

Addressing Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Humanitarian Emergencies: Strengthening Multi-Sectoral Responses

23 September 2021

Sexual Violence against Men and Boys Project
Women's Refugee Commission

Quick Poll

- Have you ever received training on working with male survivors?
- Are there male survivors of sexual violence in the context where you work?
- Do you feel comfortable to support any male survivors that disclose to you?



WRC's Sexual Violence Project

WRC's work on Sexual Violence against Men and Boys (SVAMB) strives to prioritize accountability to women and girls. We do this by:

- exploring how sexual violence against men and boys impacts the lives of women and girls;
- exploring how sexual violence against men and boys intersects with violence against women and girls;
- advocating for services for and attention to survivors of all genders;



Some data on SVAMB

Research. Rethink. Resolve.

- **Europe:** A 2015 study suggested that up to 28.6% of male migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers have been subjected to sexual violence since their arrival in Europe
- **Lebanon:** A 2013 rapid assessment of 520 Syrian and Palestinian male youth and boys (age 12-24) living in Lebanon revealed that 10.8% had experienced an incident of sexual harm or harassment in the previous three months.
- **Mexico:** Of 429 refugees fleeing violence in Central America, 17.2% of the men reported suffering sexual violence during flight through Mexico.
- **Morocco:** Among a sample of refugees and migrants traveling through Morocco to Europe, 37.2% (53) of 142 reported incidents of rape involved male victims.



Introduction to the Guidelines

“We need technical support on this issue. Every organization needs it. We don’t know how to do this—it is difficult.”

– GBV service provider, Cox’s Bazaar, Bangladesh



Definition of Sexual Violence against Men & Boys

- Anal and oral rape and attempted rape (including with objects)
- Genital violence, including beatings, burning, cutting, tying, electric shock, forced circumcision, and mutilation
- Amputation of the testes and/or penis
- Forced sexual activity with or sexual harm against other people, corpses, or animals, including enforced rape of others
- Forced witnessing of sexual violence (visual and auditory)
- Insertion of objects or liquids into urethra
- Forced sterilization
- Sexual humiliation, such as forced nudity
- Forced masturbation of self and others
- Non-consensual touching of the genitals
- Injury to the nipples, including burning, cutting, and amputation
- Exposure of boys, including adolescent boys, to pornography



Strengthening Multi-Sectoral Response

Sectoral Responses Addressed:

- Health
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
- Protection
- Child Protection
- GBV
- Additional info on Livelihoods, WASH, and Shelter

Each chapter contains:

- Impact for the Survivor
- Key Actions for Providers
- Considerations for Sector
- Relevant Resources for more in-depth information



Health Related Impacts for Male Survivors

Some selected health-related impacts

- Trauma to the penis, scrotum, and testes, rectum, and anus including varicose veins
- Urinary and fecal incontinence and pain during urination and/or bowel movements
- Hernias and abdominal tears
- Sexual dysfunction including erectile dysfunction and fears of infertility
- Genital, rectal, and lower back pain can be indicators



Some MHPSS Impacts on Male Survivors

- Emotion regulation challenges including overwhelming feelings of self-blame, shame, helplessness, humiliation, anger, rage, loneliness, and fear
- Dissociation, depersonalization
- Self-destructive behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse
- Escapism, such as increased focus on work or gaming – running away from home
- Confusion and distress about gender identity and/or sexual orientation
- Psychosexual dysfunction



Protection Issues for Male Survivors

Protection Issues for male survivors include:

- Immediate safety and safe shelter/housing (short- and/or long-term) – cannot endanger GBV survivors or WGSS
- Justice/legal redress - SVAMB not always recognized
- Expedited refugee status determination (where applicable)
- Expedited resettlement referral for third country resettlement, if no appropriate services or protection are available in the country of first asylum



Child Protection Issues

- Sexual Exploitation of Boys is often unreported; Adolescent boys often seen more as perpetrators than as potential survivors
- May face discrimination when trying to access services that are geared towards women and girls
- Gender norms often allow boys more freedom and access to public spaces, combined with less oversight by caregivers and misconceptions that boys are not targeted for sexual abuse, which can increase vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Contexts that increase vulnerability to sexual victimization include detention, institutions, labour sites, and armed forces (amongst others)



Discussion

- **Moderator: Dale Buscher, Women's Refugee Commission**
- **Panelists:**
- **Health: Meggy Verputten, MSF**
- **Livelihoods: Galo Quizanga, HIAS**
- **Child Protection: Carina Hickling, CASI and Child Protection AOR**



**Addressing Sexual Violence against
Men, Boys, and LGBTQ+ Refugees:
Learnings from Pilot Projects in
Bangladesh, Kenya, and Italy/Bulgaria**

Meet the speakers

Research. Rethink. Resolve.



Meggy Verputten
Médecins Sans Frontières



Carina Hickling
Child and Adolescent Survivor Initiative
Child Protection AOR



Galo Quizanga
HIAS



Sarah Martin
GBV Consultant



Dale Buscher
Women's Refugee Commission



Questions?

Feel free to type in the chat box



Some Recommendations to Health Sector

Research. Rethink. Resolve.

- Ensure staff UNDERSTAND the issues and address harmful myths about SV against men and boys
- Build and DEVELOP CAPACITY particularly around service providers attitudes to male survivors
- Create ENTRY POINTS for male survivors, not just in the OB/GYN
- Create INCLUSIVE Practice to ensure male, trans and LGBTQ survivors feel comfortable
- Ensure REFERRAL PATHWAYS include services for male survivors including specialised surgery if needed.



Recommendations to MHPSS Sector

- Ensure staff UNDERSTAND the issues – disclosure for male survivors is not necessarily healthy
- Build and DEVELOP CAPACITY to respond to the needs of male survivors – particularly around the issue of anger, homophobic and misogynistic attitudes
- Review and create ENTRY POINTS for male survivors to access MHPSS – linking to livelihoods or targeting men who have been in detention could be useful. Conduct GENDER ANALYSIS of MHPSS entry points
- *Section address harmful myths about male sexual violence with staff and survivors, particularly useful in community outreach to encourage men to come for care.*



Some Recommendations for Protection sector

- Ensure interviewers for asylum-related claims are familiar with SVAMB including forced witnessing, enforced rape of others, and so-called “corrective” rape for gay or trans men.
- Work to develop alternative shelter for male survivors so as not to jeopardize WGSS.
- Ensure community outreach and awareness-raising efforts on SVAMB includes addressing harmful myths and sensitize and train police and judiciary
- *Section includes tips on how to interview male survivors*



Recommendations to Child Protection Sector

- Ensure staff UNDERSTAND the issues – adolescent Boys are vulnerable to SEA around the world
- Build and DEVELOP CAPACITY to respond to the needs of adolescent boy survivors – particularly those who vulnerable to sexual exploitation
- Review and create ENTRY POINTS for boy survivors, particularly unaccompanied minors and add messages about SV in child outreach
- Use participatory methods to MAP SAFETY RISKS and barrier mappings for boys who are often unsupervised in public

- *Case study in Iraq included and Lessons Learned from working with Sexually Exploited Adolescent Boys*



GBV Sector

- Assess referral services to support male survivors and integrate or establish separate pathways.
- Coordinate with CP to develop referral pathways for boy survivors and LGBTIQ+ adolescent survivors.
- *Case Management Tips for Male survivors included in this section.*

Shelter Sector

- Safe Shelters, particularly for gay and trans male survivors are needed but rarely available.
- *Tips on making shelters safe for Trans People are included.*



WASH

- Urinary and fecal incontinence is a big issue for male survivors.
- WASH actors should support with hygiene products for male survivors and include waste bins to dispose incontinence and sanitary products in all toilets (not only women's toilets), to minimize exposure and stigmatization for men/boy survivors
- Provide support to survivors with disabilities for whom basic hygiene activities may be particularly difficult and time-consuming.

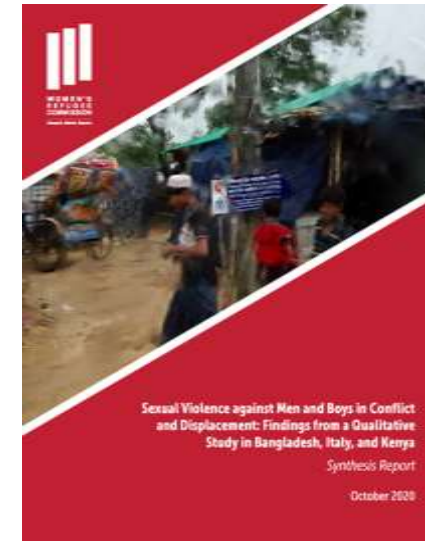
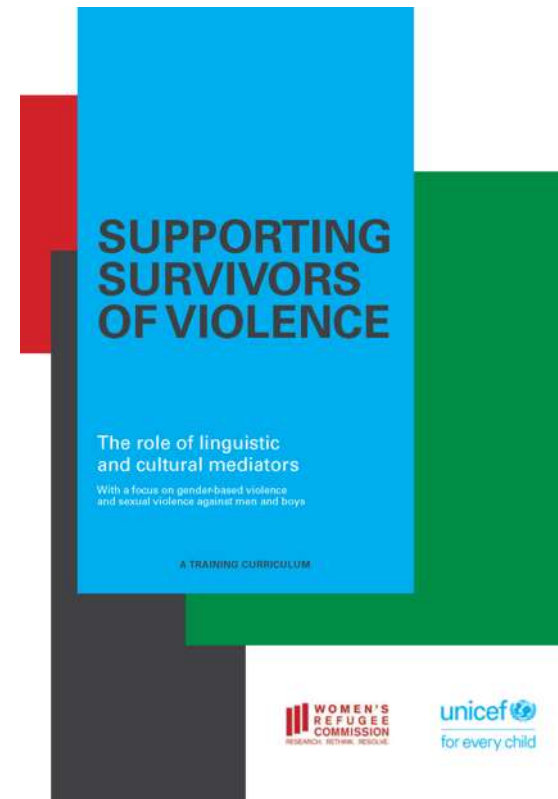
Livelihoods

- Very important services for men and boys due to gender norms in society
- SEA happening in workplaces
- SV can impact physical strength for survivors limiting their ability to seek work
- Consult with men, adolescent boys to develop and implement livelihood programs that are accessible to those at risk of sexual violence, as well as survivors.



For more information

- Join the **GBV AOR Community of Practice** and access our dropbox of materials.
- Go to the **Women's Refugee Commission website** for all of the research materials, the tools including a toolkit on working with adolescent boys in transit and with interpreters and cultural mediators. Lessons learned from pilot projects in Italy, Bangladesh, and Kenya are available.
- ***Please raise this information with your cluster and sector leads to strengthen our response to male survivors!***





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