Gender and Diversity Considerations in the 2023/2024 Winter Response

Overarching Considerations:

- Conduct winter rapid needs assessment and consult with refugee and local women and men, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and chronic diseases, Roma and LGBTQAI+ to identify their winter gender and diversity sensitive needs and priorities.
- Regularly collect sex, age and disability disaggregated data on beneficiaries by all relevant diversities in winter and make sure that the most vulnerable groups (women with many children, pregnant and lactating women, GBV survivors, women in rural areas, older women and men, women and men with disabilities and chronic diseases, LGBTQAI+, Roma, children from large families, unaccompanied children) are included and continue to benefit of support.
- Engage and partner with local women's organizations for winter related activities.
- Ensure gender and diversity sensitive[1] information campaigns, targeting refugee and local population aimed to provide information on winter-related services, especially on GBV protection, cash (cash for utilities, cash for insulation, cash for winterization), voucher, health, food and non-food support.

Service Provision at Home

- For relevant home-based services (medical check-up, elderly care, childcare, homeschooling, etc.) embed GBV and SEA prevention and mitigation mechanisms, as well as provide gender and diversity responsive, inclusive and confidential feedback and complaint mechanisms.
- Ensure gender balanced/mixed staff in mobile teams and identify female staff as a contact point for women and girls where this may be necessary for effective delivery and protection services.

Coping Mechanisms

- Regularly review feedback and complaints, monitor, identify and address gender differential types of winter related negative coping mechanisms for women, men, boys and girls that could emerge as a result of the economic hardship during the period.

[1] Addressing difficulties seeing, hearing, illiteracy, limited digital literacy, no or limited access to technologies and minority languages.

- Strengthen economic resilience through tailored livelihoods programs aimed at skills development and job-placement to prevent women, men, boys, girls and their families falling into poverty, particularly women who engage or are at risk of engaging in the sale and exchange of sex as a coping mechanism and young adolescents withdrawing from school to cope with economic pressure and contribute to the family's income.
- Strengthen prevention and response to human trafficking and sexual exploitation, especially among the most vulnerable groups (young women, older persons, persons with disability, persons with chronic diseases, LGBTQAI+ and Roma).

Sector-Specific Considerations

Cash and Vouchers

- Ensure support for cash and voucher enrollment, whereas necessary, to the most vulnerable groups, including rural, older and Roma population, and with limited mobility due to health conditions, care responsibilities or other reasons.
- Ensure that refugee women, men, boys and girls and host communities are equally financially literate and familiar with the modality for delivering cash with particular focus on persons from rural areas, older women and men, and Roma women.
- Ensure that cash and voucher assistance embed GBV and SEA prevention and mitigation mechanisms, as well as provide gender and diversity responsive, inclusive and confidential feedback and complaint mechanisms.
- Ensure the regularity of cash transfers so that the most vulnerable and marginalized groups are able to plan their expenses and are not exposed to increased protection risks because of the delayed/irregular payments.

Firewood and Energy Support

- Ensure that information campaigns on the reduction of energy consumption specifically target women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by energy poverty, and do not exacerbate the pre-existing inequalities.
- Support vulnerable women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by energy poverty, with the implementation of energy efficiency measures.
- Ensure that support to innovate energy solutions targets women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by energy poverty, in line with their specific needs.
- Ensure that firewood distribution is organized in consultations with the beneficiaries and factors in gender and diversity sensitive considerations with regard to the location, timing and handling of distribution and meets the specific needs of beneficiaries with lower physical abilities and reduced mobility.

Community Infrastructure Repairs and Community Support

- Prioritize insulation of RACs to ensure health, well-being and protection of the most vulnerable groups, specifically women with infants and children, older persons and persons with disabilities during winter.
- Prioritize replacement of damaged windows and doors and ensure availability of locks and blinders/curtains in RACs to ensure women and girls privacy and protection against GBV and SEA during winter.
- Prioritize renovation of sanitary blocks, water and/ or sewage systems in RACs to ensure appropriate menstrual hygiene. Ensure that sanitary blocks are heated, they are separate for women and men and that there is a greater number of sanitary blocks for women based on their increased needs compared to men. Consider the specific needs of LGBTQI+ that may fall outside the conventional hygiene needs.
- Prioritize insulation of community infrastructure, as well as installation of heating and air-conditioning systems, to ensure efficient operation and provision of basic social services, such as social assistance, childcare, education and health services, to the most vulnerable groups during winter.
- Prioritize renovation of sport fields and kindergarten playgrounds to alleviate the childcare burden in refugee and local women, contribute to refugee integration and social cohesion, as well as promote sports and athletic achievements among girls.
- For winter maintenance of streets and sidewalks (clear snow and ice, salt/sand road), first clean and treat sidewalks to ensure mobility, prevent winter-related injuries and facilitate access to services for women, especially with children, including infant, adolescents, and older persons, who are less likely to own cars compared to men.

NFI Distribution

- Provide warm clothing and footwear of inclusive sizes for the most vulnerable women, men, girls and boys, especially in rural areas, based on the assessment of their district needs.
- Ensure that the distribution of clothing, bed linen and household items is organized in consultations with the beneficiaries, factors in gender and diversity sensitive considerations with regard to the location, timing and handling of distribution and meets the specific needs of beneficiaries with lower physical abilities and reduced mobility.
- Ensure the provision of dignity kits for women and girls, diapers for adults and plastic sheets, especially for older people, people with disabilities and chronic diseases.
- Ensure gender balanced/mixed staff teams for the distribution of NFI and identify female staff as a contact point for women and girls where this may be necessary for effective delivery and protection services.

Hot Meals and Food Packages

- For the provision of hot meals, prioritize women with many children, pregnant and lactating women, women and men with disabilities and chronic diseases, older persons, girls and boys and take into account their distinct needs related to food restrictions, dietary requirements, specific health conditions, etc.
- Ensure that food packages are formulated based on the needs of households and take into account the distinct needs of women, men, girls and boys.
- Ensure that the distribution of hot meals and food packages is organized in consultations with the beneficiaries and factors in gender and diversity sensitive considerations with regard to the location, timing and handling of distribution and meets the specific needs of beneficiaries with lower physical abilities and reduced mobility.
- Ensure gender balanced/mixed staff teams for the distribution of hot meals and food packages, and identify female staff as a contact point for women and girls where this may be necessary for effective distribution and protection services.
- Provision of border snacks to the most vulnerable refugees crossing the border with Moldova that lack private transportation and wait for the bus services. Those are mostly single-headed households, often women with multiple children and elderly people.
- For Refugee Hosting Households, over 74% are women-headed and elderly led households which also prove to be the most socio-economically vulnerable families. They receive the support to afford increased winter expenses and support the decrease in negative coping mechanisms (often associated with food quality, quantity and diversity).

Health Services

- Ensure access to specific medications and treatments for persons with disabilities and chronic diseases, sexual reproductive health for women and girls and hormone replacement therapy for LGBTQAI+, including through mobile outreach to rural areas.
- Provide vouchers for medicines to mothers with children to address winter-related flues and colds in children.
- Ensure gender balanced/mixed staff in mobile teams and identify female staff as a contact point for women and girls where this may be necessary for effective delivery and protection services.