International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Group 4 – Dignity, Access, Participation and Safety of Migrants**

Regional Gender and Diversity Training of Trainers / 5-8 October 2015

**Guidelines for group session**

**Time allocated for session delivery:** 40 minutes

**Materials provided:**

1 x Powerpoint

1 x IFRC snapshot on migration

1 x Factsheet from UNWomen on Gender aspects of migration in Asia

1 x group activity

1 x Minimum standard commitments to gender and diversity in emergency programming.

**Group activity**

Ask participants to think about the key challenges and protection and safety issues for migrants at each stage of their journey.

As participants to think in particular of specific considerations for women and girls that may exacerbate their vulnerability during each stage.

As a facilitator give some hints during the discussions e.g. think about how the media can play a role? Think about the type of work women engage in, particularly those who migrate due to poverty, and how this can impact vulnerability?

After this, have a discussion about what the groups came up with, add additional points that your group discussed.

Some challenges and protection concerns are outlined below, but in your group you may be able to come up with some others. Information adapted from UNWOMEN Factsheet, Gender aspects of migration in Asia[[1]](#footnote-1).)

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| **In home (sending) country** |
| Recruiters may take advantage of migrants low level of legal knowledge and poor awareness about safe migration, trapping them into slavery-like conditions.  Migrants may be deceived before their leave as to the type of work they will be doing, their contract, living conditions, wage etc. |
| **During the migrant’s journey** |
| Migrants, especially women and those travelling irregularly, often get stranded in transit countries.  In transit, migrants can be vulnerable because they lack language skills, knowledge of the local context, lack of knowledge of the route to get to destination country. All this makes migrants an easy target for traffickers.  Women and girls, especially those, travelling alone can be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation. |
| **In host (receiving) country** |
| In the host societies and communities, lack of skills and training in domestic work, combined with a lack of understanding of the language and culture of the host country can leave migrants vulnerable and can lead to misunderstandings and negative perceptions of migrants in host countries  The portrayal of migrants in the media often leads to misconceptions and prejudices which impacts their experiences in a host country. Terminologies and labels such as ‘illegal immigrants’ leads to the perception that migrant workers should be criminalized.  Domestic workers may have restrictions placed on their movement which can prevent them from accessing help and support.  Lack of safety and privacy in accommodation arrangements can be a concern and a risk factor for abuse.  One of the key challenges is that, in most labour-receiving  countries domestic work is not recognized both legally and by society as a formal type of work and is often unregulated. It is also not seen as “real work” therefore women, who make up the majority of domestic workers lack social protection such as education and health care as well as the protection that comes from labour laws and employment contracts.  This prevents women who have suffered rights violations from access to justice  On arrival in a receiving country, many will not know where or how to access good quality, safe medical care. Furthermore, access to public health care for migrants is dependable on national policies and the migrant’s legal status in the host country. Lack of access to public health care services can leave certain groups at particular risk e.g. pregnant women, people with HIV/Aids, people who suffer from physical or verbal abuse.  Migrants at this stage are also vulnerable to trafficking – acts of deception, coercion, exploitation e.g. bondage, slavery and employment contract substitution.  Financial hardship and the value of remittances to families back home means domestic workers end up staying in situations that could pose a danger to their physical and mental health. |
| **Return and reintegration** |
| Many female migrants return home to find out that their families are broken apart and that their communities do not welcome them back. This can be particularly true if families or communities learn about the women being victim to sexual exploitation and abuse during her time overseas.  This is exacerbated by mental trauma and physical disabilities that most female migrants experience during their journey for better opportunities. |

1. UNWOMEN, Gender aspects of migration in Asia, Factsheet, [↑](#footnote-ref-1)