**Word of Welcome from the Chairs**

***Honorable Delegates,***

It is our distinct honor and a great pleasure to welcome you to UN Women of FORMUN 2018! We are thrilled to be chairing this committee. We strongly believe in the power of debate, in the importance of discussing tough topics in order to seek a reasonable solution and in the ability of Model UN conferences to change the world around us.

Being at UN Women represents a great challenge. It is an institute that deals with really close topics of our everyday life. Promoting women rights and structuring ways to achieve gender equality is, or at least should be, a cause that move us all along. This is why we chose topics that offer a possibility of a much deeper analysis and discussion, often left aside when discussing the gender issue.

Previous research, readings and preparing arguments is a fundamental part of the conference, which is why we encourage you to dedicate yourselves at this moment, in order to make the most of the days of the conference. We hope to have days of very informative, fruitful and thought-provoking debates, but Model UN is also more than that. FORMUN 2018, especially our lovely committee, is going to be a fantastic opportunity to put ourselves in a diplomatic environment, in touch with a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures. Meeting people, making friends, enjoying the socials, these are all at the heart of the FORMUN’s tradition.

To sum up, we are looking forward to meeting you and to have an unforgettable experience at UN Women! If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to ask any of us. We will be glad to assist you.

***Yours Sincerely,***

*Uzair Khan, Mahrukh Maqsooq and Saqib Yaqoob*

**Research Report Topic I:**

**The Vital Role of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development**

**Introduction to the topic:**

Rural women are key agents for development. They play a catalytic role towards achievement of transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to credit, health care and education are among the many challenges they face. These are further aggravated by the global food and economic crises and climate change. Empowering them is essential, not only for the well-being of individuals, families and rural communities, but also for overall economic productivity, given women’s large presence in the agricultural workforce worldwide.

Given equal resources, women could contribute much more. FAO estimates that if women farmers (43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries) had the same access as men, agricultural output in 34 developing countries would rise by an estimated average of up to 4 per cent. This could reduce the number of undernourished people in those countries by as much as 17 per cent, translating to up to 150 million fewer hungry people.

*“Empowering rural women is crucial for ending hunger and poverty. By denying women rights and opportunities, we deny their children and societies a better future.”* UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

Considering the fact that women do not have sufficient access to opportunities and resources agriculture is underperforming in many developing countries. Comprising 43 percent of the agricultural labor force of developing countries women’s roles in agriculture and rural development do need to be strengthened and supported. According to UN Women “rural women are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development.” Except within Latin America women are just as likely as, or even more likely than men, to work in the agricultural sector. With the Beĳing Platform for Action, which has been adopted by consensus in 1995 on the 4th World Conference on Women focusing on promoting equality for women as well as with The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11, Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development (SOFA 2010-11), an extensive body which deals with the vital role of women in agriculture and rural development6, important agreements have been reached and evidence for the vital role of women has been given. However tremendous lack of access to health care, education and financing opportunities still leave women behind and let them face enormous challenges. In connection with climate change, global crises such as the global food or economic crises empowering women could be a crucial key to overcome the named challenges and raise the living standards of rural communities. Taking a look back it is evident that rural development has been likely ignored in the past as the urban sector dominated the less rural represented communities despite the fact that the majority of people dependent on rural spaces for a long time.8 However, from the mid 1960s the World Bank ameliorated rural development through extensive funding and also the Green Revolution in between the 1960s and 1970s can be seen as a pioneer in developing rural policies.

Moreover noticeable changes over the last sixteen years can be seen due to the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals. But still less than 20 per cent of landholders are women and gender differences differ tremendously. According to UN Women, the World Bank and the Poverty and Environment Initiative the gender gap in agricultural productivity still ranges from 4-40 percent in respective countries as gender inequalities are not sufficiently represented in agricultural policy strategies and programs Having in mind the International Day of Rural Women; established in resolution 62/136; with its seventh session on October the 15th 2015 the unique set of issues concerning the vital role of women in rural development needs to be addressed especially while bearing in mind the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With 76 per cent of the extreme poor living in rural areas, with roughly 43 per cent of rural women in the agricultural labour force and with over a quarter of the world population being rural women ensuring women’s access to agricultural resources and hence their vital role in rural development will be crucial for the success of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda. Lacking access to sufficient nutrition, to financing, to agricultural resources, to healthcare and due to lacking equality serious remaining gaps concerning the vital role of women in agriculture and rural development need to be addressed within this committee especially with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has been adopted in September 2015 in New York as a successor of the MDGs.

**Expertise of UN Women concerning Rural Women:**

Based on its mandate (GA resolution 64/289) UN Women has several unique strengths concerning the issue at hand. First of all, UN Women firstly focuses on coordination, secondly on presence country and regional-wise as well as on the setting of performance standards for the UN System. Based on a rights-based approach and a long standing relationship with the women’s movement, gender equality advocates, women’s groups and several other organizations UN Woman coordinates different entities and partners to foster dialogue on rural development and gives advices within their own expertise such as but not limited to concerning economic empowerment, political participation of women, gender issues, human rights questions and financial issues. Moreover UN Women profits of a strengthened country and regional presence and is able to support countries concerning the issue. As well as UN Women played a crucial part in setting performance standards for the UN System by developing the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, or UN-SWAP in 2012.UN-SWAP firstly provides common performance standards for the gender-related work of all UN entities with a focus on the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); entity Headquarters and inter-agency bodies. Now UN Women has a pioneer role concerning the implementation of UN-SWAP containing 15 performance indicators and policies which need to be adopted by all UN system organizations.

**UN Women’s Approach to the Empowerment of Rural Women:**

According to Women Watch four main functions need to be outlined as they are carried out by UN Women in order to support women in relation with rural development:

1. Support the development and implementation of evidence-based, gender-responsive laws, plans, policies and budgets;

2. Support gender equality advocates, both within government and non-governmental organizations, to have a stronger voice in decision-making processes;   
3. Support the development and strengthening of knowledge and expertise on gender equality and the status of women and girls, including through South-South learning and exchange;

4. To help rural women escape poverty, in 2012 UN Women joined with the World Food Program, Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agriculture Development to launch a joint program to empower poor rural women through economic integration and food security initiatives. The initiative aims to empower rural women to claim their rights to land, leadership, opportunities and choices, and to participate in shaping laws, policies and programs, and

5. Lead coordination, within the UN Resident Coordinator system, to promote enhanced coherence and accountability within the UN Country Team in providing effective support to countries in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, including in the development and implementation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks UNDAFs.

As well as UN Women focuses on six priority areas which go hand in hand with its Strategic Plan 2011- 2013 followed up by the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, which updated the 2011-2013 Plan and contains a development results framework, a management results framework and an integrated resources framework in order to support Member States and the UN system. As those are closely linked to rural development and women’s empowerment the six priority areas are outlined in the following:

**1. Women’s leadership and participation;**

**2. Women’s economic empowerment;**

**3. Ending violence against women;**

**4. Peace and security and humanitarian response;**

**5. gender-responsive plans and budgets; and**

**6. Global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women empowerment. All of these areas are of high relevance to rural women** empowerment. These various dimensions bring together UN Women normative and operational functions in support to rural women.

UN Women supports rural women through developing normative standards, effective programs in the field, legal frameworks and policies on rural women’s empowerment and provides coherence, coordination and accountability on rural development. Moreover, UN Women supports entrepreneurs and works closely with governments to support rural women.

**The Role of the International System:**

Taking a look at the United Nations itself it must be outlined that also the UN has a focus on the empowerment of rural women. In order to provide strategic direction and guidance to relevant UN processes and UN agencies working on promoting the achievement of the MDGs in rural areas, with a particular emphasis on rural women a one-year-Interagency Task Force on rural women has been established during the 10th session of the Inter Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE) and is now coordinated by the FAO, IFAD and WFP. Within the UN System a lot of bodies and entities are actually working on the empowerment of rural women and hence cooperation can be seen between them raging from FAO, IFAD, ITC-ILO, SPFII, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, WFP, WHO to UN Women. Everybody has its own areas of unique expertise and strengths and thus joint efforts and programs are precious within the international system. WFP, FAO, IFAD and UN Women are for example working together to empower rural women through economic integration and food security initiatives within the joint program: Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Tanzania, Guatemala and Haiti.

**Facts and Figures:**

Having in mind that the issue of rural development touches multiple areas a holistic understanding of these is crucial. Hence the following outlined Facts and Figures by UN Women and the inter-agency report “Rural Women and the Millennium Development Goals” give a nuanced overview of topics to be addressed within the overall issue.

* **Poverty and Hunger:**

• “On average, women make up about 43 percent of the agricultural labor force in developing countries. Evidence indicates that if these women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, raising total agricultural output in these countries by 2.5 to 4 percent. This would reduce the number of hungry people in the world by around 12 to 17 percent.”

• “Almost 70 percent of employed women in South Asia work in agriculture, as do more than 60 percent of employed women in sub-Saharan Africa. This highlights the importance of developing policies and programs that address their needs, interests and constraints”

• “Less than 20 percent of the world’s landholders are women. Women represent fewer than 5 percent of all agricultural landholders in North Africa and West Asia, while in sub-Saharan Africa they make up an average of 15 percent.”

• “Women in sub-Saharan Africa collectively spend about 40 billion hours a year collecting water. Per week, women in Guinea collect water for 5.7 hours, compared to 2.3 hours for men; in Sierra Leone women spend 7.3 compared to 4.5 hours for men; and in Malawi this figure is 9.1 compared to 1.1 hours. This significantly impacts women’s employment opportunities.”

• “Research indicates that when more income is put into the hands of women, child nutrition, health and education improves. In South and Central America, rural children are about 1.8 times more likely to be underweight than their urban counterparts. Other regions do not fare much better.”

* **Education:**

• “Women make up more than two-thirds of the world’s 796 million illiterate population.”

• “According to global statistics, just 39 percent of rural girls attend secondary school. This is far fewer than rural boys (45 percent), urban girls (59 percent) and urban boys (60 percent).”

• “While progress has been made in reducing the gender gap in urban primary school enrolment, data from 42 countries shows that rural girls are twice as likely as urban girls to be out of school.

* **Employment:**

“Men’s average wages are higher than women’s in both rural and urban areas. Rural women typically work longer hours than men, due to additional reproductive, domestic and care responsibilities.”

* **Decision-Making:**

“A large gender gap remains in women’s access to decision-making and leadership.”

* **Maternal Health:**

“Between 1990 and 2008, the proportion of rural women receiving prenatal care at least once during pregnancy grew from 55 to 66 percent.”

* **Violence against Women:**

“More rural women experience domestic violence, and yet few seek services, according to a multicountry study by the World Health Organization (WHO). In Peru, less than 5 percent of the total amount of rural domestic violence survivors (60 percent) sought help, compared to approximately 16 percent of urban women (out of 49 percent).“

* **HIV and Aids, Malaria and Other Diseases:**

“Rural women understand less about how HIV spreads compared to urban women; WHO figures from 25 countries indicate the margins of understanding between the two to be between 20 and 50 percent.”

* **Environmental Sustainability:**

• “There is still far less access to clean or improved water sources in rural areas than in urban areas. In 2008, an estimated 743 million people living in rural areas relied on unimproved sources for drinking water, compared to 141 million in urban areas.”

• “Natural disasters, climate change and conflict can undermine the health, education and livelihoods of rural women, differently to men. For example, although women usually manage the small plots of agricultural land in each family for income or sustenance in developing countries, land titles are most likely to be held by the men.”

**Conclusion:**

As “UN Women supports the leadership and participation of rural women in shaping laws, strategies, policies and programs in all issues that affect their lives, including improved food and nutrition security, and a better rural livelihoods” there are multiple issues the committee needs to address. As social and economic development are crucial to improving the vital role of women in agriculture and rural development and thus the improvement and empowerment of women would lead to poverty reduction, improved living conditions and better circumstances for rural women the issue of women’s role in rural development is of exceeding importance within this committee. However, when elaborating solutions for the addressed question several factors need to be kept in mind. According to UN Women different barriers need to be addressed. Facing different cultures, religious beliefs and different understandings about women’s roles it is highly important to address these and overcome hindering obstacles for the empowerment and the equality of women. Bearing in mind the Beĳing Platform for Action as well as the adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development policies and laws need to be strengthened in order to ensure better working conditions, employment possibilities and access to resources and financing. Hence economic and financial barriers must be overcome, women’s participation must be fostered and the persisting gender gap as well as climate change must be addressed. Hence Delegates should take a multifaceted and holistic approach in order to ensure an in depth approach to the topic of the vital role of women in agriculture and rural development. “We must take every opportunity to ensure that rural women do not lag behind, but rather lead the way.” - UN Women Executive Director Phumzile MlamboNgcuka34

**Questions a Resolution must answer:**

• How can UN Women and the UN System support member states in order to ensure a profound participation of women in rural development?

• How can the role of women be strengthened concerning economic development and how can the status of women be improved?

• How can the international system help to empower women in rural development? • How can Member States improve laws on gender equality and healthcare?

• What measures must be taken by governments to close the persisting gender gap? • How can UN Women ensure the further implementation of the SGDs with regard to rural development?

• What are barriers the committee is facing concerning women in rural development?

• How can developed countries support developing countries most considering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

**Bibliography and Recommended Reading**:

Using the listed sources within this Study Guide will help you to get a first overview where to start with your research as well as the recommended reading will provide you with an in depth understanding of the topic. However, it must be mentioned that research should be exceeding the background guide as it is just the starting point for researching the committee topic.

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**Recommended Reading**:

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•http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/022/mb054e.pdf . This document provides evidence on the vital role of women in agriculture and rural development. It demonstrates that eliminating the gap between men and women in access to agricultural resources and inputs would raise yields on women’s farms by 20-30 percent and increase agricultural production in developing countries by 2.5-4 percent, which could in turn reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by 12-17 percent or 100-150 million people. The document also reviews policy recommendations and proven strategies for closing the gender gap in agriculture and rural development.

**Research Report Topic II:**

**The Rights of Female Refugees and Migrants**

**Introduction to the topic:**

In 2014, UNHCR observed the highest number of forcibly displaced people since the end of World War II in 1945 – at 59.5 million, and 19.5 million of them were refugees. Developing nations hosted approximately 86% of the refugees. However, between 2011 and 2015, the number of asylum applications lodged by Syrian refugees steadily increased. In 2014, 99% of asylum applications received by Russian Federation were by Ukrainians fleeing the war in Donbass. Crises impact women and men differently. The needs and interests are different along with the required resources and coping strategies. Often gender, displacement and other factors combine to amplify discrimination against women and girls. Women make up about 50% of any refugee or stateless population. Women who are pregnant, elderly, disabled or unaccompanied become more vulnerable to many issues faced by refugees in camps and host nations.

Recently, UNHCR pointed out that women and girl refugees on the move in Europe face grave danger of sexual and gender-based violence. However a culture of neglect and denial of such violence exists even today. The position of women and girls in society, their frequent lack of means to travel and/or knowledge about their rights and the particular risks they face during flight mean it is generally still more difficult for women than men to reach a country where they can safely seek asylum (UNHCR: 2008).

Across the eastern Mediterranean and western Balkan routes, mainstreaming the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian activities has become a priority. But when it comes to European Union, the capacity to prevent and respond adequately depends largely on the individual states. (UNHCR: 2016).

Particular challenges for women and girls can arise in the following situations:

**• Urban areas,**

**• Camps,**

**• Isolated non-camp areas,**

**• Upon return,**

**• Upon local integration,**

**• Upon resettlement.**

**History of the Problem**

Human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interconnected and interdependent. Every individual, without regard to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or status, is entitled to the respect, protection, exercise and enjoyment of all the fundamental human rights and freedoms. However, women and girls face discriminations due to their gender and they are being denied the most basic human rights. Gender based discrimination occurs in multiple forms. The term gender-based violence is used to distinguish common violence from violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals based on their gender. The term violence against women refers to any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual and psychological harm to women and girls, whether occurring in private or in public.

Sexual violence, including exploitation and abuse, refers to any act, attempt or threat of a sexual nature that results, or is likely to result, in physical, psychological and emotional harm. Sexual and gender-based violence leads to the stereotyping of gender roles and denies human dignity of individuals. The overwhelming majority of the victims of this sort of violence are women and girls. An estimated of 40-70% of homicides of women are committed in the context of an abusive relationship and one in every three women have been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in her lifetime. Mass rape in war has been documented in Bosnia, Cambodia, Liberia, Peru, Somalia and Uganda. 94% of displaced households in Sierra Leone have reported incidents of sexual assault and torture (UNHCR: 2003).

There are various International instruments that exist to address sexual and gender based violence against girls and women:

**· The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

**· United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women**

**· Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

In 1995, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees first published the report: Sexual Violence against Refugees: Guidelines on Prevention and Response. It was the first time this issue had been addressed by the UN and it became clear that the magnitude of this problem called for a more focused and adequate approach. Yet the first convention on sexual and gender-based violence in Refugee Situations only occurred in 2001 (UNICEF 2003). The struggles, discriminations, and abuses female refugees and migrants face still lack a proper, sufficient, unilateral answer.

A research conducted by Amnesty International observed that women and girls face violence and sexual exploitation at every stage of their lives, including on European soil. Women and girls travelling alone felt particularly more vulnerable and many pregnant women reported lack of food and basic healthcare at transit and arrival countries. Overall the report suggested that women felt unsafe and threatened in transit countries, on route and in arrival countries. Adding onto that were issues of unhygienic conditions, lack of toilet facilities and lack of sex-based segregated toilets (Amnesty International: 2016).

**Statement of the problem and the current situation**

Female refugees and migrants face gender based discrimination, violence and sexual assault throughout all the stages of their flight. Yet the respective surroundings, whether on their flight through transit countries, or in arrival countries, demand a particular response. First, we shall focus on the struggles women and girls face during their flight in transit countries, then we shall move onto the struggles and discriminations women and girls face in arrival countries. It is to be pointed out that the first part mainly addresses developing countries whereas the second part mainly addresses developed countries. It is nevertheless important that all countries represented in UN Women work on these issues together and try to cooperate in order to achieve solutions that foster a more secure and fair world for female refugees and migrants.

**Transit Countries:**

Brutalization of women is seen as a deplorable and persistent trend. Senior UN relief official Kyung-Wha Kang once pointed out how ISIS militants have repeatedly captured and tortured women in order to demonstrate power and authority. Women have been forced into marriage and slavery. Even if women move away from armed conflict areas, there is an ongoing threat of human traffickers and border security forces.

More than one million individuals fleeing conflict in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan arrived in Europe. Refugees, traveling quickly, journey through southern, eastern, and central Europe, are striving to reach destinations where they hope to find safety and asylum before borders close. As of January 2016, more than 55 per cent of those traveling are women and children. Fundamental services such as sexual and reproductive health care, post rape kits and essential commodities are not prepositioned in transit centers. There is a barrier for women and girl from accessing clear and transparent information regarding their rights or the transit process. Such gaps leave them vulnerable to smugglers.

Furthermore, there have been reports of lack of policies or staff to ensure safe journeys, identify survivors or to ensure that any required services are provided. UNHCR raised concerns in 2015 upon receiving credible testimonies regarding sexual violence and abuse. They also highlighted the risk of sexual violence in crowded areas such as parks, train stations, bus stations and roadsides. There were also cases of children engaging in survival sex in order to continue their journey (UNHCR: 2015). Transit countries fail to pursue a gender sensitive measures and they lack sufficient and wholesome approach towards sexual assault.

**Lack of Gender Sensitivity:**

Women and girls making journeys often find no proper support or mechanism to protect them from violence or exploitation. Often the first personnel refugee women and girls encounter at transit sites are government authorities, border officials and police officers who serve as frontline workers, responsible for registration and directing the movements of large numbers of refugees. Overwhelmed border authorities are working relentless number of hours responding to an unprecedented influx. These lacks of capacities might end up in insensitive and inappropriate treatment of female refugees and migrants (WRC: 2016).

Showers and latrines are rarely separated by sex at transit centres. Refugee women and girls admitted to refusing food and water for multiple days in order to avoid using the latrines, which they perceive as unsafe and unsuitable. Many transit sites did not have menstrual pads and undergarments in the women’s kits being distributed. Furthermore, access to minimum standards for reproductive health in transit sites was also limited. While many pregnant women were referred to hospitals for ultrasounds, fear of leaving transit sites or delay in journey left many women reluctant to travel to these hospitals.

**Sexual Assault:**

There has been a lack of clinical care for sexual assault victims in transit areas. National and international aid workers admitted that post-rape kits have not been pre-positioned and they were unfamiliar with the procedure to accompany rape survivors to local hospitals or to access needed medications. International humanitarian actors are normally required to have expertise on women’s protection and gender-based violence in order to identify survivors along the route. However, few gender-based violence victims actually get identified due to lack of expertise. The transit centers provide few, if any, spaces where GBV survivors would feel safe to disclose their story confidentially.

**Arrival countries:**

Asylum is not gender neutral. Female refugees and migrants face gender-based disadvantages, discriminations and violence not only throughout the journey but also in detention or reception centers in arrival countries as well as during the process of integration. Firstly, women tend to lack of the knowledge of the process, their rights and they tend to be less advanced in foreign languages like English, due to their reduced school education. Furthermore, women are expected to embody all the reminiscences of the country of origin. Their socialization and social pressure coming from their community pushes women into being responsible for childcare, household chores, preparing food etc. This leads to the isolation and social, cultural and financial dependency towards men (father, husband, brother). Women are therefore less likely to be integrated into the society and to attend integration courses, leading to a lack trust in the system as well as low self-confidence. Arrival countries in Europe, Northern America and Australia fail to address the basic needs of female refugees and therefore lack of gender-sensitive mechanisms to respond to such drawbacks in the respective asylum systems.

There are several areas women face such discriminations and difficulties like housing, training and language courses/ labor market and the healthcare system and therefore many areas in need of gender-sensitive mechanisms to fully integrate and empower female refugees and migrants. It has to be pointed out that, in comparison to female refugees, female migrants tend to live in uncertainty over their legal status and are therefore forced to live in the countries illegally, preventing proper integration. This also results in children being born without a nationality and without access to proper education and healthcare (European Parliament 2016: 7-11).

**Housing:**

Collective reception centers are usually the first housing refugees’ experience. Such arrangements do address the most current need for shelter, yet they also isolate the refugees from the host society and they barely cover basic requirements.

Guaranteeing adequate access to permanent and adequate housing facilities is one of the main struggles arriving countries face. Women can experience gender-based violence due to such housing arrangements. Collective reception centers tend to be overcrowded and the lack of privacy and the huge amount of stress and uncertainties can accumulate in violence against women. Furthermore, women tend to be left out of decision making progresses and therefore struggle to adjust to the new housing arrangements. Moreover, landlords often show strong prejudices against race, ethnicities, origin, gender and economic means. Especially due to the lack of economic means, women are at risk to being exploited by landlords and others. Cleaning facilities sometimes are located outside the housing in special containers. Such facilities must be safely approachable, especially in the night to prevent violence against women. Another important obstacle women face, is, that the lack of proper housing arrangement and the shortages of sufficient and trained staff leads to domestic violence not being addressed properly. Women who suffer from such violence should be accommodated in special facilities with trained staff and decent help in order to find immediate safety (European Parliament 2016: 21).

In 2001, the UNHCR established five commitments to refugee women. First, meaningful participation. Women should be included in decision making processes by being represented in management and leadership committees. The overall standard of a 50 per cent representation should be achieved. Women ought to be sufficiently informed about their rights and options they could take, if they suffered violence and abuse, as well as to receive negotiating and leadership skills training. Second, individual registration and documentation. Women should be registered as individuals to ensure their exercise of their basic rights. They should be provided with their own documents to provide them with individual security. Third, Food and non-food items management and distribution. Food and non-food items should only be accessible by the women directly and women should be included at all times in the management and distribution of food and non-food items. Fourth, economic empowerment. Projects and training opportunities should be responding to women’s needs and capacities directly to widen women’s access to such opportunities as well as micro-credit schemes and employment. Fifth, prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence. The Guidelines on Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV Guidelines) have to be sufficiently implemented and addressed. Addressing such violence requires a community-based approach, involving boys and men, and must be embedded in a wider framework of gender equality mainstreaming and empowerment (UNHCR 2001).

**Training and language courses:**

Language is vital for refugees’ and migrants’ integration. Training programs and education foster the integration progress as well as seeking employment and children’s integration. Moreover, refugees and migrants then have easier access to information about rights, health and integration. Involving women into this process delimits isolations and segregation and fosters the self-esteem. Yet, women are usually less educated than men, less confident and less autarkic. Women tend to be prohibited from attending language and training courses by their father, husband or the community in order to care for the children or do household chores. Women further tend to be forbidden to attend classes together with men. Therefore, special language and training courses responding to these circumstances must be established to educate and empower women. Hence, the provision of child care services is further necessary. The direct involvement of employers can better assimilate the skills needed on the labor market. Language courses and training programs lead to an increased independence and that makes it easier for women to be integrated into the society, which makes it easier for the children to adapt to the new host country (European Parliament 2016: 29-30).

**Healthcare System:**

The risks of spreading diseases and epidemics during the journey and in reception centers are high due to the lack of clean sanitation systems and the lack of sufficient health care. Female refugees are most likely to suffer sexual abuse and gender-based violence compared to any other female population. This leads to sexually transmitted diseases, undesired pregnancies and the absence of family planning practices. Furthermore, entailed psychological traumas and the health consequences of gender-based violence are not sufficiently treated. Therefore, states are responsible for guaranteeing full access of health care assistance, reproductive health services and psychological assistance (European Parliament 2016: 37-38). The UNHCR underlines the central role the health care system plays in relation to gender-based violence. Firstly, medical examinations should be performed by trained staff of the same sex in adequate and private surroundings. Women should be provided with health care workshops, talking about preventing diseases and pregnancy. Health care appointments should be provided on a regular basis, including screenings for sexual and gender based violence. If detected, women have to be provided with psychosocial assistance and extensive follow-up care. Women should be included in all decision-making processes regarding their health and care. In order to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, women and the whole community need to be thoroughly educated and informed about sexual and gender-based violence, the legal framework and entailed consequences, accompanied by empowerment workshops. It is further necessary to inform about reproductive health and guarantee access to contraceptives. (UNHCR 2003: 59-60).

**What has been done so far?**

Several protocols, conventions, standards and guidelines have been established under international law to foster sufficient protection for female refugees and migrants. These instruments address different areas focusing on gender-equality or sexual and gender-based violence, as well as the overall protection of women or forcibly displaced women.

• **1951 Refugee Convention and UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)**

**• UN Convention on the elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979)**

**• UNHCR Policy on Refugee Women (1990)**

**• UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women (1991)**

**• UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) (1993)**

**• UN Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, Fourth World Conference on Women (1995)**

**• UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1999)**

**• UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325/2000 on Women and Peace and Security**

**• UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, (Palermo Trafficking Protocol) (2000)**

**• UNHCR Five Commitments to Refugee Women (2001)**

**• UNHCR Sexual and Gender-based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons. Guidelines for Prevention and Response (2003)**

**• UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution No. 31/2005 on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System**

**• UN General Assembly In-depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women (2006)**

**• UN Security Council Resolution No. 1820/2008 on Acts of Sexual Violence against Civilians in Armed Conflicts (2008)**

**• UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls (2008)**

**• UN General Recommendation No. 32/2014 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the Gender-related Dimensions of Refugee Status, Asylum, Nationality and Statelessness of Women**

**• UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls**

**Questions a Resolution Should Answer**

1. What measures can UN Women implement in order to guarantee a more equal and fair integration of female refugees and migrants and to tackle gender based discriminations?

2. How can sexual and gender-based violence be prevented in reception centers and in domestic households?

3. What are ways to include more female refugees and migrants into language and integration courses?

4. How can female refugees and migrants be better integrated into the labor force of the host countries?

5. In what way can the health care systems be reformed to better suit the needs of female refugees and migrants?

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