



UNITE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

True to its humanitarian mandate, WFP works in some of the world's poorest, least secure places. In these environments, rates of gender-based violence are high. Displacement and extreme poverty – often linked to conflict or climate events – are complicating factors. Personal insecurity and food insecurity feed on each other: they trap women and girls in a near-unbreakable cycle. That is why for WFP to carry out its mission efficiently, it must not only ensure that its interventions do no harm; wherever possible, it must pro-actively respond to gender-based violence, and seek to reduce it in the communities it serves.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism (or "Orange") Campaign, WFP is this year launching its **Guidance on Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**. The move places efforts to combat GBV firmly in the context of food assistance: it will help staff and partners identify and tackle GBV risks linked to hunger and malnutrition, as well as those that arise in the course of our interventions. But while the launch of the Guidance is an institutional first, WFP has already built measures into many of its programmes to prevent or mitigate gender-based violence.

PROTECTION, LIVELIHOODS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Present in **18 countries**, the WFP-sponsored SAFE initiative provides fuel-efficient stoves to food-insecure households. By reducing

dependency on firewood collection, the project makes women less likely to undertake risky forays into the bush. In **Sudan's** violence-prone region of Darfur alone, SAFE has equipped more than 600,000 households and 180 schools, along with training on how to build more stoves and briquettes.

- In **South Sudan**, WFP is helping women create communal assets such as shallow wells. The project is helping reduce tension over scarce water resources. It also bolsters cohesion and solidarity among women from different social groups.

EMPOWERMENT AND PEACE BUILDING

- In **Colombia**, emerging from decades of civil conflict, WFP provides food assistance to survivors of gender-based violence, aiding their psycho-social recovery and reintegration into the community. It also works with networks of



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smallholder female farmers to boost their crop production and incomes, raise their rights awareness and leadership skills, and improve their capacity to advocate for – and influence – the peace process.

SAFE DISTRIBUTIONS

- In countries including **Iraq, Palestine, Madagascar** and **Niger**, WFP takes extra measures to make distribution points safe and easy for women to access. In some cases, single-sex waiting lines have been organized. In **Niger**, distribution points are located no further than 5 km from refugee sites; pregnant and nursing women are identified and served first. In **Palestine**, women receive WFP food and cash assistance directly in their communities: for Bedouin women and girls, this means fewer long journeys to buy food, and thus less exposure to potential rights violations.

TRACKING VIOLATIONS

- In **Lebanon**, which also hosts large numbers of refugees, WFP staff have referred cases of sexual violence or abuse, and any human rights violations found during regular food assistance monitoring, to UNHCR and other protection agencies. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, a complaints desk was set up at food and cash distribution points, to ensure reporting of any abuse and violence against beneficiaries – including gender-based violence. And in **Afghanistan**, which struggles with severe challenges in this area, most callers into a Beneficiary Feedback Mechanism have been female.

Combined with an awareness campaign, the introduction of the mechanism in 2012 and its subsequent expansion gave a voice to some of the country's most food-insecure women and girls: due to constraints on public mobility in Afghanistan, they might otherwise have remained invisible.

Spotlight

RWANDA'S REFUGEE CAMPS

The camps of **Gihembe** and **Nyabiheke** house tens of thousands of refugees from the **Democratic Republic of Congo**. The residents receive cash assistance from WFP. At both camps, difficult living conditions are often compounded by violence, alcoholism and the sexual exploitation of women. In an additional challenge, instances of child malnutrition carry significant social stigma and lead to increased tension as family members blame each other for the condition.

As well as working to treat the substantive problem of malnutrition with supplementary feeding, WFP has trained nearly 100 "nutrition animators". Acting as liaison officers between humanitarian service providers and the refugees, they foster awareness of nutrition and help reduce tension. Nearly two-thirds of the animators are female: in the words of one of them at Nyabiheke camp, the "mother-to-mother" support groups, which meet monthly, "are very important". "As well as financial matters," she says, "we discuss child abuse and abuses against women in our families. We also talk about ways to end the violence when it happens."



For more information:
<http://go.wfp.org/web/gender>
<http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/>

