FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE?

#WOMEN'S VOICES

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PREVENTING & COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST REFUGEE WOMEN & GIRLS ON THE MOVE
IT IS IMPORTANT THAT FEMINISTS ENGAGE IN REFUGEE POLITICS IN ORDER TO CHANGE THE MALE NORM OF “WHO IS A REFUGEE.”

Swedish Women’s Lobby

ENSURE THAT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING IS GENDER RESPONSIVE

World Humanitarian Summit Core Commitment
"I arrived in Finland with my husband as asylum seekers. Already in the very beginning of the process, I stated that I wanted our applications to be handled separately. Because of the political activity of my husband, I had been gang raped in my country. I did not want my husband to learn this. The marriage is a forced one and there has been all kinds of violence throughout the marriage, and also in the reception centre in Finland. I sought help from a social worker and the police has also visited our home because of domestic violence. I want a divorce, but it is very complicated because of religious reasons."
Asylum is not gender neutral: the refugee crisis in Europe from a feminist perspective

Posted on 21 September 2015
The #womensvoices project: a unique and impactful 6-month project putting violence against refugee women and girls on the European political agenda

A unique project methodology:
- A bottom-up approach
- Questionnaires sent to all EWL members (50 national and European coordinations)
- Stakeholders’ mapping to identify and meet key actors
- #womensvoices Forum convening EWL members and key players on the issue (April)
- #womensvoices recommendations with advocacy tools
- #womensvoices European Dialogue, bringing women’s voices at EU level (June)
- Country findings factsheet
WOMEN'S VOICES COUNTRY FINDINGS

Preventing and combating violence against refugee women & girls

Different Countries, Same Findings by EWL members:
- No comprehensive policies to end violence against refugee women and girls
- No gender-sensitive humanitarian response
- No gender-sensitive asylum systems

"VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BOTH VIOLATES AND IMPAIRS OR NULLIFIES THE ENJOYMENT BY WOMEN OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS."

Beijing Platform for Action
THREE KEY DEMANDS:

- Comprehensive policies to end all forms of violence against women and girls in the EU and its member states, and specific measures to ensure that women and girls refugees and asylum seekers are protected and get access to justice.

- A humanitarian response which succeeds in protecting women and girls from male violence and exploitation.

- Gender-sensitive asylum policies and procedures to help women and girls to escape or denounce male violence and access to their full human rights.
THREE ADVOCACY TOOLS

THE 5 P’s FRAMEWORK TO END ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST REFUGEE WOMEN AND GIRLS

EWL CHECK LIST ‘IMPLEMENTING A GENDER-SENSITIVE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE’

EWL CHECK LIST ‘ENGENDERING THE ASYLUM SYSTEMS’
The reality: A lack of specific measures to protect women and girls refugees from male violence

- Lack of funding for women’s NGOs providing services for survivors (PARTNERSHIP)
- Lack of campaigns to end stigmatisation of refugee and migrant women (PREVENTION)
- Lack of access to information on their rights, in their language (PREVENTION)
- Lack of shelters, helplines, rape crisis centres, legal aid… (SERVICE PROVISION)
- No access to services because of the legal status (SERVICE PROVISION)
- No long-term care for mental health and trauma recovery (PROTECTION)
- No individual residence permit status (PROTECTION)
- Impunity, increasing with racism (PROSECUTION)
Our demands:

- Ratification of the Istanbul Convention, without reserves
- Comprehensive and coordinated policies on all forms of violence against women
- A victim-centred approach including specific measures for refugee women and girls
- Systematic and adequate data collection and research
- Appropriate financial and human resources
- National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security
The 5 Ps framework is a policy and advocacy tool to ensure that all aspects for a comprehensive policy to end all forms of male violence are included, analysed, and implemented. Based on the establishment of a holistic policy framework, the 5 Ps refer to: partnership, prevention, service provision, prosecution and protection. Here is our advocacy tool to ensure that the rights and situation of women and girls refugees are integrated into general policies and measures on ending male violence. These demands are directed at the EU, its member states and acceding/candidate countries, and should be implemented at all levels.
The reality: the specific needs of women and girls are not taken into account in refugee settings, and women and girls are at risk of several forms of male violence while on the move.

- Women’s organisations can’t access sites (HUMAN RESOURCES)
- Lack of female interpreters and trained staff (HUMAN RESOURCES)
- No sex-segregated toilets, showers, sleeping rooms, safety rooms (SPACES)
- No separate spaces to report VAW or for asylum interviews (SPACES)
- Lack of services for women: post-rape care, reproductive health, etc. (SERVICES)
- Lack of integration programmes (SERVICES)
- Lack of access to legal aid, psycho-social support (RESPONSE TO VAWG)
- Lack of referral mechanisms and case management (RESPONSE TO VAWG)
Our demands:

• Transit/accommodation centres built and staffed in a gender-sensitive manner
• Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights
• A coordinated global approach to prevent and respond to violence against women in crisis contexts
• Empowering women and girls as agents of change
Hastily constructed transit, reception and accommodation centres are not designed to protect refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls from male violence or provide assistance to survivors. This check list is an advocacy tool for EWL members and partners to put pressure on national and European authorities, as well as on humanitarian actors (agencies and organisations), and ensure concrete measures and change to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG). These measures are organised around the 4 main areas of action in humanitarian response: human resources, spaces, services, and the response to VAWG.
The reality: national asylum policies and procedures are gender-blind and don’t abide with the international obligations.

- Lack of trained asylum staff on gender-based violence/persecution (STAFF)
- Lack of mandatory guideline for interviews of women & girls (INTEVIEWS)
- Lack of female staff in asylum centres (CENTRES)
- No gender mainstreaming in all aspects of asylum policies/procedures (INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS)
- Attacks on freedom of assembly and association (PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS)
- Lack of safe space, trained professionals, child friendly information... (UNACCOMPANIED GIRLS)
Our demands:

- Asylum procedures comply with the UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection
- The EU asylum system include a gender perspective
- All women entering the EU should be granted independent legal status
- Gender focal points in the European Asylum Support Office


Article 18 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
Engendering asylum systems requires reading and applying asylum policies with a gender perspective (implementing gender mainstreaming). The following check list, addressed to the EU and its member states and acceding/candidate countries, looks at the 6 areas of action related to asylum policies: staff, interviews, reception centres, institutional mechanisms, public awareness campaigns, and the specific situation of unaccompanied girls.
A timely, relevant & strategic project
European Parliament resolution of 8 March 2016 on the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU
4 June 2016: adoption of EWL emergency motion on “Promotion of women protection in EU and UN refugee policies”

“We, the EWL, request the following urgent actions:
• that EU Member States should increase the number of **UNHCR quota refugees** and give priority to women within the quota system;
• that EU Member States implement the **principle of family unification** upheld in the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, in order that mothers, sisters and daughters of men refugees travel to Europe safely and avoid becoming victims of human traffickers;
• that EU Member States apply the **principle of human rights** to women refugees and children including internally displaced persons (IDP), taking into account especially women’s asylum claims, including child, early and forced marriages, as contained in international instruments such as CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
• that EU Member States **implement EU law dealing with asylum**, including relevant Directives on gender and women’s rights.”
Now is the time for action for Europe to implement a gender-sensitive humanitarian response and to end violence against women!
To find out more:

www.womenlobby.org
@Europeanwomen