

## Berlin Call to Action Communiqué

In 2013, leaders across government, international organizations, and civil society joined together for the first time in one voice to release the groundbreaking communiqué “[Keep Her Safe: Protecting Women and Girls in Emergencies](#)” to acknowledge increasing violence against women and girls (VAWG) in humanitarian crises and that we, collectively, have the responsibility and ability to act from the very outset of crisis to prevent and respond to VAWG.

Within a decade the community of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Emergencies (Call to Action) with over 100 partners evolved thus ensuring that the humanitarian system sees GBV prevention and response as lifesaving and mandatory. However, as global crises continue to grow, it is time to renew our collective commitment toward prioritizing the prevention of and response to all forms of GBV in humanitarian settings.

With the following Berlin Communiqué from the 2024 Annual Partners’ Meeting of the Call to Action, held in Berlin under the leadership of the Government of Germany, we, the partners of the Call to Action

**Recognize** that GBV is especially prevalent in humanitarian crises, which are growing in number, complexity and duration and needs to be addressed at all levels of the humanitarian system.

**Reaffirm** that primary responsibility for provision of humanitarian assistance to and protection of the population lies with the affected State, and that parties to a conflict are to abide by international law and have a special responsibility to promote the protection of civilians.

**Reiterate** UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242, 2467, and 2493 on Women, Peace and Security, the UN Economic and Social Council Resolutions E/RES/2012/3, E/RES/2013/6 and E/RES/2014/2 on strengthening gender in all aspects of the humanitarian response and the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 5 Gender Equality and Goal 16 Peace, Justice and strong Institutions.

**Acknowledge** that the humanitarian community has made strides forward on multiple fronts on GBV prevention and response, including through the creation and roll-out of the GBV Minimum Standards, integration of GBV into the humanitarian program cycle needs assessments and planning documents, and in the tracking of GBV prevention and response needs and funding levels.

**Commit** to the reinvigoration of the Call to Action a decade after its founding as a concrete instrument for achieving sustained multi-stakeholder action on GBV across different levels of the humanitarian system by collective efforts of States & Donors, International Organizations, and Non-Governmental Organizations, i.a. by **calling** for the implementation of the following actions:

### Accountability

- ❖ Achieve commitments already made to the Call to Action Roadmap 2021-2025, Generation Equality Forum, Grand Bargain, and other relevant humanitarian and development normative frameworks;
- ❖ Effect political mobilization, at the highest levels, to prevent GBV and protect women and girls in all their diversity as well as LGBTQI+ persons, while promoting gender equality through gender-transformative policies and practices that address its structural causes and promote systemic change;
- ❖ Support transformational changes in the humanitarian architecture, both in terms of multi-year GBV funding and equal participation, to address the growing gap of increased GBV needs versus a still often underfunded and under-resourced GBV response;
- ❖ Advocate for strengthened interagency and cross-sectoral accountability mechanisms, especially accountability to affected population, through establishing clear and measurable indicators for tracking of progress;

- ❖ Promote the inclusion of gender-specific needs, especially protection from GBV, into all levels and sectors of the humanitarian system's work, including recruitment, training and deployment of personnel as well as protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH);
- ❖ Advocate for strengthened access to justice by ensuring accessible and survivor-centered justice services;
- ❖ Prioritize and invest in mental health and psycho-social well-being of healthcare workers in fragile settings, GBV support staff.

### **Localisation**

- ❖ Support localization of GBV coordination and programming through supporting capacity strengthening and institution building initiatives, transferring decision-making power and addressing systemic challenges that still hamper the funding access and the full, equal, and meaningful participation of local women-lead organizations and women refugee-lead organizations in GBV early action, risk mitigation and response in humanitarian settings and beyond;
- ❖ Promote inclusive leadership at all decision-making levels and ensure that the voices of all women, including older women, children at all stages of development and those with disabilities, are heard;
- ❖ Ensure locally-driven continuity in the GBV response by improving coordination along the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus;
- ❖ Increase awareness of and systematically strengthen the work of existing local health and medical services and enlarge the access for women and girls in crises affected areas to those services, including sexual and reproductive health and psychosocial and mental health services, cognizant of their life-saving function and entry point for GBV work.

### **Increased data availability and reporting**

- ❖ Contribute to improved data availability and close data gaps, especially in hard-to-reach areas, while ensuring a survivor-centered approach that prioritizes the safety and dignity of survivors and adheres to guidelines on ethical data collection;
- ❖ Support the creation and systemic integration of feedback mechanisms into humanitarian programming that allow affected populations to hold stakeholders accountable;
- ❖ Enhance prevention, mitigation and responses to GBV wherever it occurs through data-driven programming and coordination, and increase women's and girls' agency and resilience;
- ❖ Report publicly on our individual and collective progress, share lessons learned and best practices using Call to Action products as advocacy tools.

We oblige ourselves to operationalize the objectives of the Call to Action by breaking down the silos between stakeholders in the humanitarian system and to hold ourselves accountable within the Call to Action as well as to the affected population.

We are committed to further strengthening the Call to Action as an essential platform for organizing ourselves to address this pressing matter.

All Call to Action members

Berlin, 21 November 2024