Humanitarian response in Bosnia and Herzegovina: supporting women and youth

MONTHLY OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW IN NUMBERS FEBRUARY 2022

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Preventing abuse and addressing these outcomes as early as possible are the main priorities in order to protect and support gender-based violence survivors. During February, different types of violence have been addressed by the UNFPA team, and were mostly related to physical violence in case of men, and forced / arranged marriages with cases of sexual violence in case of women. Incidences of violence occurred in the country of origin and/or during the movement. UNFPA MHPSS experts intervened and assisted in 21 crises situations due to triggers of anxiety attacks, post-traumatic reactions and frequent panic attacks, and other difficulties caused by the disturbed psychological state of GBV survivors.

In addition, in February, a Gender-based violence working group was held in Una Sana Canton to address overall protection needs of the affected population and ensure coordinated approach.

Considering specific vulnerabilities, 15 single women were supported with distinct services such as mental health support and peer support groups in order to feel empowered to share their unique experiences.
Omar’s story

The story of a 18-year-old young man shows that when one has the willpower to do something, nothing can stop him. Though he is young in age, the young man has come a long way to get to the Temporary Reception Center Miral in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This exemplary young man has many characteristics that distinguish him from his peers on the move, but the most interesting detail is that, although he stays in the Center, he regularly attends online lectures at the University of Pakistan. Omar says that he always loved to study and while his peers spent time hanging out he read books.

“I was supposed to get married after tenth grade. I even liked the girl and asked my parents to ask for permission from her family but, we were from different castes. Culture and tradition came before love.”

Omar knew that the only way to change something in his community would be to pursue an education. He says, since UNFPA opened the Center in Miral he hasn’t missed an activity. He realised he could learn a lot from those activities, stating how benefiting it is to communicate with someone who has the knowledge and will to teach other people as well.

“They motivated me to re-enroll in college and get in touch with my professor from my home country. With all of the help and support I’ve received, I began attending online lectures.”

During the day Omar listens to the lectures over his phone, continuing to study through the night. Conditions are difficult but schooling gives him motivation and hope for a better future, because he would like to improve the education system in his Pakistan since he does not agree with the current system. In the past, Omar has won awards for public speaking and newspaper article, and he was given space and time at the UNFPA Center in Miral to present the topic of “Marriage” to other migrants and refugees, improving his skills until he fulfils his dream of becoming a social worker.
UNFPA provided GBV training for Service for Foreign Affairs’ personnel engaged in TRC Lipa, aiming to educate on the basic concepts of GBV and understanding the different forms of violence which should contribute to prevention, timely identification and response.

“Thanks to the GBV training, I now fully understand the severity of trauma survivors have to live with and, more than ever, I appreciate the services available to alleviate the suffering.”

- Participant of GBV training