

ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

(GCR Para 71)



Key Challenge: A mechanism to ensure that AGD, Women and Girls and addressing SGBV are reflected in the Energy and Infrastructure Co-Sponsorship Group and Pledges

“Providing enough time, assistances and supports {including safe shelters} for the SGBV survivors in order to help the survivors become independent and to be able to rebuild their livelihood and move on” (Female Refugee Representative, Gender Audit team).

Major concerns about energy and infrastructure experienced by girls and women which could be addressed by Pledges include:

- Major and chronic funding shortfalls in protracted refugee situations across Africa and Asia, leading to malnutrition, serious physical and mental health problems, increased SGBV and serious child protection issues.
- Women and girls continue to experience high levels of rape and sexual abuse when accessing fuel and water in camps and urban settlements.
- Lack of adequate lighting, separate bathroom areas, and safe segregated spaces for men, adolescent boys and women and adolescent continues to be a major problem.
- Women and girls often do not have access to secure shelter and they and their children are unsafe in their “homes”.

- Women including young women are not routinely included in discussion, project development, implementation and monitoring of measures taken to increase access to energy and to provide better health infrastructure despite their lived experience, knowledge and frequently easily implementable suggestions for improvement.
- The inclusion of women in decision making is often tokenistic and they do not receive the support they need to participate meaningfully.
- Women frequently have to travel long distances on foot to reach clinics and medical centres, including pregnant women about to deliver due to insufficient ambulance and health services.
- There is a chronic shortage of short and medium terms safe shelters, counselling and support services for women and young women fleeing domestic and family violence.

Pledges which could be made to ensure Energy and Infrastructure

That sufficient long-term dedicated funding is made available for safe and secure long-term shelters or half-way houses and coordinated follow-up, counselling, physical and medical assistance for women and girls who have suffered abuse or who are vulnerable to abuse.

That food rations or cash provided for food meets the World Food Program minimum standard in all refugee situations.

That women are specifically included as active participants in all discussion, project development, implementation and monitoring of measures taken to increase access to energy and to provide better health infrastructure.

That separate and secure recreational and meeting spaces be provided for women, adolescent girls, men and adolescent boys.

That secure, well-lit and separate toilets and bathing spaces with private entrances where possible linked to women friendly spaces be provided for women and girls.

That women and girls be provided with regular and sustainable sources of cooking fuel to prevent the risks associated with firewood collection or being forced to exchange sex for cooking gas.

Women be supported and if necessary, receive training to ensure that they have an equal place at the “planning table”, that their voices and ideas are heard and considered, and that they are not just token appointees to decision making processes.

A detailed Gender audit report of the 2nd Preparatory meeting with further recommendations for Pledges is available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-au/resources-5cc1a4e94.html>

Progress reports on the field consultations undertaken as part of the Refugee Women and Girls Key to the Global Compact on Refugees Project, led by UNSW, in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia will be available from October 2019 at <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/our-research/research-centres-networks/forced-migration-research-network/projects/refugee-women-and>

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