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International Humanitarian Assistance
Mr Stephen Salewicz
Director General
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Per mail :

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Berne, 15 December 2020

Swiss Commitments to the Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies 2021-2025

Dear Mr Salewicz,

Switzerland welcomes the 2021-2025 Road Map for the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based violence in Emergencies (Call to Action). We re-affirm the goal and the three objectives and affirm the core principles of the Call to Action.

The **goal** of the Call to Action is to drive change and foster accountability within the humanitarian sphere, so that every humanitarian effort, from the start, includes the policies, systems and mechanisms necessary to provide safe and comprehensive support and services to those affected by gender-based violence (GBV), to prevent GBV, and to mitigate GBV risks, especially violence against women and girls.

Objectives

1. Establish specialized GBV support, services and programs that are accessible to anyone affected by GBV and are available from the onset of an emergency.
2. Integrate and implement actions to prevent GBV and to mitigate GBV risks across all levels and sectors of humanitarian action from the earliest stages of an emergency and throughout the program cycle.
3. Mainstream gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls throughout humanitarian action.

Core Principles

- Accountability to affected populations is paramount in implementing the Call to Action. The meaningful participation and leadership of affected populations, in particular women and girls, must be ensured.

- GBV and gender inequality are inextricably linked. To end gender-based violence, systemic equality between women and men must be established.
- Women and girls are a priority focus for Call to Action because of their documented higher risk of GBV, the overarching discrimination they experience, and their lack of safe and equitable access to humanitarian assistance.
- An intersectional approach is key for effective survivor-centered programming. This requires an understanding of how aspects of a person's social and political identities might combine or intersect to heighten protection risks.
- The engagement, leadership and participation of local organizations and local leaders, particularly women and women's organizations, is critical to effective humanitarian action.
- Sustained collective action and accountability by all partners in the humanitarian system—at every level and across all sectors—are essential to achieve the goal of the Call to Action.

Switzerland will implement organizational policies on gender-based violence and gender equality in humanitarian action and on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. As a Call to Action partner, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), acting primarily through its Humanitarian Aid, is committed to ensuring implementation of the Road Map and will submit an annual public report on progress in meeting commitments. Please find hereafter our list of commitments, which can be shared publically:

Commitment 1: Policy and Capacity

- *Partner name: SDC*
- *Location of the planned work: HQ and representations*
- **Outcome 1 – Policy and capacity; Key Action Area (KKA) 1-1 Accountability**

SDC commits to continue implementing its policies and guidance on gender equality and gender-based violence and to firmly anchor PSEAH systems in the organization.

Policies and guidance related to gender and GBV were put in place during the last Road Map of the Call to Action. For the period of the Road Map 2021-2025, staff and partners will be capacitated to systematically implement gender considerations in humanitarian programming. The elements for prevention of and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment are already in place; their implementation will be systematized through 2025.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks over the life of the 2021-2025 Road Map:

- Through 2025, 80% of bilateral humanitarian programs are gender significant
- By 2025, PSEAH systems in place in Swiss representations with international cooperation mandate

Measuring progress: DAC Gender Equality Marker for all SDC funded projects; reporting by SDC PSEAH Focal Point

Commitment 2: Funding

- *Partner name: SDC*
- *Location of the planned work: HQ, representations*
- **Outcome 4; KAA: 4-1 Prioritization**

SDC will increase annual fund allocations to GBV prevention and response in humanitarian contexts

GBV is a priority protection theme for Swiss Humanitarian Aid. Between 2018 and 2020, SDC doubled funding for GBV programming. In the last year, SDC GBV funding for humanitarian contexts was just below CHF 10 million. This level will be increased or at least maintained through 2025.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks over the life of the 2021-2025 Road Map:

- Annually through 2025, CHF 10 - 12 million allocated for GBV programming in humanitarian contexts

Measuring progress: Financial tracking

- **Outcome 4; KAA 4-3 Localization**

SDC will invest in the strengthening of locally owned systems to address GBV and provide funding to national and local actors, particularly women-led organizations

Localization is high on the agenda of the SDC. Funding and capacity building of local women-led organizations and networks, as well as government structures where feasible, will be promoted by the SDC. As capacity strengthening and the building of quality services take time, SDC will favour longer contract durations in humanitarian contexts. The indicators will be reviewed and are expected to be increased after the first two years.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks

- By 2022, at least 10% of SDC/HA GBV programme funding is channeled directly to local actors (without any intermediary) and at least 50% with only one intermediary
- By 2022, 60% of GBV projects funded by the SDC/HA invest in institutional capacity building for local actors, particularly women led organizations and government agencies
- By 2022, 80% of GBV projects/programmes receiving SDC/HA funds are of a duration of 2 years or more

Measuring progress: Internal tracking system

- **Outcome 4; KAA 4-4 Advocacy**

Switzerland will advocate for sufficient, flexible, multi-year funding for GBV and gender equality work during every phase of a humanitarian response.

Switzerland has been actively involved in the Call to Action and will continue to engage and to speak up for an increase of funding for quality GBV prevention and response in global forums as well as in local contexts where the SDC/HA is engaged. A big part of the SDC/HA funding is unearmarked; efforts to strengthen gender equality and GBV programming of multilateral partners, including with secondments, will be intensified

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks:

- Through 2025,
 - active participation in Call to Action;
 - advocacy interventions vis-à-vis multilateral partners at global, regional and country level;
 - multilateral partners supported to strengthen gender equality and GBV programming.

Measuring progress: Reporting by focal points on advocacy interventions; number of secondments to support multilateral partners.

- **Outcome 4; KKA 4-5 Nexus**

SDC will provide resources for joined-up programming at the humanitarian, development, peace nexus that effectively addresses GBV prevention and response and gender equality, while ensuring that humanitarian action remains grounded in humanitarian principles.

Initially, three pilot countries will be identified for nexus programming; based on this experience, the nexus programming will be extended.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks:

- By 2022, SDC GBV nexus programming initiated in 3 pilot countries

Measuring progress: Programme reporting

Commitment 3: GBV Risk mitigation

- *Partner name:* SDC

- *Location of the planned work:* HQ and representations; global and national level

- **Outcome 6; KAA: 6-1 Institutionalization**

SDC will institutionalize GBV risk identification into its own tools and trainings

The SDC/HA will request protection risk/GBV risk identification and mitigation for all sector programs and will provide tools and trainings to its staff and deployable experts.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks:

- By 2021, SDC internal guidance available;
- 2022-2025, trainings/ briefings of staff and deployable experts conducted

Measuring progress: Guidance documents; training reports

- **Outcome 6; KAA: 6-6/7 Resources and Advocacy**

SDC will advocate for and support the integration of GBV risk mitigation actions as a standard component of humanitarian program design and implementation across all sectors

SDC has been advocating for and supported with funds and expertise the strengthening of protection policies and their implementation in partner organizations. SDC will continue to engage with partner organizations to advance the GBV risk mitigation in their programmes and will put a specific emphasis on ensuring that cash and voucher assistance (CVA) integrates GBV risk mitigation.

Timeframe for completion and benchmarks:

- Partner organizations supported to integrate GBV risk mitigation as a standard component of programming.
- Advocacy for and funding of technical support for GBV risk mitigation in CVA programming intensified

Measuring progress: Number of secondments; financial tracking; advocacy statements

Switzerland will contribute to the collective work of the initiative, including participation in working group meetings and the annual partners' meeting.

Barbara Weyermann, Gender and GBV advisor, barbara.weyermann@eda.admin.ch is designated to be our focal point.

SDC looks forward to working with our partners to ensure the success of this critical initiative.

Yours sincerely,

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation



Manuel Bessler
Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of SHA
Deputy Director General SDC