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A Snapshot of Measures to address Gender Inequality from the GRF Second Preparatory Meeting, June 2019. Updated September 2019 to include further data from the field.

The UNSW/UNHCR Gender Audit team.

FACILITATING SOLUTIONS

GRF Paras 89.92.95



Key Challenge: A mechanism to ensure that AGD, Women and Girls and addressing SGBV are reflected in the Facilitating Solutions Co-Sponsorship Group and Pledges

“From our village to the camps to today in {resettlement country} we get to be treated as second hand. We do not feel as if our opinion matters, and our voice matters. It feels like we have been forgotten” (Resettled Rohingya woman, quoted by refugee participant, 2nd preparatory meeting.)

Barriers to solutions such as resettlement, complementary pathways and safe return experienced by girls and women which could be addressed by Pledges include:

- In protracted refugee situations women are often not given information about potential solutions and that their fathers and husbands could not access this at times. This leads to rumour, misinformation, myths and speculation, which causes disquiet, mistrust and a sense of hopelessness and in turn contributes to an increase in family disharmony and antisocial behaviour.
- Women are not included in decision making processes for potential solutions and nor do they receive the training and support necessary to take equal place at the “planning table”. If they are included it is often only as token appointees to decision making processes. This means that their knowledge experience and capacity is not utilised and solutions including return, local integration and resettlement often fail them and their families.

- Very marginalised groups including LBT, older and disabled women and girls have little or no say in the major decisions about potential solutions which will shape their future.
- The differences in educational opportunities, previous social status, and the impact of childrearing between refugee men and women is not taken into account and addressed when devising potential solutions, to ensure that both women and men have equal access to these.
- The Women at Risk Resettlement scheme is a critical protection measure however it often fails to meet its promise to identify and fast track the resettlement of refugee women and girls at extreme risk and their families. A pervasive problem is the failure to recognise that the presence of a male relative does not automatically provide safety or exclude the need for resettlement for the entire family.
- Women and girls being returned to places where their abusers still are in positions of power, or to countries where their status as raped women and single mothers will not allow them to reintegrate into society.

Pledges which could be made include:

That refugee women are included in all decision making processes for all potential solutions and they must be supported and if necessary receive training to ensure that they have an equal place at the “planning table”, that their voices and ideas are heard and considered, and that they are not just token appointees to decision making processes, including for returns.

That refugees are not forced to return to a dangerous and unstable future in their home countries until sustainable peace is achieved and sufficient structure is in place to ensure their human rights.

That the differences in educational opportunities, previous social status, and the impact of childrearing between refugee men and women be taken into account and addressed when devising potential solutions, to ensure that both women and men have equal access to these.

That existing and new resettlement actors include a dedicated quota of resettlement places for refugee women at risk and their families (including spouses and adult sons).

That women and men will have equal access to complementary pathways which include specific support for women and girls previously denied access to basic education and ensures apprenticeships and traineeships suitable for women and girls, and appropriate to their informal skills, are also accessible.

A detailed Gender audit report of the 2nd Preparatory meeting with further recommendations for Pledges is available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-au/resources-5cc1a4e94.html>

Progress reports on the field consultations undertaken as part of the Refugee Women and Girls Key to the Global Compact on Refugees Project, led by UNSW, in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia will be available from October 2019 at <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/our-research/research-centres-networks/forced-migration-research-network/projects/refugee-women-and>

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