



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

ECHO FACTSHEET

### Facts & Figures

**Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** is a serious humanitarian issue and a priority for the European Union (EU).

In **June 2017**, the EU formally took over the leadership of the global initiative 'Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies' from Sweden. The initiative brings together **67 partners** including **13 EU Member States**.

In **2017**, the European Commission has so far supported **61 projects** to end sexual and gender-based violence.

In 2016, the EU allocated over **€27 million** in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, reaching almost **3.4 million women, men, girls and boys**.

In addition, 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.

In 2017, **€1 million** will be allocated under EU's Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) programme to projects aimed at operationalising the Call to Action at field level.

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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/ownership of GBV** as a cross-cutting issue is typically weak within organisations. There is a **disconnect 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 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 **very serious humanitarian issue and a priority**. 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 2016-2018**.



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## Humanitarian situation and needs

GBV remains a complex under-reported and under-addressed issue in humanitarian crises. There is not yet widespread understanding of what GBV is or what a humanitarian response to GBV should look like. Leadership/ownership of GBV as a cross-cutting issue is typically weak across humanitarian response at all levels. Prevention of and response to GBV are still not treated as a priority from the earliest stages of emergencies and humanitarian responses lack sufficient mechanisms – funding, policy and systems – to ensure that the issue is comprehensively addressed.

## The European Union's Humanitarian Response

GBV is a very serious humanitarian issue and a priority for the EU. The **European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid** stresses the need to integrate gender considerations, including protection strategies against sexual and gender-based violence, in humanitarian response.

In June 2017, the EU took over the leadership of the **Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies**. The Call to Action is a global multi-stakeholder initiative which brings together 67 members, including States and donors, international organisations and NGOs aiming to drive change and foster accountability in the humanitarian system to address GBV. A **Call to Action Road Map 2016-2020** sets out an operational framework with common objectives for the humanitarian community to be translated into targeted actions on the ground. The EU has been an active member of the Call to Action since its creation in 2013. It has made a number individual pledges under the Call to Action Road Map, focussing on (1) *policy* dissemination and (2) ensuring that available *funding* supports the implementation process.

- 1) The EU's approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises is outlined in its 2013 humanitarian gender policy '**Gender: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance**'. The **Gender-Age Marker** introduced in 2014 is a quality and accountability tool that measures the extent to which EU-funded humanitarian actions integrate gender and age considerations. In 2015, 89% of EU humanitarian actions integrated gender and age considerations 'strongly or 'to a certain extent'. In 2016, the EU introduced a new protection policy '**Humanitarian Protection: Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises**', which includes guidance for programming of protection activities, including on GBV.
- 2) In 2016, the EU allocated more than **€27 million** in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, the EU also funds global capacity-building projects on gender and gender-based violence to support the implementation of the Call to Action Road Map. In 2016, **€1.8 million** was made available for this purpose through the Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) programme: €600.000 to UN Women, for the revision of the **Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Handbook**, and €1.2 million to the International Rescue Committee, to develop tools and approaches to conduct GBV case management in hard-to-reach areas.

During its leadership, the EU will focus on four main priorities:

1. **Increase advocacy** on the need to prevent and respond to GBV and **amplify the voices of GBV survivors** through awareness-raising events, more effective and targeted messages, and continuous outreach to existing and potential new partners to strengthen the Call to Action partnership.
2. Increase focus on **prevention of GBV in emergencies**. Though its actions, the EU will continue to aim to prevent GBV in emergencies from happening in the first place, and will advocate so that GBV prevention becomes a reflex for all humanitarian actors.
3. **Raise awareness** of the Call to Action **at the field level** where it can have the biggest impact, but where there is also the largest lack of awareness. Under its Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) Programme, the EU will allocate **€1 million** to [projects aimed at operationalising the Call to Action at field level](#). A number of field-based workshops will also be organised for awareness-raising purposes.
4. **Lead the implementation and monitoring of the Call to Action Road Map** through further development of the existing Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, design of a governance package, management of partners' annual reporting on their commitments, and maintenance of a consolidated list of Call to Action commitments.

