

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS  
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**Objective**

The aim of the meetings was to involve service providers operators, staff of organizations that are not directly in contact with refugee women and asylum seekers, but are active at institutional and local level in combating violence to women and the reception of immigrants. 6 meetings have been carried out between May 2017 and May 2018. The purpose was to inform and disseminate elements of knowledge and strategies useful to adequately support women asylum seekers victims of sexual violence.

**Who has been involved:**

**Conferenza Territoriale Sociale e Sanitaria Metropolitana di Bologna** (Social and Health Territorial Conference Metropolitan of Bologna). The CTSS is composed by the Mayors of Bologna and of other cities in the metropolitan area, the Presidents of the District Committees and the Regional Councilors for Health Policies and Welfare and Housing Policies. The CTSS is the place of governance of social and health policies of the metropolitan area of Bologna.

**Consulta permanente per la lotta all'esclusione sociale** (Permanent Board for the fight against social exclusion) is a place of exchange between the municipal administration of Bologna and the urban realities that in different ways operate in the ground of the social exclusion. The Consulta is formed by voluntary organizations, non-profit associations, social cooperatives. More than 100 organizations are members of the Consulta. The Chiefs of the 6 Metropolitan Districts of the Area of Bologna and the Municipal Councilors are invited, without the right of vote. The "Consulta" meets at least three times per year and different working groups are set annually on specific issues (at the moment: Actions to combat extreme urban poverty, Prison, Home and new reception models, Interventions on urban cohabitation, Work school and university training, gender differences).

**Zonarelli Intercultural Center**, set up in the mid-90s, in July 2007 assumed a city and metropolitan role directly managed by the Municipality of Bologna. The center gathers many associations and groups of people and families, where initiatives are carried out to promote knowledge and dialogue. In Bologna it has become a historic meeting place between native Italians and immigrants. Its action is aimed at supporting, promoting and multiplying opportunities for meeting, mutual knowledge, exchange and intercultural dialogue.

**Municipalities of Argelato, Bologna and Granarolo**, local authorities.



Addressing Sexual Violence Against Refugee Women

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## Participants

In total, 81 people participated to the meetings: members of associations, volunteers, political officers, politicians, executives, managers and personnel of:

- the CTSS Metropolitana di Bologna as officials, executives and staff of the Municipalities, equal opportunities managers of the Metropolitan City of Bologna, Unione terre d'acqua; Ufficio di piano Pianura ovest; Unione dei comuni dell'appennino bolognese; distretto pianura ovest AUSL of Bologna; Municipality of Bologna.
- the Zonarelli Intercultural Center, women of migrant female associations, managers of the Center, representatives of the Anti-Discrimination Network of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.
- the Permanent Council for the fight against social exclusion, Confcooperative Bologna, Don Paolo Serra Zanetti Association, Libera contro le mafia, Auser, Xenia association, Acli Bologna, Antoniano Onlus, CGIL Bologna, Street Lawyer, Libertà was to remain, Coop. Soc. Dai Crocicchi, Association Documentation Center Handicap, Legacoop Bologna, Ancescao Avoc, Forma-Azione, Voluntary Association Andromeda.
- the Municipalities of Argelato, Bologna and Granarolo executives, political exponents, Italian teachers L2, staff of the Municipal Police, social workers, members of associations and the Third Sector organizations.

## Calendar of the meetings:

### "What tools are needed to deal with SGBV and the taking charge of refugee women and asylum seekers"

24 May 2017 - Conferenza Territoriale Sociale e Sanitaria (CTSS) Metropolitana of Bologna, Via San Felice 25, Bologna.

6 February 2018 - Consulta permanente per la lotta all'esclusione sociale, Sala del Dentone, Palazzo D'Accursio - Bologna.

7 March 2018 - Centro Interculturale Zonarelli, Via Giovanni Antonio Sacco 14, Bologna.

13 March 2018 - Associations and local services in the city of Granarolo, Public Library, Via San Donato 74, Granarolo (Bologna)

14 March 2018 - Personnel of the City of Bologna, Sala degli orologi, Palazzo D'Accursio, p.zza Maggiore 7

29 May 2018 – Associations in the city of Funo ed Argelato  
Sala della Biblioteca, Via Don Pasti 80, Funo

## Methodology

For the meetings we have adopted methodologies focused on active participation, such as focus groups, brainstorming and workshops with the aim of involving participants in the discussion, facilitating the exchange of experiences and gathering different points of view. The focus group methodology was particularly useful to find out the specific needs of the different professionals who are in contact with women seeking asylum victims of violence.



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Groups were formed by 10-20 people, had an average duration of about 2 hours per session, a moderator led the group, starting from some introductory solicitations provided by her. The discussion has been slightly structured to encourage the free flow of ideas.

### **Organization of meetings**

The meeting was structured in:

- a first introductory part that provided participants with general background information on the issues of violence and migration,
- a second part, conducted with the focus groups methodology, aimed at bringing out, collecting and comparing practices and experiences regarding the various aspects of gender-based violence against women and the reception of migrants.

### **Coordinator and facilitators:**

- Loretta Michelini - President of the MondoDonna Association
- Giovanna Casciola – Coordinator of the GBV Area of the MondoDonna Association
- Sara Macchioni-Coordinator of the RAS people Reception Area of the MondoDonna Association

### **Results of the discussion:**

The meetings revealed issues and indications to be explored in order to increase awareness and knowledge of the various territorial actors who come into contact with women who seek asylum victims of violence. In particular, central issues were addressed such as:

#### **Team work:**

- Promote collaborative work between different services that support women and asylum seekers for their own competence,
- Map of the existing services in the metropolitan area of Bologna to find out and be able to respond to new needs of the women
- Provide women with safe environments
- Working in multidisciplinary teams, with the key role of the anthropologists

#### **Networks**

- Importance of a social network as a key point in supporting women towards social inclusion,
- Addressing communication barriers

#### **Socialization**

- Promote moments of meeting and socialization in the territories.
- Organizing social and cultural events to foster the knowledge of the new comers

#### **Health and wellness**

- Plan information activities on psycho-physical wellbeing and HIV prevention and sexually transmitted diseases.

#### **Job**

- Informing on the issues of labor rights to combat the labor exploitation of migrant women and / or asylum seekers,
- set up work placement paths for women seeking asylum victims who are victims of violence,



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### **Training**

- Promote training activities and actions, in the metropolitan area of Bologna, that address the issues of violence against women related to forced migration,
  - Plan ad hoc training for mediators / interpreters on issues of violence against women,
  - Organizing opportunities for meetings and exchanges, also with a view to continuous training.

### **Actions to be undertaken:**

- Support and promote actions, in the different territories, that address the issues of violence against women related to forced migration;
- Promote trainings on the issues of violence for cultural mediators, often not adequately trained although they play a big role in women's empowerment paths;
- Strengthen the professionalism of those who work closely with women seeking asylum victims of violence through targeted training and develop the ability to build relationships of trust with these women, "betrayed" by their closest figures (family, relatives, friends) .
- Involving further public services in awareness raising on GBV not yet reached;
  - Develop network actions able to better support women seeking asylum.
  - Plan training on the issue of violence and migration

### **Comments**

We evaluate the community involvement actions very positively starting from quantitative and qualitative indicators such as:

- large participation,
- active participation in the discussions,
- heterogeneity of participants: representative of women's associations, the Third Sector, voluntary service, political / institutional representatives, managers and service operators,
- availability to network,
- availability to commit in activities and / or training aimed at addressing the issue of violence connected to that of forced migration.



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