



EU Leadership of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

From June 2017 to December 2018, the EU led the 'Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies'. The initiative brings together **82 partners** including **17 EU Member States**.

During 2017 and 2018, the EU allocated **more than €62m** in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence worldwide under its protection and health programming.

At the end of 2017, **€975 000** was allocated under **EU's Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC)** programme to UNFPA for the operationalisation of the Call to Action at field level.

In 2016, the EU provided **€1.8 million** for **global capacity-building projects** on gender and gender-based violence to support the implementation of the Call to Action Road Map.

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Key messages

- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a life-threatening, health, human rights and protection issue. It is deeply rooted in gender inequality and exacerbated in emergencies. Yet, prevention of and response to GBV are still not comprehensively addressed and prioritised from the earliest stages of humanitarian operations.
- Leadership and ownership of GBV as a crosscutting issue is typically weak within organisations. There is a disconnection between gender equality and GBV, capacity issues, and a lack of accountability. The complexity of the issue, the limited means and the obstacles to addressing GBV (such as lack of adequate justice systems) should not prevent humanitarian actors from tackling this problem.
- The '[Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies](#)' aims to ensure that every humanitarian effort, from the earliest phases of a crisis, includes the policies, systems and mechanisms to mitigate GBV risks, and to provide safe and comprehensive services for those affected by GBV.
- The EU considers GBV a priority humanitarian issue. The [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#) stresses the need to integrate gender considerations, including protection strategies against sexual and GBV, in humanitarian response. During 2017 and 2018, the EU allocated more than €62m in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence worldwide under its protection and health programming.
- The continued support to the Call to Action was an EU commitment at the 2016 [World Humanitarian Summit](#). The endorsement of the Call to Action and the implementation of its road map are reflected in the [EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020](#).

European Union's Leadership of the Call to Action: Key Achievements

From June 2017 to December 2018, the EU led the [Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies](#). The Call to Action is a global initiative, which brings together 82 partners, including states and donors, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) aiming to drive change and foster accountability in the humanitarian system to address GBV. The [Call to Action Road Map 2016-2020](#) sets out an operational framework with common objectives for the humanitarian community. The EU has been an active member of the Call to Action since its creation in 2013. It has made a number of individual pledges under the Call to Action Road Map, focussing on policy dissemination, and ensuring that available funding supports the implementation process.

The EU's leadership of the Call to Action was guided by four main priorities:

1. **Increase advocacy on the prevention of and response to GBV in emergencies.** As lead of the Call to Action, the EU organised a number of [global awareness-raising events](#) in Brussels, Geneva and New York, and undertook continuous outreach to existing and potential new partners to strengthen the Call to Action partnership. For instance, a [high-level panel debate](#) on preventing, mitigating and responding to GBV in humanitarian crises was held during the 2018 European Development days. A public event held in the margins of [the annual Call to Action Partners Meeting](#), in June 2018, discussed challenges and opportunities in responding to GBV in emergencies, while raising awareness of the efforts deployed by the Call to Action partnership to address the issue in different settings. In September 2018, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides and UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore co-hosted the event '[Children and women under attack: ending gender-based violence in emergencies](#)' during the United Nations General Assembly, in New York.

During its leadership of the Call to Action, the EU advocated for the key importance of collective action in prevention and response to GBV in emergencies. From June 2017 to December 2018, the EU [welcomed 18 new partners to the Call to Action](#), including five EU Member States.

2. **Increase focus on prevention of GBV in emergencies.** The EU strives to prevent GBV in emergencies, and advocates so that GBV prevention becomes a reflex for all humanitarian actors. Examples include EU support for the revision of the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) Gender Handbook](#), a practical tool that provides guidance to frontline humanitarian workers on how to integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian aid. In October 2018, the EU published [a report on its Gender-Age Marker](#), which includes a criterion on risk mitigation. Many of the events that the EU hosted discussed issues relevant to prevention, risk mitigation, and collective responsibility of humanitarian actors to address GBV in emergencies.
3. **Raise awareness of the Call to Action at the field level where awareness is the lowest yet the potential impact is the biggest.** The EU supports the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility with €975 000 for the operationalisation of the Call to Action at field level, in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This two-year project started in early 2018. The [Northeast Nigeria Call to Action Road Map](#) was formally launched in September 2018. A similar process is ongoing in the DRC. The EU is also supporting the UNFPA to develop inter-agency global minimum standards on GBV in emergencies, which is a key deliverable, part of the Call to Action Road Map.

Throughout 2018, the EU organised a series of field workshops to raise awareness on the Call to Action and discuss context-specific challenges, in Afghanistan, Colombia, Kenya, Cameroun, Iraq, Jordan, Sudan, Thailand, Turkey and Senegal, welcoming almost 500 participants in total.

4. **Lead the implementation and monitoring of the Call to Action Road Map 2016-2020.** The EU facilitated the finalisation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for improved reporting of the impact and overall progress of the Call to Action, piloted a new standardised reporting tool, and facilitated the drafting of the [2017 Call to Action Progress Report](#). The EU also set up the [Call to Action website](#), a joint platform owned by the partnership and managed by the rotating leadership of the initiative, and created a logo for the initiative.

