



Gender-based Violence Programme

Greece – Refugee and Migrant Response

November 2019

Focus on Phase II of the programme *Action Against Gender-Based Violence Affecting Refugee and Migrant Women and Children in Greece, Italy, Serbia and Bulgaria*
October 2018 – September 2019

Situation Analysis

Between January and September 2019, 12,892 children arrived in Greece by sea –50 per cent increase in such arrivals compared to the same period in 2018. As of September 2019, around 34,800 refugee and migrant children were thought to be in Greece, including 4,616 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). An estimated 40 per cent of all refugee and migrant children in Greece were girls, who also accounted for 6.4 per cent of all UASC.

More than 1,400 UASC, in addition to 9,000 other children, were living in Reception and Identification Centres (RICs), awaiting transfer to the mainland. The physical and psychological wellbeing of refugees and migrants have been severely impacted by staying for long periods in overcrowded RICs, as well as by continued challenges on the mainland, including slow asylum procedures, limited employment opportunities and gaps in social integration strategies.

While living conditions and access to basic services for refugees and migrants have improved on the mainland, reception capacity and service provision on the Greek islands is still characterized by overcrowding and increasing risks of violence and abuse, including gender-based violence (GBV) – a situation confirmed by a UNICEF-supported study¹ on accessibility and barriers to GBV services for refugees and migrants. The study revealed challenges that include an overly complex referral system, limited interpretation and intercultural mediation, lack of adequate psychological support and services for child and male survivors of GBV. At the same time, the report notes a significant increase in disclosures by survivors in locations where support services are present and where information for survivors is provided consistently.

Strategy

UNICEF is working with state and non-state actors in Greece to support access to GBV prevention and response services for refugees and migrants. This work includes support for Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), the dissemination of information about GBV services, ensuring the availability of interpreters to facilitate survivors' access to counselling centres and shelters, training

frontline workers on GBV identification and referral, and strengthening referral pathways.

This approach emphasizes the importance of strengthening local and national systems at every step, from initial response to recovery efforts, to promote national ownership, capacity and long-term change at structural, system and service levels.

Achievements

As of September 2019, 1,418 refugees and migrants (1,131 women, 182 girls and 105 boys) had received psychosocial support, education assistance and referral to existing specialized services delivered through two WGSS run by the Melissa Network⁴ in urban Athens and Iliaktida in Lesbos.⁵

In all, 77 per cent of users polled reported their overall satisfaction with the services received, particularly in terms of accessibility (74 per cent), confidentiality (97 per cent) and competency of the staff (92 per cent).

KEY POPULATION FIGURES²

36,195 of sea arrivals during the year (Jan-Sept 2019)

7,687 (21%) **15,526** (43%)
Women Men

12,982 (36%) Children

KEY RESULTS AT A GLANCE³

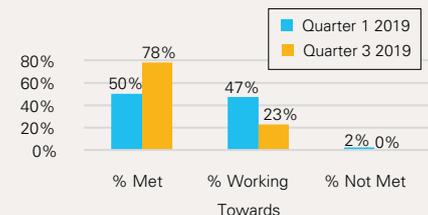
(10/2018 – 09/2019)

1,418 GBV survivors and individuals at risk accessed GBV services

TARGET 1500
REACHED 1418



Minimum standards



90% of polled users stated that they would recommend the services to others

264 frontline workers trained

UNICEF continued its strategic partnership with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE).

UNICEF-BPRM⁶ Partners

General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE)
Iliaktida, Melissa Network of Migrant Women, Diotima, KETHI (Research Centre for Gender Equality)

These positive trends were confirmed by monitoring of the implementation of UNICEF's internal service delivery standards, which showed major improvements in service accessibility, respect for users' confidentiality and the competency of staff. In the first quarter of 2019, 50 per cent of good practice standards were met, rising to 78 per cent in the third quarter.

The capacity of the public system and civil society to respond to refugee and migrant survivors has been enhanced through the training of front-line workers, increased availability of interpretation services and support to the revision of the Cooperation Protocol. In this regard, 264 front line workers (185 female and 79 male) were trained on GBV prevention and response where: 98 per cent of polled participants reported being able to refer survivors correctly after their training.

In addition, UNICEF has continued its strategic partnership with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE), including the recruitment of a GBV expert placed within the GSGE – a placement that has resulted in a more solid inter-agency coordination system.

Finally, as part of the partnership between UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Greece, UNICEF has supported Solidarity Now, establishing Child and Family Support Hubs in 13 open accommodation sites that includes WGSS and GBV case-management services. As a result of this partnership, UNICEF has also been invited to provide capacity development support on child protection across all 26 open accommodation sites operating on the Greek mainland. While Solidarity Now is not a formal partner under the BPRM-funded programme run

by UNICEF, funding from BPRM in 2017 proved crucial for the establishment of the GBV pillar within Solidarity Now's work.



On the island of Lesbos, UNICEF has mobilized funds from BPRM to support Iliaktida organization in its operation of a *Child and Family Support Hub* and build its capacity to host girls and women from the Moria RIC. Building on Iliaktida's strong local presence and links with local support networks, UNICEF has built its capacity through staff training; monitoring and coaching on GBV prevention, identification and referral; and ensuring Iliaktida's regular participation in all relevant coordination mechanisms.

In Focus – Partnering with governmental institutions to prevent and respond to GBV

In May 2018, UNICEF formalized cooperation with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE), to respond to ongoing gaps in GBV programming and to promote sustainability and upstream work on GBV in Greece. As well as focusing on information dissemination and awareness raising, strengthened coordination and referral pathways, and enhanced accessibility of services for refugee and migrant women and children, the cooperation also included research and data collection to inform policy and planning.

In early 2019, this partnership was expanded to include the secondment by UNICEF of a technical expert on GBV in emergencies to the Social Protection Department of the Secretariat to support ongoing collaboration, and to contribute to the strategic coordination function of GSGE by: reinforcing its new role as

co-chair of the national GBV sub working group; supporting the revision of the GSGE Cooperation Protocol for the Referral of Refugee Women and their Children; and analysing available data and services for refugee and migrant GBV survivors and children to inform policy development and planning. By focusing on coordination to broaden the scope of the partnership, UNICEF aims to strengthen the leadership of GSGE in the overall coordination of the GBV response for refugees and migrants, in collaboration with relevant national and local authorities and CSOs working in this field.

As a result of this strategic partnership, UNICEF launched a number of initiatives. These ranged from dissemination events for the National Cooperation Protocol on the Referral of Refugee Women and Children (recognized as an example of best practice at European level) to the

launch of a campaign around GSGE's motto "You are not the only one, you are not alone" to raise awareness among refugees, in particular about the availability of services, including an SOS helpline.

The partnership also improved access for women refugee survivors of GBV to state-run counselling centres and shelters through the provision of interpreters and made initial progress on systematizing and analysing existing data on cases of GBV affecting refugee and migrant women. In the next phase of partnership, UNICEF will pursue ongoing areas of joint work, including the finalization of the revised Cooperation Protocol, as well as continued support for GSGE's coordination role and the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which will include the strengthening of systems for harmonized nationwide data collection and analysis on GBV.

Endnotes

¹ Accessibility and Barriers to SGBV services for refugee and migrant girls, boys, women and men in Greece, published in 2019 by Diotima with the support of UNICEF Greece.

² UNICEF Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe Situation Report # 33

³ All data are drawn from UNICEF's regular Monitoring and Evaluation System

⁴ To know more about Melissa visit <http://tcleadership.org/the-melissa-network/>

⁵ To know more about Iliaktida visit <https://iliaktida-amea.gr/en/about/>

⁶ Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration