

PRACTICAL GUIDE

POSTURE & CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Welcoming, Protecting and Taking Action in Situations of Gender-Based Violence or Vulnerability in Festive Settings

Why Plan for Crisis Management in Advance?

In festive settings, situations involving gender-based violence, emotional distress, anxiety attacks, or discomfort can arise quickly, in an environment shaped by noise, crowds, fatigue, and heightened emotions.

In these moments, improvisation can put both the people involved and the teams at risk. For Souk Rassek, thinking through posture and crisis management in advance makes it possible to respond with calm, consistency, and humanity, placing safety, care, and coordination at the heart of the intervention.



Working in pairs, these Souk Rassek volunteers, Khadija and Youssef, patrol the festival with a smile while enjoying the music
L'BOULEVARD Festival 2024!

Outreach: Active Presence, Prevention & Mediation

Outreach is a central component of Souk Rassek. It is a mediation and outreach patrol deployed directly across the festival grounds. Teams move through the different areas of the event to raise awareness of the initiative, foster a general sense of safety, identify situations at risk or early warning signs, and respond quickly in cases of gender-based violence, anxiety attacks, or vulnerability.

Outreach teams make it possible to reach people where they are, rather than waiting for them to come to the stand. Their presence creates a recognizable, reassuring, and non-intrusive human presence at the heart of the celebration.

Outreach teams provide first-level support and active listening, refer people to the listening unit or appropriate support services, and step in as mediators when conditions allow. They are often the first point of contact in a crisis situation.

Coordination with Security: A Clear and Shared Framework

Souk Rassek works in close coordination with the festival's security team. This coordination is based on clear zoning of the site, defined communication channels, and shared procedures.

The security team briefing is a key step. It introduces the Souk Rassek initiative, explains the role of the outreach teams and the listening unit, clarifies everyone's responsibilities in situations involving gender-based violence or vulnerability, and emphasizes the importance of a calm, respectful, and non-violent approach.

Strong coordination from the outset helps prevent abrupt interventions, misunderstandings, and reactions that could distress or further escalate the situation.

Supporting a Person Experiencing Gender-Based Violence

When a person experiencing gender-based violence is identified or comes forward, the priority is to ensure their safety. This may involve moving them away from the area of danger or from the person involved, bringing them to a calm and safe space when possible, and ensuring that someone remains present with them.

The person should be welcomed with care, without judgment or questioning the validity of their experience. Active listening is the central approach. The goal is not to obtain a detailed account or ask intrusive questions, but to help the person calm down, regain a sense of control, and feel safe.

Team members should speak calmly, explain each step, and respect the person's pace and silences.

When possible, the psychologist present as part of the initiative takes over to provide more in-depth support, connect the person with appropriate resources, and determine, together with them, any possible next steps. The person is never left alone or handled by a single team member acting in isolation.

Supporting a Person Experiencing an Anxiety Attack or in a Vulnerable State

Souk Rassek also supports people experiencing anxiety attacks, panic, or distress. These situations require a specific approach.

The first step is to remove the person from excessive stimulation and offer them a calm space. The stand or listening area can become a “cool-down” space, where they can sit, drink some water, breathe, and regain their bearings. The approach should be gentle, slow, and non-directive.

Care and active listening are key tools for ensuring that the person does not feel overwhelmed or judged.

It is essential to avoid commands, sudden gestures, or judgmental or moralizing language. Explaining what is happening, speaking softly, allowing the person to breathe at their own pace, and offering simple points of reference can often help de-escalate the situation.

When necessary, the person is referred to a trained professional for further support.

Mediation and Managing the Situation with the Perpetrator, When Possible

In certain situations, and only when safety conditions and the consent of the person concerned allow it, mediation with the person responsible for the gender-based violence may be considered.

This type of mediation is neither automatic nor systematic. It depends on the severity of the incident, the context, and the willingness of both parties to engage in a discussion.

When appropriate, its purpose is to establish a clear framework, identify the unacceptable behavior, remind the person of the festival's rules, and help prevent further incidents.

This approach is part of harm-reduction and accountability practices used in many prevention initiatives within nightlife and festival settings. It never replaces legal procedures when these are necessary.

Souk Rassek Emergency Protocol

Key Steps for a Coordinated and Compassionate Response

Step 1: Identify and Ensure Safety

Identify the situation, move the person away from the area of danger or excessive stimulation, ensure continuous human presence, and never leave the person alone.

Step 2: Welcome and De-escalate

Adopt a calm, non-judgmental approach. Introduce yourself, explain your role, and use active listening to reduce stress and help the person come out of a state of shock or dissociation.

Step 3: Assess the Situation

Determine whether the situation involves gender-based violence, an anxiety attack, physical distress, or simply a need to slow down, without conducting an investigation or asking for unnecessary details.

Step 4: Refer to the Appropriate Support

Depending on the person's needs, refer them to the listening unit, a psychologist, the medical team, or security. Explain each step and respect the person's consent.

Step 5: Mediate When Appropriate and Safe

When conditions allow, intervene with the person involved in the incident to establish a clear framework and help prevent further incidents, without putting the person affected at risk.

Step 6: Provide Ongoing Support

Make sure the person feels sufficiently safe, offer a cool-down space if needed, and provide them with relevant resources.

Step 7: Debrief and Support the Team

Organize a debriefing after the situation, adjust practices if necessary, and pay attention to the well-being of the teams involved.

In Conclusion

In festive settings, crisis management relies on a distinct set of professional skills. Care, active listening, coordination, and clear protocols make it possible to respond appropriately to situations involving gender-based violence, vulnerability, or anxiety attacks, while preserving the dignity, safety, and well-being of everyone involved. Souk Rassek embraces this collective approach to care, contributing to cultural events that are safer, more human, and more responsible.