

## FIGO calls for the immediate safe passage of women and children in Ukraine

The war in Ukraine poses extreme risks to civilians – in particular to women and children. FIGO calls on the Russian Federation to provide immediate and continuous safe passage across and out of Ukraine to all civilians, in particular pregnant women, women who have recently delivered, newborns and children.

More than [2.5 million people have been displaced](#) by the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. This figure could rise to as many as 4 million. Among these are around [80,000 women expected to give birth in the next three months](#). FIGO and our OBGYNs already recognise the innate risks of childbirth to mother and infant at all times. These risks are dramatically exacerbated when planning and giving birth while under siege, in war or displaced, significantly increasing the possibility of maternal and infant death or injury.

### Health is an enduring and unassailable human right

Health is a human right, and all women deserve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. This right must hold true wherever they live – and wherever they choose or are forced to go. The enduring and unassailable recognition, promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls is critical, both globally and at country level. This is no less true during times of war.

### FIGO will support the protection of women and children

In collaboration with our OBGYN leadership, FIGO will support the efforts of our member societies, regional federations, health care colleagues, partners and humanitarian organisations to accommodate women and children fleeing the conflict; ensure there is adequate provision of access to health services and the support needed for their care; and monitor and evaluate pregnancy and childbirth outcomes among those impacted by this crisis.

FIGO recognises that the bulk of needs for health care services will be seen across Europe. We will work closely with the leadership of the European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (EBCOG) to encourage the support and fulfilment of the needs of women and children caught up in this humanitarian crisis.

In addition to this commitment, FIGO will continue to:

- join leaders around the world in calling for an immediate end to all hostilities, returning the people of Ukraine to their homes, and allowing peace to reign
- demand that all efforts be made to provide for the safety of all civilians, hospitals, schools, food, and water and sanitation facilities – including the provision that no weapons be used
- advocate for the involvement of women in decision-making processes to ensure that the responses to this humanitarian crisis respect the specific needs of women and children.

This statement should be read in conjunction with FIGO's earlier statement on the Ukraine conflict, [Conflict in Ukraine: Ensuring the Health and Rights of Women and Girls](#).

## About FIGO

FIGO is a professional membership organisation that brings together more than 130 obstetrical and gynaecological associations from all over the world. FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. Our work to achieve this vision is built on four pillars: education, research implementation, advocacy and capacity building.

FIGO leads on global programme activities, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia. We advocate on a global stage, especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and wellbeing, and non-communicable diseases (SDG3). We also work to raise the status of women and enable their active participation in achieving their reproductive and sexual rights, including through addressing female-genital mutilation (FGM) and gender-based violence (SDG5).

We also provide education and training for our Member Societies and build capacities of those in low-resource countries through strengthening leadership, translating and disseminating good practice and promoting policy dialogues.

FIGO is in official relations with the World Health Organization and a consultative status with the United Nations.

## About the language we use

Within our documents, we often use the terms 'woman', 'girl' and 'women and girls'. We recognise that not all people who require access to gynaecological and obstetric services identify as a woman or girl. All individuals, regardless of gender identity, must be provided with access to appropriate, inclusive and sensitive services and care.

We also use the term 'family'. When we do, we are referring to a recognised group (perhaps joined by blood, marriage, partnership, cohabitation or adoption) that forms an emotional connection and serves as a unit of society.

FIGO acknowledges that some of the language we use is not naturally inclusive. We are undertaking a thorough review of the words and phrases we use to describe people, health, wellbeing and rights, to demonstrate our commitment to developing and delivering inclusive policies, programmes and services.

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