

OVERVIEW

IOM teams in Asia and the Pacific region have been implementing a range of programming focused on gender-based violence (GBV) mitigation, response and prevention, in line with the Organization's [Institutional Framework for Addressing GBV in Crises](#). As co-lead of the Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCCM) Cluster, IOM's GBV risk mitigation activities center on these interventions, as well as other key areas of implementation, including Shelter/NFI, Health, WASH, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Protection and cross-border response.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, IOM adapted existing programs in response to widespread reported increases in GBV and heightened protection risks among migrants and other vulnerable populations. New approaches have also been put in place to respond to simultaneous emergencies, including tropical cyclones, floods, and increased conflict, while combatting the spread and impact of COVID-19 on migrant women, men, boys and girls, including stranded and returning migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons. IOM also continues working to mitigate GBV risks in ongoing and secondary crises, support survivors by facilitating access to survivor-centered and multisectoral services, and address GBV root causes by working closely with communities to progressively transform the conditions that perpetuate GBV.

GBV RISK MITIGATION

Ensuring GBV Risk Mitigation measures in Evacuation Centers in Vanuatu

As part of the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day event organized in October by the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in Luganville, IOM led a panel discussion entitled “*Sef Ples Blong Yumi Evriwan/Safe Place for All of Us: How to ensure evacuation centers are safe for women, people with disabilities, and children.*” Panelists for this discussion included representatives from the Vanuatu Disability Promotion & Advocacy (VDPA) Association, Department of Women's Affairs, Save the Children, and Vanuatu Ministry of Justice and Community Services.

The panel discussion was part of a larger consultation process for a Spotlight-funded project to create Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on GBV in Evacuation Centers, which IOM is developing in partnership with Vanuatu's NDMO. As part of the consultation process, key informant interviews were held with over 30 stakeholders in Vanuatu's Shefa and Sanma Provinces, ranging from key government agencies and nonprofit service providers to individuals managing evacuation centers. A draft SOP template has been developed based on these consultations, and the template will be reviewed and piloted through a contextualization workshop in one province in early 2022.



IOM holding stakeholder consultations to inform development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on GBV in Evacuation Centers in Vanuatu.

CONTACT

For more information contact [Alexandra Valerio, avalerio@iom.int](mailto:avalerio@iom.int)

Safety audits and GBV trainings in Solomon Islands

Together with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Provincial Government, IOM carried out safety and security audits in two communities, using observation, discussions with community leaders/representatives, and focus group discussions (FGD) with women and girls to identify safety concerns in the communities. The primary safety and security issue raised by women was the need for support with building toilet facilities for the communities. In both communities, villagers mostly practice open defecation in the mangroves, which are far from communities and therefore increase women's risk of experiencing gender-based violence. Community members additionally face risks of being harmed or even killed by crocodiles in the mangroves. As a result, IOM provided support to both communities with installation of pipes, flush toilets, septic tanks and lighting to address these risks. IOM additionally trained 22 local service providers from Isabel Province on trafficking in persons and GBV as part of an effort to strengthen the country's GBV referral network, SAFENET.



Picture of a community in Solomon Islands where families were using a pit latrine near their main source of bathing and washing water, as they feared going to the bathroom elsewhere.

Ensuring women and girls with disabilities are included in humanitarian programming in Cox's Bazar

IOM organized a series of cultural events performed by persons with disabilities across Ukhiya, Teknaf and Cox's Bazar to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The events were used to raise awareness to the specific GBV risks associated with the intersection of gender with disability. IOM has additionally been installing ramps in its Women and Girls Safe Spaces to ensure women and girls with mobility concerns can access the spaces. Women and girls with disabilities have also been targeted in the distribution of dignity kits and for raising awareness on GBV, protection and trafficking risks.

Strengthening national capacity on GBV in Indonesia

In December 2021, IOM facilitated a one-week training on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Trafficking in Persons (TIP) with frontline government agencies and officers in Medan, Indonesia. The main aim of the training was to improve the ability of the government officers to identify GBV and TIP cases, provide comprehensive handling of GBV and TIP survivors, increase their sensitivity on handling cases by sharing best practices, build their capacity and understanding of Gender, GBV and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and using the survivor-based approach in addressing GBV. Government agencies who attended the session included the Women Empowerment and Child Protection Agency of North Sumatera Province, the Refugee Task Force, Women and Child Protection Unit of the Police Force, Head of Immigration Control and Enforcement, and the Task Force for Anti-Trafficking in Medan.



IOM hosting various events to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Ukhiya, Teknaf, and Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

GBV RESPONSE

Strengthening the response of Legal Service Providers in Myanmar on GBV and Trafficking in Persons

In December, IOM Myanmar coordinated a training for more than 30 participants from 10 CSO legal service providers on GBV and Trafficking In Persons (TIP). Sessions within the training included introduction to human trafficking, the TIP legal framework, case management for victims of trafficking, introduction to GBV, using a survivor-centered approach with GBV survivors, the legal framework for GBV, GBV referral pathways, trauma-informed care, staff well-being and self-care, and data protection. Partner organizations for the training included Metanoia, International Development Law Organization, UNFPA and International Justice Mission.

“

Live-in domestic workers have long faced increased workloads, unregulated working hours and increased vulnerability to abuse. However, these have been exacerbated by stay-at-home orders since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Boonsom Namsomboon
Secretary-General at HomeNet Thailand



Partner highlight: HomeNet supports migrant survivors of GBV in Thailand

As part of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign, IOM Thailand showcased the important work that its partner, HomeNet, provides to survivors of GBV, including migrant domestic workers. In an interview conducted by IOM, Dr. Boonsom Namsomboon, Secretary-General of HomeNet Thailand, described the fear that migrant workers in particular have when deciding whether to report abuse and harassment, worrying they may be returned to their home countries. HomeNet raises awareness about GBV to domestic workers, shares information about how and where they can seek help and aids them in reporting abuse, if they choose to. In addition, HomeNet provides training to other NGOs to support them in addressing the specific needs of survivors and has also developed a mobile application providing domestic workers with accurate information on forms of violence and locating the nearest police station and hospitals.

GBV PREVENTION



Men's dialogue session in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Celebrating the 16 Days of Activism against GBV in Bangladesh

As part of the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, IOM led a series of events and activities within the Cox's Bazar camps. The team led a dialogue session with groups of men within the Rohingya camps. These sessions aimed to discuss men's role in helping to prevent GBV by sharing case studies.

IOM also organized a drama on early marriage at IOM's Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), which was performed by Rohingya women and girls. IOM also released a storybook titled "Stories from Rohingya Women and Girls" and presented it at eight IOM-led WGSS, which contains artwork and stories created by Rohingya women and girls related to their memories, feelings, hopes, and dreams.

30 representatives from various institutions, government bodies, and women working at different NGOs or INGOs in Cox's Bazar joined a roundtable to discuss migrant protection and socio-economic empowerment. Participants discussed the challenges, scopes, possible interventions and solutions regarding gender equality, violence prevention, migrant protection, socioeconomic empowerment of women.



Drama to raise awareness about early marriage in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Promoting women's economic empowerment in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, IOM has continued to support women-led small and medium sized businesses in the midst of the economic crisis since the Taliban takeover in August 2021, including for Afghans that have recently returned from neighboring countries. IOM additionally has advocated strongly for women to continue to serve as staff providing essential humanitarian services, including medical services, and ensuring that women and girls continue to be able to access critical health services.

Celebrating International Day of the Girl in Bangladesh

In celebration of the International Day of the Girl, adolescent girls from the Rohingya camps and host communities participated in various interactive activities, such as discussions, quiz competitions, presentations in the different Women and Girl Safe Spaces run by IOM and its partner PULSE Bangladesh. With the motto "Girls are Heroes", the activities aimed to address how to protect girls from any type of discrimination and how to lead the communities to create an equal world for the girl child.



Adolescent girls participate in IOM-led activities to celebrate International Day of the Girl in Bangladesh.

"We [girls] can make the societies more advanced. We just need proper scope of getting education and building our careers. In the Women and Girls Safe Space, we regularly watch various videos on different educative topics and now we can understand our capacity of doing more for our communities. Now we know women and men are equal. By engaging in the girls' group, I am now dreaming to be a doctor." - Fatema Tuz Zohora (15), who lives in a small village in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, is a member of the 'Child Protection Adolescent Girls Group', which is part of IOM's WGSS. Fatema regularly takes part in the different activities in the WGSS and participated in IOM celebrations for International Day of the Girl.



IOM is supporting women-led businesses and advocating for the inclusion of female health staff in Afghanistan.

Implementing Gender Responsive Peacebuilding in Extractive Industries in Solomon Islands

In Solomon Islands, IOM is implementing the UN Peacebuilding Fund project "Gender Responsive Peacebuilding in Extractive Industries in Isabel Province" jointly with UNFPA, and in partnership with SIPPA/IPPF, Stages of Change, government counterparts and other partners. Under this project, IOM and partners are working to build a communication campaign to promote women's participation in leadership, peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and to advocate that women's rights are upheld, particularly with respect to GBV and sexual reproductive health. The campaign also shares information on available support services for survivors of gender-based violence and is targeted at community members (women, men, children, traditional leaders) from communities affected by extractive industries in Isabel Province.

Regional Initiatives

Together with UNICEF and the GBV Area of Responsibility/ Regional Emergency GBV Advisors, IOM co-facilitated a workshop on GBV Risk Mitigation to cluster coordinators in Asia-Pacific that were preparing HNOs/ HRP for 2022. IOM also finalized draft guidelines for addressing GBV and other protection risks in evacuation centres, which will be piloted in Fiji, Vanuatu and other target countries in the AP region in 2022.