

At an Inter-agency Symposium on Reproductive Health in Refugee Situations held in Geneva, Switzerland in June 1995, more than 50 governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and UN agencies committed themselves to strengthening reproductive health (RH) services to refugees. Following the symposium, an *Inter-agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Refugee Situations* was produced and distributed for field-testing around the world.

This 1999 revision of the Field Manual is the result of two years of field use and comprehensive field-testing conducted under the auspices of the Inter-agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Refugee Situations. More than 100 experienced staff from 50 agencies working in refugee situations in 17 countries applied the Field Manual in their programmes and provided comments and suggestions for improving the content of the publication.

The Field Manual supports the delivery of quality RH services. Technical standards included in the Field Manual are those set by the World Health Organization. In several important areas, the Field Manual provides programmatic direction with frequent reference to additional resource materials that should be obtained and used to ensure comprehensive and reliable RH services for refugees.

Field managers of health services in refugee situations are the primary audience for the Field Manual. Community-services officers, protection officers and others working to meet the needs of refugee women, young people and men should also benefit from the guidance offered in the Field Manual.

The purposes of the Field Manual are:

- to serve as a tool to facilitate discussion and decision-making in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of RH interventions;
- to guide field staff in introducing and/or strengthening RH interventions in refugee situations, based on refugee needs and demands and with full respect for their beliefs and values; and
- to advocate for a multi-sectoral approach to meeting the RH needs of refugees and to foster coordination among all partners.

Chapter One lays the foundation for the subsequent technical chapters on reproductive health and provides the guiding principles for undertaking all RH care. It should be read carefully.

The components of reproductive health described in the Field Manual are:

- Minimum Initial Service Package
- Safe Motherhood
- Sexual Violence
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases, including HIV/AIDS
- Family Planning
- Other Reproductive Health Concerns
- Reproductive Health of Young People