

Terms of Reference

Afghanistan Protection Cluster - Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster (AGBV SC)

The Afghanistan Gender-based Violence Sub-Cluster (GBV S-C) was established as a national coordinating body to strengthen and enhance the efforts and activities of stakeholders in the country, in the prevention of and response to gender-based violence.

Its Terms of Reference (TOR) are established within the framework of the TOR for the Afghanistan Protection Cluster (APC), version of May 2010.

I Definition of gender based violence within the context of the AGBV SC

In order to ensure a uniform understanding among the members of this working group, gender-based violence will be defined as any form of violence directed against women, girls, boys and men on the basis of socially attributed differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental, sexual harm or suffering, as well as threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty.

GBV shall be understood to comprise, but not be limited to:

1. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring **in the family**, including battering, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse of children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.
2. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring **within the general community**, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, as well as trafficking in women, girls, boys and men, and forced prostitution.
3. Physical, sexual and psychological violence **perpetrated or condoned by the State and institutions**, wherever it occurs.

II Objectives of the Gender-based Violence Sub-Cluster (AGBV SC)

1. To consolidate, coordinate, improve and support the activities of all relevant stakeholders in the prevention of and response to GBV within the context of humanitarian action in Afghanistan
2. Within the humanitarian setting, the AGBV SC shall target and prioritize GBV issues relating to most vulnerable or affected groups. The Gender-based Violence Sub-Cluster (AGBV SC) recognizes that there will be different priorities in the different regions of Afghanistan and that these should be determined at field level with the active guidance of the SC.

III The structure and membership of the Gender-based Violence Sub-Cluster (AGBV SC)

1. Leadership

The Gender-based Violence Sub-Cluster (AGBV SC) will be chaired by UNFPA and co-chaired by the OXFAM GB.

2. Membership

- a. In order to ensure a holistic and multi-sectoral approach in the prevention of and response to GBV, membership of the AGBV SC will be extended to international and national NGOs, human rights activists, international organizations, government representatives and other entities providing services in the GBV, health, psycho-social, legal and security sectors.

- b. Appointed APC task force and other sub-clusters' GBV-focal points will be members of the AGBV SC, in order to ensure the participation of each sub-cluster. The APC GBV Focal Point will participate in other Clusters' meetings.
 - c. Membership of national NGOs, human rights and civil society actors and entities shall be encouraged, in order to ensure ownership and sustainability of the SC. Membership of related entities providing services in provinces, districts and/or at community level will be particularly encouraged.
 - d. Focal points will be appointed in focus provinces where no GBV working group has been established. In focus provinces where a GBV working group has been established, the Chair of that particular working group will act as a focal point to the AGBV SC.
3. Provincial working groups established after the approval of these TOR will adopt the TOR, but amend it as necessary to suit provincial circumstances. The working groups will define their own membership criteria, meeting timetables and elect their Chair.
- 4. Meetings**
- a. The AGBV SC will meet once per month (venue to be defined additionally).
 - b. Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair, Deputy Chairs, or at the request of three other members of the AGBV SC, when this is considered necessary to address an issue of urgent matter.
 - c. A draft agenda will be circulated to members of the SC at least 5 days before the regular monthly meeting, giving the members the opportunity to suggest additional items for discussion.
 - d. Draft minutes will be circulated within 10 days of the meeting. The final minutes will additionally be circulated to GBV working groups in the field.
- 5. Reporting**
- a. Members of the AGBV SC will submit a monthly brief report to the Chair, at the latest one week before the regular meeting.
 - b. The reports will highlight the GBV issues the members and their field counterparts are addressing, the challenges they are facing and highlighting any issues that require action by the AGBV SC. These issues will be discussed at the monthly meeting of the AGBV SC.
 - c. For the same purposes, the Chairs of provincial and/or regional GBV working groups, as well as the field focal points will submit monthly brief reports to the Chair of the GBV SC, at the latest one week before the regular monthly meeting.
 - d. The GBV SC is a sub-working group of the Afghanistan Protection Cluster (APC) and, as such, the Chair of the AGBV SC will report monthly to the APC on the relevant issues raised in all received reports, as well as on any decisions and actions taken. The Chair of the AGBV SC will participate in the meetings of the APC and may request the assistance of the APC on any particular issue.
- 6. Secretariat and staffing**
- a. The AGBV SC will be coordinated by UNFPA jointly with Oxfam GB as Deputy Chair.
 - b. This team will serve as Secretariat of the AGBV SC and have the responsibility for preparing the agenda of the meetings, calling the meetings, drafting and circulating minutes and preparing reports.
 - c. Minutes of the AGBV SC meetings will be shared with the APC.

IV Functions of the AGBV SC

In line with the TOR of the APC and identified responsibilities, the GBV SC will consolidate, coordinate, improve and support the efforts and activities of all relevant stakeholders in the prevention of and response to GBV, within the context of humanitarian action in Afghanistan through:

- a. Mapping and updating relevant GBV prevention and response actors in provinces (who, what, where);
 - b. Ensuring that analyses are carried out on the GBV situations in focus areas and documented for all actors to use;
 - c. Establishing reporting and monitoring mechanisms to ensure coordination of efforts and activities of members and relevant stakeholders;
 - d. Mapping and updating all research activities on GBV and gap identification in GBV research and related possible actors in addressing the gaps in data collection. Assisting in the collection and analysis of age- and sex disaggregated data and train actors as needed;
 - e. Providing a forum for sharing information on activities, identifying needs and gaps in prevention, protection and response, as well as for planning GBV inter-agency activities and development and implementation of joint projects and programmes;
 - f. Engaging in inter-agency, multi-sectoral field missions to assess programming successes and challenges and identifying gaps in GBV programming;
 - g. Providing technical support to national authorities and NGOs in the setting up of GBV response and referral systems;
 - h. Facilitating and supporting awareness-raising initiatives, targeting government bodies and community structures for the prevention of GBV;
 - i. Strengthening the capacity of governmental bodies, NGOs and humanitarian staff to prevent and respond to GBV by organizing trainings, providing technical support and tapping into existing training/capacity development opportunities;
 - j. Active liaising with relevant cluster working groups to ensure that GBV issues are integrated into all humanitarian response efforts.
1. The work of the AGBV SC will be guided by the following principles:
 - **Confidentiality:** ensuring that survivors, witnesses, and information sources are protected. No identifying information will be revealed in data resources, nor during coordination or other public meetings, when reference is made to (specific) GBV cases;
 - **Neutrality:** a non-partisan approach in providing services to survivors - not taking sides;
 - **Impartiality:** non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, religious belief, political views, sexual orientation, social or other status;
 - **Safety and security:** all actors will prioritize the safety of the survivor, family, witnesses and service providers at all times;
 - **Participatory approach:** ensuring, to the extent possible, consultation with all members of the community (women, girls and boys and men) throughout the GBV programming cycle;
 - **Independence:** working without influence of States, government bodies, parties to a conflict or other political entities;
 - **Respect:** actions and responses of all actors will be guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and the dignity of the survivor.

V. Amendments

This TOR is a working document and may be altered to meet the current needs of all members (at national level), by agreement of the majority of the members.