

GBV Checklist

Basic considerations for reception centers

Any time groups of people are housed in collective facilities there are potential GBV risks, particularly for women and girls, as well as for children traveling without a caregiver. However, by taking a few simple actions, such risks can be proactively identified and reduced. The following basic checklist¹ outlines some of the elements to consider in the context of reception centers in the refugee response.

Immediate potential GBV risks	
<p>Communal sleeping areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Keep families together as much as possible. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide privacy partitions – screens, hanging sheets, etc. – between sleeping areas for different family units. <input type="checkbox"/> Designate sleeping areas where family units comprised of only women/children can be apart from others.² <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure 24/7 adult supervision for unaccompanied children (ideally for all children in this category but, at minimum, for those under 10-years-old). <input type="checkbox"/> For unaccompanied children without a caregiver present – set up separate areas for 1) older boys, 2) older girls, 3) young children.³ <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a complaint mechanism and follow-up on feedback and complaints and respond in a timely manner together with other actors. 	<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure staffing/volunteer composition for all sites includes women and men, also for security personnel and interpreters. <input type="checkbox"/> Given that the majority of refugees are women and children, a higher number of female staff is suggested. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers must be registered. <input type="checkbox"/> Have at least one staff member/volunteer who speaks Ukrainian or Russian. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid unsupervised one-on-one interactions between staff and children. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all personnel sign, and are trained on, a code of conduct. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all personnel are trained on ‘do no harm’ and how to safely handle a disclosure of GBV and make a referral via referral pathways. SAMPLE Code of Conduct: English <input type="checkbox"/> If possible, have a trained counselor or social worker available on-site to support immediate needs. Otherwise, have contact information for available support and make this information available for those who need it (posters, helpdesks, etc.) in various and appropriate formats. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure that the roles and responsibilities of staff are clear to the residents of the center
<p>Accessibility of services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support access to available food, clothing, SIM cards and basic services (i.e. health, MHPSS in reception center or nearby). <input type="checkbox"/> Share information on transportation options to available services (provide maps). <input type="checkbox"/> Have information available on existing support services and referral options in the location where you are working. These should be easily available and in various formats. <input type="checkbox"/> Stay updated on GBV referral pathways. 	<p>External visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Set up a monitoring system (registration desk, etc.) for all entry/exit from the facility. <input type="checkbox"/> Require all external visitors to show identification and sign in/out of the facility. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage staff and volunteers wear a uniform/other clothing that clearly identifies their employer. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all staff and volunteers know how to react if journalists come to the facility. Journalists should never be allowed access to children without parental/caregiver consent. <input type="checkbox"/> Media and others should not be allowed to seek out survivors of GBV.
<p>Lack of privacy/safety in shared facilities (latrines, bathing areas, changing rooms, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Set up separate areas based on gender. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure sufficient lighting in common areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Install doors that lock from the inside. <input type="checkbox"/> Use opaque materials to construct shower and latrine areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Make menstrual hygiene supplies (and washing/disposal options) available in multiple locations. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct safety checks and create opportunities where women and children can provide feedback and voice safety concerns if/as they arise. 	

¹ Adapted from UNICEF Tip Sheet: Basic safety considerations for evacuation centers, 27 Aug 2021

² Excessive separation/isolation can also be problematic. It is important to strike a balance between privacy and sufficient oversight depending on the options available.

³ See point above in checklist.

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Cash	
<input type="checkbox"/> Link persons with specific needs (PSNs) with referral process to enroll in cash programmes and information on where (enrollment points). <input type="checkbox"/> Share accurate information on cash assistance programmes for the most at-risk.	
Other potential risks	
Onward movement / end of stay at reception center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information on how to seek help and how to apply for asylum. www.help.unhcr.org <input type="checkbox"/> Share information with women and children on available services along their route, including safe shelter locations (i.e. labeled map with known services, Blue Dots). <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information on family tracing and reunification (FTR) for unaccompanied and separated children and families who were separated, even if they are on the move. https://familylinks.icrc.org 	Private accommodation (for adults only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If requested, share information on private accommodation options registered with local authorities or screened by NGOs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask people offering private accommodation if they have registered with the local authorities or an NGO. Refer them to the relevant entity for this. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide translated information on risks related to staying in private accommodation, including trafficking in persons and where to receive support if needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Share UNHCR's 'Stay Safe' campaign messages. <input type="checkbox"/> Require identification and sign-in of anyone coming to pick up a person from the reception center.

Processes and systems that can be established to help improve and maintain safety:

1. Use the GBV checklist to routinely monitor the issues listed above.
2. Set up regular feedback mechanisms through focus group discussions, suggestions boxes, or hotlines where people can report safety concerns including misconduct.
3. Link with specialized services (inside or outside the facility) through established GBV referral pathways – especially sexual and reproductive health services, psychosocial support and case management for gender-based violence – where referrals can be made as needed and based on informed consent.
4. Train all personnel including volunteers to recognize signs of distress/abuse, administer psychological first aid, make appropriate referrals in situations involving violence (see additional information below on reacting to disclosures of GBV).
5. Establish systems for staff/volunteer support and self-care.

Do No Harm

- Do not attempt to proactively identify or investigate situations of violence/abuse. If you are worried about someone, ask for advice from colleagues who work on GBV or Child Protection.
- If the situation involves a child, speak to the Child Protection focal point available at your site.

What to do if someone tells you they have experienced GBV

1. **Prepare ahead of time.** Have information available on existing support services and GBV referral pathways in the location where you are working.
2. **Prioritize immediate safety and comfort.** Assess if the person is in immediate danger. Ask if they want to talk in a quiet and private place. Comfort the person (sometimes offering a glass of water helps) and speak in simple, supportive language.
3. **Listen.** Listen to what they say; express what happened is not their fault; and ask how you can help. Be calm and patient without passing judgment. Treat any information shared with confidentiality. Let the person express their feelings in their own words and never push for more details than they feel comfortable sharing.
4. **Link.** Provide information about available support/response services. Ask the person if there is someone they trust who can help them access these services. Stay with the person until they feel safe or are with another trusted person.

Download the “GBV Pocket Guide” smartphone app and review its content: [iPhone](#); [Android](#) which includes information on safe disclosures and also in the case of not having a GBV actor in your area. Please consult your GBV Focal Point or coordination mechanism for the latest referral pathways and to request training or support.

Other resources:

- [GBV Guidelines](#) for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action
- [GBV Pocket Guide](#) on responding to disclosures of gender-based violence
- GBV resources and videos in Polish and Ukrainian at [Poland GBV Sub-Sector](#) Data Portal