

WORKING WITH REFUGEES ENGAGED IN SEX WORK: GUIDANCE FOR HUMANITARIANS

UNDER A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO WORKING WITH REFUGEES ENGAGED IN SEX WORK, PRACTITIONERS WILL:

1. KNOW INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Consult existing non-humanitarian resources that affirm the rights of individuals involved in sex trade and explain positive practices for working with them.
Example: WHO et al., Sex Worker Implementation Tool (2013)

2. SOLICIT INPUT FROM REFUGEES DOING SEX WORK

Facilitate their meaningful input into the design and implementation of protocols, referrals, and programs designed to meet their protection and health needs.

3. CENTER THE INDIVIDUAL DURING DECISIONS

Ensure that each individual's self-expressed concerns, needs and preferences drive individual case management and/or counseling.

4. RESPECT INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

Provide individuals with all relevant information about a **range of options** for services, referrals and peer support, so they can choose what is most relevant for them.

5. BUILD SKILLS AND CAPACITIES OF STAFF

Train staff to talk about sex work in nondiscriminatory and **non-stigmatizing** ways. Train staff to develop rights-based protocols and programming for these refugees.

6. REACH OUT TO SEX-WORKER LED ORGS.

Map local and regional sex worker-led organizations. They may have information critical to the health and safety of these refugees: friendly service providers, peer trainings, drop-in centers, etc.

7. REACH OUT TO RIGHTS-BASED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Reach out to local organizations who work with host-community sex workers. Ask about **entry points for refugee inclusion** in existing programs. (Examples: regional UNFPA, UNAIDS offices)

8. KNOW LOCAL LAWS AROUND SEX WORK

Become familiar with host nation prostitution laws and enforcement. Develop tailored protocols for assisting refugees who get arrested or detained for selling sex.

9. DEVELOP TAILORED REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Create referral pathways and know-your-rights information handouts for refugees engaged in sex work. These should be based on information gathered from refugees and local experts.

10. MAINSTREAM SERVICE NEEDS ACROSS PROGRAMS

Integrate the rights and service needs of refugees engaged in sex work across humanitarian response, including health, legal, livelihood, GBV and SRH programs.

11. CONDUCT TARGETED OUTREACH

Targeted outreach is critical to reaching these refugees and facilitating their access to services and support. Where possible, **peer-led outreach** is best practice.

12. ENSURE FUNDING PROPOSALS ARE INCLUSIVE

Include refugees engaged in sex work in needs assessments, budgets, and strategic plans. Allocate adequate human and financial resources for tailored programming and staff capacity-building.

13. FACILITATE PEER SUPPORT

Provide tangible support to **community-led** protection and peer support efforts.

14. GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES

Collect information about the risks and service needs of refugees engaged in sex work and use it to inform **holistic**, tailored interventions.

THE GUIDANCE NOTE WAS DEVELOPED BY THE WOMEN'S REFUGEE COMMISSION AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR GENDER EMPOWERMENT AND RIGHTS ADVOCACY.

THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT IS CONDENSED FROM A LONGER GUIDANCE NOTE AND IS MEANT TO PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW. FOR MORE DETAILS AND INFORMATION, VISIT THIS LINK:

[HTTP://WRC.MS/SEX-WORK](http://wrc.ms/sex-work)