Humanitarian response in Bosnia and Herzegovina: supporting women and youth

MONTHLY OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW IN NUMBERS NOVEMBER 2021

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Since the start of its involvement in the mixed-migrations humanitarian response, UNFPA BiH has put vulnerable affected populations at the center of its response effort. UNFPA has commenced with service delivery to vulnerable women and girls, as well as boys and young men in Temporary Reception Center, Lipa. On this note, residents of Temporary Reception Center, Lipa will be able to access a plethora of UNFPA supported services, tailored to meet their specific gender and cultural Sexual health & reproductive health, Mental health & psycho-social services and empowerment needs.

UNFPA proudly joined efforts with women and girls to mark 16 Days of Activism for NO violence against women and girls by organizing diverse activities targeted at raising awareness on the debilitating effects violence has on individuals, families and communities.
Rabia's story

The Family is where everyone's life begins. However what happens to those whose families fall apart? Rabia, a strong willed young girl, is a vocal advocate within her community for young women to utilize their inner strengths and aim towards a better life. A chain of past life experiences had set Rabia on a path for a better life, much different to the one of her sisters’. In accordance to her country’s cultural norms, her older siblings were forced to marry men they previously had never met. Both marriages were full of sadness, pain and grief. Rabia, predicting that the same destiny awaits her, made a choice not to conform to the degrading expectations of her community.

“I never thought about the things that contribute to loving, respecting and appreciating myself. I feel like I’ve finally found a place where I’ll be able to discover my talents and interests, which I wasn’t able to do before.”

During onward movement, Rabia was separated from her family members. Left alone, the sudden feeling of helplessness, fear and isolation were the catalysts behind her will to survive. Finally, Rabia reached safe shelter where she is able to utilize her experiences to help other women and girls.

“I don’t want my stay here to be just a safe shelter from the cold and hunger. I want this to be a place where I will leave my mark.”

Today, Rabia is often the main speaker at UNFPA peer education sessions providing crucial information to peers. She states that inspiring other girls to improve themselves and to thrive, positively gives her a sense of belonging, a way to leave her mark. Although she remains separated from her biological sisters, she has made many friends along the way and acts as a big sister to many girls in the UNFPA safe spaces.
Through a series of empowerment sessions including 16 Days of Activism and Movember - Raising awareness on men’s mental health, cancer and suicide prevention, adolescents and young men participated in various educational workshops where they were able to get involved in subjects such as antenatal care, tolerance, interpersonal communication in relationships as well as life planning strategies.

“Constant pain and discomfort had a negative effect on my health and self-esteem. I withdrew socially, became isolated and fell into depression. Thanks to urological diagnostic and treatment, my life has fully changed. I no longer hide behind my pain.”

- Letter of “Greetings and respect” from man in Temporary Reception Centre, Blazuj

The UNFPA Women and Girls committee meeting is a platform where voices of women and girls are amplified and steer service delivery to meet their specific needs.

During the last Committee meeting, migrant and refugee women and girls actively participated in shaping assistance within UNFPA Centers.

DONORS

UNFPA BiH IS GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING DONORS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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