully registers as an asylum-seeker. However, she does not feel safe due to the high presence of Morlos in country W. With some help from local humanitarian organisations, she travels to country V seeking refuge.

She is again registered as an asylum-seeker and given shelter at a refugee camp that is being run by the country V Red Cross. However, she again feels threatened by the prevalence of Morlos in the camp and is given the option by the government of accommodation in the nearby city. It turns out that the city has an even greater prevalence of Morlos and is less controlled than the camp and therefore more dangerous to Ella, so she returns to the camp.

Still feeling vulnerable, Ella accepts protection in return for sexual favours from a male refugee, who also abuses her. She does not reveal this abuse to the camp authorities, who believe she is safe and secure. When the man leaves, she reveals the full extent of her ordeal to the country V Red Cross, which gives her secure accommodation.

In order that Ella can access an offer of resettlement in Canada, the Red Cross, in collaboration with the UNHCR, accelerates Ella's application for refugee status, which is quickly accepted.

Unfortunately, results of her medical tests reveal that she is HIV positive and therefore ineligible for resettlement.

**Questions**

Identify the reasons for Ella's vulnerability:

- With reference to the phases of the refugee experience, what threats did Ella face?
- What sources of protection should have been available to her? Which duty-bearers did or did not protect her?
- What protective mechanisms are or are not in place to address Ella's situation? How do the different actors with protection responsibilities relate to each other?
- What measures should have been taken to protect Ella?