



Have you read section A ?

# GENDER AND LIVELIHOODS IN EMERGENCIES

In humanitarian crises, important windows of opportunity exist to support the early recovery of affected populations, creating the basis for self-sufficiency and future development interventions. By planning early recovery interventions as soon as possible during an emergency, you can avert the risk of relief assistance becoming an alternative to development and the social fabric of society can be more easily preserved and reconstituted. Providing early recovery support is also an important opportunity to promote gender equality and to build back better, in a way that capitalizes on the capacities of all sectors of society and reshapes social roles towards greater gender equality. Livelihoods support is one example of early recovery intervention in a humanitarian situations.

**Livelihood strategies** aim at developing self-reliance. Livelihood interventions should be designed and implemented to strengthen women's and men's productive capacity early on, when it matters most, and to promote longer-term self-sufficiency.

**A livelihood** refers to the capabilities, assets and strategies that people use to make a living; that is, to achieve food and income security through a variety of economic activities. Livelihood programmes cover a range of issues, including non-formal education, vocational training and skills training programmes, income generation activities and food-for-work programmes, apprenticeship placement projects, micro-credit schemes, agriculture programmes, business start-up programmes, seeds and tools projects, animal disbursement projects and self-employment and job placement programmes.

## HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS

The term *livelihoods* is defined as *capabilities, assets and strategies that people use to make a living*. The human rights standards of particular relevance to ensuring adequate livelihoods are the right to an adequate standard of living, including security in the event of unemployment or other lack of livelihood (UDHR and ICESCR); the right to work, including the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain her or his living by work which is freely chosen or accepted, and the right to just and favourable conditions of work, including safe working conditions and fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value and women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men (UDHR, ICESCR, CEDAW).

Apart from these human rights standards, the following should be borne in mind as principles when promoting livelihoods in humanitarian situations:

- Strategies to enable people to secure their livelihoods should be formulated through a participatory process involving the persons concerned.
- Information on means of gaining access to employment should be accessible to all.
- Women should be guaranteed equal right to training and education to increase their technical proficiency and the right to access credit and loans.
- Income generation activities should be culturally appropriate and consistent with the dignity of the individual.
- A person must not be forced to work or provide other services under the threat of any penalty.
- Safeguards should be in place to ensure that girls and boys are not required to perform any work that is likely to be hazardous or harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Here are some issues you should consider when designing and implementing gender-responsive livelihoods programmes in emergencies:

- Women and men have **different resources available** to them in crisis situations, and will turn to different strategies for survival. It is crucial that you understand and factor in these differences when livelihood strategies are supported. In general, individuals with greater access to resources and better mobility will have a wider variety of options. Often, women will have different — but perhaps less — access to livelihoods assets than men and may be forced to adopt survival strategies for which they are ill-equipped or untrained. In protracted crisis situations, women turning to prostitution or being subjected to sexual abuse in exchange for means of livelihoods offer a tragic example of this situation.
- Crises usually **increase the care burdens of women**. At the same time, discrimination based on gender can decrease their access to productive resources as credit, relief commodities, seeds, tools and productive land become ever scarcer. In addition, the loss of family members, and spouses in particular, might determine a situation of isolation and discrimination for women and women-headed households.

**For example** the majority of the missing or dead in Banda Aceh after the Tsunami were women. In the structures set up for survivors, men outnumbered women, and women's burden of care therefore increased hugely after the crisis.

- A gender-sensitive approach to livelihood programmes entails an understanding of the **different skill sets, needs, vulnerabilities and responsibilities** of affected women and men and adolescent girls and boys. At the same time, a gender-sensitive approach also creates spaces to challenge gender inequality in access to and control of resources. Often, vocational training programmes for women build on their existing traditional skills without considering the potential for over-competition and market saturation within communities. Programmes that balance traditional employment promotion for women with building women's skills in non-traditional sectors that are in high demand because of post-crisis reconstruction needs (such as carpentry and plumbing) can offer more viable alternatives.
- Specific consideration should be given to the **gender division of labour**, responsibilities and coping strategies within the household. When designing income generation activities targeted to women, special at-

ention should be paid to the overwhelming family and household responsibilities they already shoulder. Labour- and energy-saving technologies can prove very effective for improving women's participation in training and livelihoods initiatives. Providing some form of community child care associated with vocational training opportunities is also a useful strategy in this regard.

**For example** according to a World Bank study in Sierra Leone, immediate post-conflict efforts to rehabilitate the agricultural sector were hindered by the use of a household approach, based on the needs expressed by household heads — most often men. Because women and men farm different types of crops, and therefore need different tools and seeds, CARE offered seeds to all adults, instead of via heads of households. This approach allowed women to obtain seeds for groundnuts, a women's crop in Sierra Leone, with additional empowerment potential, as it is typically exchanged in petty trading.

Livelihoods programmes in emergency situations provide **important opportunities to promote higher standards of gender equality** in economic life, by affirming women's role as economic agents and by promoting equal access to productive resources and to decision-making mechanisms.

## WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMES FOR LIVELIHOODS IN EMERGENCIES?

### What are the population demographics?

- Total number of households/family members — disaggregated by sex and age.
- Number of single female- and male-headed households and number of households headed by children (girls and boys).
- Number of unaccompanied children, elderly, disabled, pregnant and lactating women.

### What type of access and control of livelihood assets do women and men have and how have they been affected by the emergency?

- What are the main assets (land, seed, livestock, equipment, access to markets) needed for a sustainable livelihood and how have they been affected by the emergency? What is the different impact on women and men based on their access to and control of these resources?

- What type of agriculture, farming, fishing, trade and food supply existed before the emergency? What role did women and men play in these sectors?
- What are the practices regarding agricultural land ownership and distribution? In particular, what are the practices regarding women's property and inheritance rights?
- What types of skills exist among women? Among men? What are their respective skills training needs?

**What are the normal cultural and social roles and practices of women and men that existed before the onset of the emergency?**

- What are the roles played by women, girls, boys and men in farming and other productive activities?
- Who has decision-making power with regard to productive assets and household expenditures?
- Who is responsible for farming, gathering, selling at the market, keeping stocks, cooking?
- Which kinds of activities, tasks and work are forbidden to women and/or men by local customs?
- How are resources allocated within households? Who has the most decision-making power?
- Are there practices that may discriminate against women, female-headed households, the elderly and the disabled?

**How have workloads, responsibilities and gender roles changed as a result of the emergency?**

- How much time do women, girls, boys and men devote to non-monetized (unpaid) work (fetching water, cooking, collecting firewood, child care, washing clothes)?
- Do women or men still practise their traditional forms of income generation? If not, what has been the impact on women and men?
- Do women or men shoulder more responsibility for their households/families post-displacement than they did previously?
- Have women and/or men taken on community and reconstruction work after the crisis? Which kinds of tasks have been assigned to women and to men?
- How do security concerns hinder the abilities of women, girls, boys and men to access productive resources?

## ACTIONS TO ENSURE GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING IN LIVELIHOODS

**Equal participation of women, girls, boys and men in livelihoods programming**

- Involve women and men in planning and implementing all livelihood programmes.
- If necessary convene meetings separately for women and men to capture their views and identify representatives for mixed group meetings.
- Consult with women to identify potential obstacles to their participation (e.g. if there is a need for child care during meetings, time and place of meetings, time and mobility constraints, how socio-cultural factors, as well as their roles and responsibilities, might affect their participation, etc.).
- Include women's productive assets as well as men's in asset replacement and protection programmes, whether cash or in-kind.
- Restore or provide financial services to meet the different needs of women and men, bearing in mind illiteracy issues.
- Include marginalized populations in programme activities (e.g. the disabled, elderly persons, young married girls and victims of gender-based violence). For example, a useful strategy is to establish mutual referral systems among agencies to direct gender-based violence survivors to the right place for livelihood assistance.
- Ensure the *meaningful* participation of women and girls rather than mere token representation. For example, supporting women's farming collectives or carrying out quick orientation programmes for women prior to skills training can be a useful strategy.
- Ensure that both women's and men's security concerns are addressed to enhance participation in decision-making, distribution, training and planning processes. For example, providing safe means of transportation, safe spaces for children, avoiding the promotion of livelihood activities that expose women to risks (for example fetching firewood unaccompanied) or social discredit.

**Equal access to and benefits from livelihoods programmes for women, girls, boys and men**

- Design programmes based on an assessment of women's and men's knowledge, skills and livelihood needs.
- Provide equal access for women and girls, boys and men to vocational training, income generation and microfinance programmes. Set specific gender targets for livelihood support services. Labour-saving techniques and low-cost technologies are often useful to enhance women's access to income generation initiatives.

**For example** in Sri Lanka, UNDP required all institutions providing credit for livelihood recovery to disburse at least 40% to women applicants; all business training services to enrol at least 50% women; and rural cooperatives to have at least 50% women participants.

- Ensure that vocational training programmes do not perpetuate gender-based labour discrimination and provide equal opportunities, including non-traditional livelihood options, for adolescent girls and boys and women and men.

**For example**, women in traditional communities in Gujarat were trained as engineers and masons after the earthquake, and were employed as part of government-sponsored rebuilding programmes.

- Assess the need for women's and girls' leadership and empowerment training programmes to ensure their meaningful participation.
- Assess the non-formal education needs of women, girls, boys and men and consider implementing non-formal education programmes (literacy, numeracy) for those who may be illiterate or may not have had opportunities to complete their schooling.

**For example** in DRC, the UNDP community recovery programme has systematically adopted gender analysis to ensure equal representation of women and men as beneficiaries. As a result, young women traumatized by their experience in armed groups learned basic literacy skills in a country where women's illiteracy is widespread.

- Assess the appropriateness of food-for-work, food-for-training and cash-for-work programmes, and ensure the equal participation of women.
- Provide access to child care for women undergoing training, engaged in response roles or in community mobilization.

- When planning income generation activities for women, assess skills and life experience utilized in non-monetized activities (child rearing, household maintenance, sustaining their families/households) and how these can be built upon for livelihood programmes.
- Involve female extension officers and/or female group leaders in project activities.
- Support women's involvement in both subsistence and cash crop sectors.
- Assess the impact of different technologies and choose on the basis of their impact on women's workload inside and outside the home.
- Assess the effect of project activities on women's and men's traditional productive or trading activities.
- Identify and use means of communication accessible to women and men.
- Ensure gender balance in training teams, and be sensitive to local cultural practices.
- Raise awareness on property and land rights — and the right of women to them.
- In providing skills training, consult with women at the outset to ensure that cultural practices are not being ignored. This might result in setting up different programmes for women and men, separate training sessions or different methods of work.

**For example** FAO and UNFPA provided a Training of Trainers course on gender-sensitive assessments and programming to national experts at grassroots level in post-Tsunami Indonesia.

- Raise awareness and build capacities of local implementing partners on gender sensitivity.

**Understand cultural differences and meet the needs of vulnerable populations**

- Conduct livelihoods assessments based on needs, capacities and changes in roles between women and men, age groups and particularly vulnerable groups.
- Identify and respect cultural needs of the population, for example respecting traditional clothing requirements for women or men, and acknowledging different levels of freedom in movement.
- Assess the impact of the project on existing gender relations.
- Together with women, determine acceptable ways of overcoming barriers (e.g. if movement is restricted, escorts can be provided).

- Provide equal access to livelihood programmes for ethnic and religious minorities and consider approaches that build collaboration between minority and majority populations.

**For example** women’s cooperatives supported by various international organizations in post-1994 Rwanda were composed of members of different ethnic groups, thereby providing a forum for reconciliation at the community level.

## CHECKLIST TO ASSESS GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING IN THE LIVELIHOODS SECTOR

The checklist below is derived from the action section in this chapter and provides a useful tool to remind sector actors of key issues to ensure gender equality programming. In addition, the checklist, together with the sample indicators in the Basics Chapter, serves as a basis for project staff to develop context-specific indicators to measure progress in the incorporation of gender issues into humanitarian action.

LIVELIHOODS – GENDER CHECKLIST
<b>Analysis of gender differences</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is gathered from women, girls, boys and men about:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different skill sets, needs, vulnerabilities and responsibilities of affected women and men and adolescent girls and boys, including women-headed and child-headed households;</li> <li>• gender division of labour, responsibilities and coping strategies within the household;</li> <li>• inequalities in access to and control of resources;</li> <li>• obstacles women, girls, boys and men could be expected to face in accessing or devoting time to income generation activities (e.g. child care or other household responsibilities).</li> </ul> </li> <li>The gender analysis is reflected in planning documents and situation reports.</li> </ol>
<b>Design</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The livelihood programmes that are developed do not discriminate against women or men — for example construction projects traditionally targeted only to men should be reviewed to ensure access to both women and men.</li> <li>Women, girls, boys and men benefit equally from livelihood alternatives (e.g. receive equal compensation for equal labour).</li> </ol>
<b>Access</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and adolescent girls have equal access to livelihood programmes and livelihood support services as do men and adolescent boys.</li> <li>Women’s, girls’, boys’ and men’s access to livelihood programmes is routinely monitored through spot checks, discussions with communities, etc.</li> <li>Obstacles to equal access are promptly addressed.</li> </ol>
<b>Participation</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and men are participating in consultative meetings/discussions in equal numbers and with regular frequency.</li> <li>Child care or family care provisions are in place to allow women and girls access to programmes, trainings and meetings.</li> </ol>
<b>Training/Capacity building</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational training and non-formal education programmes target the specific needs of adolescent girls and boys and provide them with practical skills that they can use, including non-traditional skills.</li> <li>Employment opportunities are equally open and accessible to both women and men.</li> </ol>

<b>Actions to address GBV</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Programmes are monitored for possible negative effects of changes in power relations (e.g. rise in domestic violence as a reaction to women's empowerment).</li> <li>2. Workplaces are monitored and instances of discrimination or GBV are addressed.</li> </ol>
<b>Targeted actions based on gender analysis</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Livelihood programmes are tailored to the unique needs of the various segments of the affected community (e.g. female heads of households, adolescent girls and boys, displaced women and men, elderly persons, survivors of GBV, etc.).</li> </ol>
<b>Monitoring and evaluation based on sex- and age-disaggregated data</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sex- and age-disaggregated data on programme coverage and impact are collected, analysed and routinely reported on.</li> <li>2. Livelihood programmes are monitored for improvements in self-reliance as well as beneficiary satisfaction for both women and men.</li> <li>3. Plans are developed and implemented to address any gaps or inequalities.</li> </ol>
<b>Coordinate actions with all partners</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actors in your sector liaise with actors in other sectors to coordinate on gender issues, including participating in regular meetings of the gender network.</li> <li>2. The sector/cluster has a gender action plan, has developed and routinely measures project-specific indicators based on the checklist provided in the IASC Gender Handbook.</li> </ol>

## RESOURCES

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