



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



UNHCR GENDER EQUALITY TOOLKIT

February 2020



The UNHCR Gender Equality Toolkit has been developed by the Field Protection Service/Division of International Protection. We acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to and provided feedback on the tools, including units and sections from the Division of International Protection, the Division of Program Support and Management, and the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply. We would specifically like to acknowledge the contribution and work of consultant Mariangela Bizzarri in the development of this toolkit. In addition, we acknowledge the work and contribution of consultant Paola Foschiatto for the initial draft of the toolkit. From UNHCR, Rebecca Eapen and Hanan Tabbara developed, consolidated, and oversaw the completion of the toolkit, with support from Christine Friis Laustsen. Editorial support was provided by Plain Sense and Presto.

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Cover photo: Thousands of new Rohingya refugee arrivals cross the border near Anzuman Para village, Palong Khali, Bangladesh. © UNHCR/Roger Arnold

INTRODUCTION

For the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), gender equality is an organizational imperative. The agency has promoted gender equality among its staff and persons of concern for over four decades.¹ Initially prompted by the proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976–1985), UNHCR’s approach to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has changed over time.²

Ongoing efforts to integrate gender equality more systematically across the agency and within operations are guided by several policy documents. Foremost among these is the 2018 [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#), which builds on the 2011 Age, Gender and Diversity Policy and the [2001 Commitments to Refugee Women](#), and reinforces [UNHCR’s Strategic Directions 2017–2021](#). All are guided by international commitments and conventions on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

In line with these policies and directives, UNHCR recognizes that an age, gender and diversity approach must be applied across the organization, and key responsibilities for implementing, monitoring, reporting and oversight must be specified, particularly at the management level. In this light, the **UNHCR Gender Equality Toolkit** is designed to support a more systematic application and ownership of gender equality priorities throughout UNHCR’s work.

Building on operational demand for guidance on gender equality highlighted in the [2016 UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations](#), the Field Protection Service/Division of International Protection, in collaboration with divisions across the agency, has developed this toolkit. The toolkit draws on input from technical colleagues and a wide range of UNHCR documents as well as resources developed by United Nations agencies, academic institutions and civil society actors.

The **UNHCR Gender Equality Toolkit** is designed to provide UNHCR personnel – staff, affiliate workforce and consultants – with practical guidance and user-friendly tools, tips, information and resources to support the achievement of gender equality. It is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it offers minimum actions to incorporate gender considerations in specific areas and processes, and provides additional resources highlighting promising practices from the field to promote cross-operational and regional learning. These are relevant to all personnel, regardless of their function or the operational context.

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📍 Sierra Leone / Returnees / Community Empowerment Projects funded by UNHCR and its implementing partners / Women's Association for Gender Balance Violence meeting to sensitize population in the area. Dia, Kailahun District. / UNHCR / E. Compte Verdaguer / December 2005

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UNHCR’S MANDATE ON GENDER EQUALITY

As set out in its statute, UNHCR’s mandate is to provide international protection and assistance on a non-political and humanitarian basis to refugees and other persons of concern (PoC) to UNHCR and seek permanent solutions for them.³ In addition, UNHCR **promotes gender equality and seeks to eliminate violence against women and girls of concern as an integral part of its protection mandate.**⁴

UNHCR’s efforts to promote gender equality are guided by two key documents: its updated policy on [Age, Gender and Diversity \(AGD\)](#) (2018), and the Commitments to Women and Girls included in the policy. For UNHCR, gender equality refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities and opportunities of all persons of concern and means that the interests, needs and priorities of all are respected, regardless of their gender.

UNHCR acknowledges that gender inequalities, which are compounded in contexts of displacement, disproportionately disadvantage women and girls, but that men and boys are also impacted by entrenched gender-based discrimination. This recognition forms the basis for UNHCR’s adoption of five institutional commitments to refugee women, and later the AGD policy’s five core actions on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

UNHCR's Commitments to Women and Girls affirm the entitlement of women and girls to:

- 1 Participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, as well as PoC committees.
- 2 Be provided with individual registration and documentation, directly or through support provided by UNHCR.
- 3 Have equal access to and control over provision and management of food, core-relief items and cash-based interventions.
- 4 Have equal access to economic opportunities, decent work and good quality education and health services.
- 5 Have access to comprehensive Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) prevention and response services.

UNHCR's 2018 policy on [Age, Gender and Diversity](#) reinforces its longstanding commitment to systematically apply an AGD approach in all UNHCR operations. UNHCR applies the principle that all PoC should enjoy their rights on an equal footing and that they should be able to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities.⁵ As such, **UNHCR's promotion of gender equality is inseparably linked to the promotion of human rights. Gender inequality is an important factor to violations of PoC rights.**

UN FRAMEWORK ON GENDER EQUALITY

UNHCR's efforts to promote gender equality and empower women and girls align with the UN's broader framework for integrating gender to improve the protection and promotion of women's and girls' rights in development and humanitarian settings.⁶ Several recent strategic policy documents have reaffirmed the UN's commitment to gender equality and strengthened its performance and accountability in this area.⁷ They include the [United Nations System-Wide Action Plan \(SWAP\) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#) (2012) and its update (UN-SWAP 2.0, 2018), and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(2016\)](#). The World Humanitarian Summit's Core Commitments (2016) and Grand Bargain (2016), and the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) (2016), including its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (Annex 1, 2016), are other relevant frameworks of reference.

The **UN-SWAP** (2012-2017) was the first gender equality accountability framework for all UN entities, including UNHCR. It consisted of 15 agreed performance indicators (PIs) that measured performance and accountability on gender equality and women's empowerment in six broad functional areas: accountability; results-based management; oversight; human and financial resources; capacity; coherence; knowledge and information management.

The revised **UN-SWAP 2.0** incorporates all the lessons learned from the first five years of implementation, strengthens requirements and examines participating entities' contributions to gender results in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). UN-SWAP 2.0 retains the majority of indicators but adds or revises performance indicators on strategic planning, programming and leadership (see Figure 1). For example, to satisfy UN SWAP performance indicator 2 (on reporting gender related results), operations are required to collect sex-disaggregated data more systematically and consistently, enabling such data to be used to inform UNHCR's reporting and strategic planning. There are 17 performance indicators in UN-SWAP 2.0.

In 2018, 66 UN entities or 93% of United Nations entities reported against the UN-SWAP 2.0 framework. The results of the first year of UN-SWAP 2.0 reporting establishes the baseline against which performance for the next four years will be measured. A summary of UNHCR's 2018 UN-SWAP 2.0 reporting is available [here](#).

The [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) is a milestone in global solidarity and refugee protection at a time of unprecedented displacement.⁸

Member States, in addition to affirming that they will promote gender equality, explicitly undertook to:

- ➔ Promote the “full, equal and meaningful participation” of refugee women and girls.⁹
- ➔ “Take into consideration the different needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of women, girls, boys and men.”¹⁰
- ➔ Encourage the “protection and empowerment of women,” including by combating SGBV.¹¹
- ➔ Ensure the delivery of accessible and gender-responsive services.¹²

The Declaration lays out a vision for a more predictable and more comprehensive response to crises, known as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)¹³ and also called upon UNHCR to propose a ‘global compact on refugees’ in its annual report to the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, to build upon the CRRF.

On 17 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly affirmed the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) after two years of extensive consultations led by UNHCR with Member States, international organizations, refugees, civil society, the private sector, and experts. The Global Compact on Refugees is a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, recognizing that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation. It provides a blueprint for governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives. It constitutes a unique opportunity to transform the way the world responds to refugee situations, benefiting both refugees and the communities that host them.

Its four key objectives are to:

- ➔ Ease the pressures on host countries;
- ➔ Enhance refugee self-reliance;
- ➔ Expand access to third-country solutions;
- ➔ Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

The GCR emphasizes the need for a strong focus on age, gender and diversity considerations, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as well as ending all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

Figure 1: UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance Indicators

A. Gender-related SDG results

- Commitment to gender-related SDG result
- Reporting on gender-related results
- Programmatic results on gender equality and the empowerment of women
- Evaluation
- Audit

B. Institutional strengthening to support achievement of results

- Policy
- Leadership
- Gender-responsive performance management
- Financial resource tracking
- Financial resource allocation
- Gender architecture
- Equal representation of women
- Organizational culture
- Capacity assessment
- Capacity development
- Knowledge and Communication
- Coherence

GENDER MAINSTREAMING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WITHIN UNHCR

While all UNHCR colleagues are responsible for integrating gender equality across the organization and all functions, certain staff have specific responsibilities under the AGD policy.

Representatives and Heads of Offices are responsible for implementing the policy and reporting on the results achieved. They do this through the annual mandatory AGD report and by monitoring indicators in UNHCR's results-based management framework. In addition, they are expected to consistently emphasize the need to adopt an AGD approach to advance gender equality, in both their communications with personnel and their advocacy with partners.

The **Division of International Protection (DIP)** is responsible for devising a roll-out and support plan for field operations and providing standardized tools, advice, guidance and assistance to ensure that the AGD approach is implemented, with a particular focus on core actions.

Division Directors should ensure that their policies, strategies, tools, guidance documents and learning programmes are fully in line with and promote the AGD policy.

Bureau Directors should support country operations to implement the AGD policy, including through all phases of the operations management cycle. They are expected to report to the Senior Executive Team (SET) all major challenges encountered and progress achieved.

The **Assistant High Commissioner for Protection** is responsible for overseeing implementation of the AGD policy and advising the Senior Executive Team on AGD considerations that require attention when making strategic decisions, including in annual programme reviews and reviews of multi-year, multi-partner strategies.

The **Deputy High Commissioner**, who oversees revision of the results-based management system, is responsible for ensuring that revisions support operationalization of the AGD policy, by defining appropriate results and indicators and enabling a system that permits default disaggregation of data by age, sex and other elements of diversity, in order to fully understand the context and requirements of AGD programming and achieve AGD goals.

WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed in 1997 that, to ensure effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action, the UN system should actively and visibly mainstream a gender perspective. Since then, ECOSOC has issued a series of resolutions to guide gender mainstreaming of all UN policies and programmes.¹⁴

Another document of particular relevance is the UN System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women,¹⁵ which was endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)¹⁶ in 2006. The policy set out the following six key elements of a policy to promote gender equality and women's empowerment:

- ➔ Strengthen accountability for gender equality.
- ➔ Enhance results-based management for gender equality.
- ➔ Establish oversight by monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
- ➔ Allocate sufficient human and financial resources.
- ➔ Develop and/or strengthen staff capacity and competence in gender mainstreaming.
- ➔ Ensure coherence/coordination and knowledge/information management globally, regionally and nationally.

The global architecture for coordinating gender equality is described below. For gender coordination in emergencies, please refer to UNHCR Gender Equality Tool 2 on Gender and Emergencies.

Since July 2010, UN Women has been charged with leading, coordinating and promoting the UN system's accountability in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including by means of system-wide gender mainstreaming. At country level, UN Women leads and coordinates work on gender equality under the overall leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. For instance, it often promotes the Gender Theme Group (GTG) and acts as the GTG's secretariat.

The senior management of each UN entity is responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in the framework of its mandate and for ensuring that its policies and programmes contribute to achieving gender equality.

UNHCR GENDER FOCAL POINTS (GFP)

THE ROLE OF GFP IN UNHCR

Responsibility for the integration of gender equality rests with all UNHCR colleagues across the organization and in all functional areas, with senior management holding key responsibilities for accountability and oversight (see section on gender mainstreaming roles and responsibilities above). The establishment of Gender Focal Points (GFP), however, is a common strategy used across the UN system and in government and non-governmental organizations to strengthen the internal capacity of organizations on gender equality. Within UNHCR, gender focal points provide direct technical support on gender equality, including gender mainstreaming and targeted actions, to colleagues and senior management.

In UNHCR, as in other UN agencies, the GFP role is usually fulfilled by colleagues who undertake gender focal point responsibilities in addition to other responsibilities. As such, their role is *not* meant to replace dedicated institutional gender specialists. Rather, GFPs act as catalysts in promoting gender equality throughout UNHCR operations. The GFP role requires a long-term vision, adaptability and resilience. It is important for GFPs to serve as *change agents* and advocate for increased attention to and integration of gender equality and women's empowerment in UNHCR's policies, operations and services, as well as in the work of partners. GFPs play an important role in sharing information, lessons learned and good practices on gender equality.

A UNHCR survey conducted with colleagues in 2016 highlighted the wide range of activities related to gender equality that GFPs undertake and the variety of technical skills, expertise and functions that they exercise. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for GFPs described below were developed by colleagues working as GFPs during the first pilot global cohort of the Gender Equality Learning Programme conducted in 2017. Developing these ToR included analysing information and examples provided by UNHCR country operations such as UNHCR Ukraine and UNHCR Rwanda where GFP networks exist. The ToR also included management responsibility on promoting gender equality.

Key activities for GFPs include:

GENDER EQUALITY INTEGRATION IN PROGRAMMING

- Support the equal and meaningful participation of women and girls of concern in all phases of the Operational Management Cycle (OMC) through inclusion in decision-making and leadership structures.
- Support gender mainstreaming throughout the OMC.
- Support the collection and analysis of sex, age and diversity-disaggregated data throughout the OMC.
- Support the design, planning and implementation of appropriately resourced and measurable targeted actions to advance gender equality.
- Support the application of gender and age marker coding for projects and programmes.
- Support the establishment and maintenance of accessible and confidential feedback and complaints mechanisms for persons of concern.
- Provide technical guidance to ensure that Project Partnership Agreements (PPA) are in line with the UNHCR AGD Policy.

INFORMATION-SHARING AND LIAISON

- Share information and maintain direct and indirect contact, where possible, with diverse women, men, girls and boys of concern.
- Report on, and share, relevant gender equality information, including documenting good practices, with UNHCR colleagues, senior management and partners.
- Liaise with and share information with other UNHCR gender focal points, the UNHCR Gender Equality Unit and external gender advisors and gender focal points.

- ➔ Be an active member of UNHCR's gender focal point system.
- ➔ Liaise with and share information with organizations working on gender equality, including women's organizations and UN Women; government entities responsible for gender equality; and networks and associations of women and youth of concern.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- ➔ Complete all relevant UNHCR e-learning courses including on Gender Equality, AGD, SGBV and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
- ➔ Complete the UN Women e-learning course "I Know Gender".
- ➔ Participate in the UNHCR Global Learning Centre Gender Equality Learning Programme.
- ➔ Keep updated on, share information and advocate for UNHCR and partner personnel participation in gender equality-related training and capacity building opportunities.
- ➔ Support the planning and implementation of gender equality training and capacity building for persons of concern, UNHCR and partner personnel.
- ➔ Provide advice and technical support on gender equality to UNHCR and partner personnel.

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS-RAISING

- ➔ Support gender equality awareness-raising initiatives with women, men, girls and boys of concern as well as internally within UNHCR and among partners.
- ➔ Raise gender equality-related issues, including during internal and external meetings.
- ➔ Provide technical support to senior management engaging in direct advocacy with government and advocate for them to establish contact with the government ministry responsible for gender/women.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY ON GENDER

SENIOR MANAGERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- ➔ Appointing at least two gender focal points – one lead and one deputy – in each bureau, operation and service.
- ➔ Officially and promptly communicating to all personnel and the UNHCR Gender Equality Unit who the current gender focal points are.
- ➔ Amending the terms of reference and e-pads of gender focal points to specifically include their gender equality tasks.
- ➔ Replacing gender focal points at least one month before the end of their deployment to allow hand-over.
- ➔ Ensuring that gender focal points have access to needed support including capacity-building and resources.

PROMISING PRACTICE:

THE GFP NETWORK IN RWANDA

The GFP network in Rwanda started as a coordination mechanism to provide input for an inter-agency gender assessment implemented in 2015–2016. Led by the protection unit, it was fully supported by UNHCR's country management. On completion of the gender assessment, the network focused on translating its recommendations into an action plan mainstreamed across UNHCR's country operation.

From the start it was understood that the network's main objective was to create a platform that could analyse protection concerns with a gender dimension, and identify feasible solutions to them. To do this, the network worked closely with the inter-agency Gender Technical Working Group and advised programmes on the impact of their humanitarian interventions on gender equality.

The network's members are based in different locations across Rwanda; there is one GFP in each UNHCR field office. Coordination is provided by the GFP in the country office in Kigali. The network meets when specific subjects require attention and action. Information is shared on a regular basis by email or at meetings of the inter-agency Gender Technical Working Group.

LESSONS LEARNED

- GFPs perform an essential role in promoting gender equality. It is therefore paramount to ensure that they have the **necessary skills** to perform their functions and that enabling and **enhancing mechanisms** (such as a GFP network) are in place.
- The gender equality assessment functioned as a catalytic tool to motivate and bring together UNHCR GFPs. The network greatly benefited from **specialized technical expertise** provided on a short-term basis during a comprehensive country-level gender equality analysis of UNHCR's interventions.
- The establishment of a GFP Network helped promote gender equality at operations level. Members were **empowered** by their official appointment as GFPs, their integration in a formal network and the additional responsibilities they assumed in field offices. They were **highly motivated** because the achievement of common gender equality objectives would improve both UNHCR's performance and the protection of PoC.
- GFP Network members have the potential to be **successful advocates** for gender equality, supporting and encouraging colleagues to act similarly. GFPs positively benefited from the information exchange, brainstorming and discussions that took place in the network. Being part of a network also ensured **consistency in gender equality work at country level** and stimulated **positive cross-fertilization** in UNHCR interventions. The organization of the GFP Network around a clear task (implementation of a specific action plan based on a gender equality assessment) provided additional motivation.
- Prioritizing work on gender equality and dedicating adequate time to it can be challenging. It is therefore important to make full use of **time on the ground** and meetings. Network meetings provided important support and guidance to GFP members.
- **Continuous reinforcement of GFPs' capacities and active mentorship** is essential. These tasks require additional attention and support. Senior management should encourage colleagues to involve themselves actively in the promotion of gender equality, including by **appointing GFPs** in UNHCR departments **other than the Protection Unit**.

RESOURCES

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UNHCR, [Understanding Community-Based Protection](#) (Policy Paper, 2013).

UN Security Council, [Resolution 1325](#) (2000).

UNHCR, [Global Compact on Refugees](#), 2018

ENDNOTES

- ¹ UNHCR, *From 1975 to 2013: UNHCR's Gender Equality Chronology* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2013). Available from <http://goo.gl/tlgIAP>
- ² Ibid.
- ³ UNHCR's Statute was adopted by the UN General Assembly (GA) in 1950 and is included as an Annex to GA Resolution 428(V) of 1950.
- ⁴ UNHCR is bound by the conclusions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom), and resolutions and decisions of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the UN Security Council that relate to UNHCR's activities and mandate. These decisions and resolutions have empowered UNHCR, as part of its protection mandate, to promote gender equality and work to eliminate violence against women and girls of concern. See [UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls](#) (2008), p. 23.
- ⁵ The AGD policy affirms that "the complete realization of gender equality is an inalienable and indivisible feature of all human rights and fundamental freedoms" and that "the systematic promotion of this principle in measurable results is essential to ensuring protection and durable solutions for women and men of all ages and backgrounds served by the Organization." UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#) (2011), Section III – Core Commitments.
- ⁶ All United Nations agencies, including UNHCR, are required to mainstream a gender perspective in their programmes, policies and operations, and to establish clear action plans for this purpose. See UN General Assembly, [Report of the economic and social council for 1997](#), A/52/3, 1997.
- ⁷ Fundamental international mandates on gender equality include, but are not limited to: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979); the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (1995); UN Security Council Resolutions (SCRs) on Women, Peace and Security (2000 onwards); United Nations, System-Wide Policy and Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2006, 2012); Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Policy Statement: Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action (2008); and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), Commitments (2016).
- ⁸ The commitments to which Member States agreed affirm that the international community has a shared responsibility to protect those who are forced to flee, and to support countries that shelter them, and that this responsibility must be borne more equitably and predictably. In addition, Member States undertook to ensure that their "responses to large movements of refugees and migrants mainstream a gender perspective, promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and fully respect and protect the human rights of women and girls," and to "tackle the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against refugee and migrant women and girls." UN General Assembly, [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#), General Assembly resolution, 3 October 2016, A/[RES/71/1](#), Paragraph 31.
- ⁹ Ibid, Paragraph 31. References to equal participation are also made in Paragraphs 5(b) and 12(d) of Annex 1.
- ¹⁰ Ibid, Paragraph 31. References to different needs and capacities are also made in Paragraph 23, and Paragraphs 5(b) and 13(c) of Annex 1.

- ¹¹ Ibid, Para 6(c) of Annex 1. References to protection of women and girls, and prevention of and response to SGBV, are also made in Paragraphs 29 and 31, and Para 5(a) of Annex 1.
- ¹² Ibid. References to accessible and gender-responsive services are made in Paragraphs 22, 31, 82 and 83, and in Paragraphs 5(e) and 15 of Annex 1.
- ¹³ Key elements of the CRRF include rapid and well-supported reception and admissions; support for immediate and on-going needs (such as protection, health and education); assistance to local and national institutions and communities that receive refugees; and expanded opportunities for solutions. Key elements are designed to meet four objectives: (1) to ease pressures on countries that host large numbers of refugees; (2) to enhance refugee self-reliance; (3) to expand third-country solutions; and (4) to support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. CRR Task Team, [Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: from the New York Declaration to a global compact on refugees](#) (UNHCR, December 2016).
- ¹⁴ The most recent was passed in 2014. For a full list, including the 1997 resolution, see: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/documents/resolutions>.
- ¹⁵ At: <https://bit.ly/2roVJO2>.
- ¹⁶ The CEB brings together the executive heads of 31 specialized organizations to deliver as one globally, regionally and at country level. It is the prime instrument for strengthening the coordination role of UN inter-governmental bodies on social, economic and related matters.



📷 A young refugee makes her way to school in Ali-Addeh refugee camp close to the Djibouti-Somalia border.
© UNHCR/Petterik Wiggers

TOOL 1
GENDER EQUALITY INTEGRATION
WITHIN THE UNHCR OPERATIONS
MANAGEMENT CYCLE



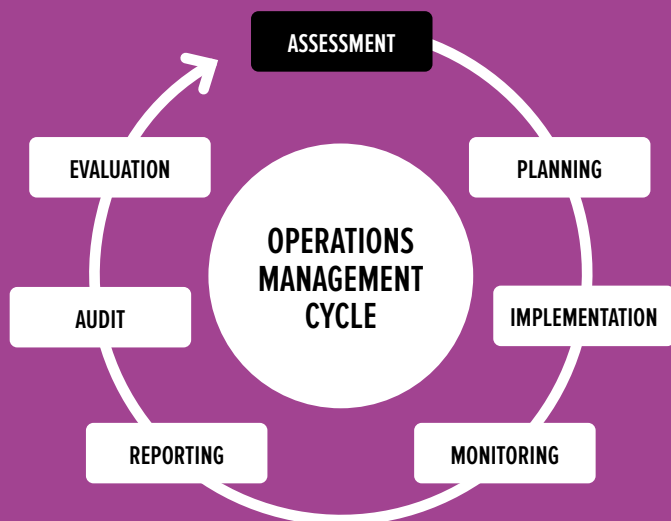
INTRODUCTION

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The Operations Management Cycle (OMC) is the process by which UNHCR organizes its programming; it generally operates in a sequential manner beginning with assessment, moving through planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and audit, and ending with evaluation. This dynamic process requires continual adjustments to programming, and while it operates sequentially, certain phases might take place simultaneously or repeatedly.¹ It is necessary to integrate gender analysis and specific actions into the operations management cycle to ensure that programming is reflective of and responsive to the needs, capacities and priorities of women, men, boys, girls and LGBTI persons of concern from diverse backgrounds. This is also an operational imperative, highlighted within the [UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#), to ensure age, gender and diversity (AGD) inclusive programming, Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and the commitments to women and girls.

The purpose of this tool is to provide guidance on integrating gender equality within different phases of the OMC. It highlights critical actions and tips to consider and apply across the OMC, bearing in mind operational needs and context. Ultimately, this guidance is meant to facilitate the mainstreaming of gender equality and to enable more effective programming, in line with UNHCR policies and internal and external commitments to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.²

ASSESSMENT PHASE




UNHCR's long-standing commitment to ensuring that people are at the centre of all that we do requires the application of an age, gender and diversity approach in all aspects of our work. One element of the updated [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity \(2018\)](#) is a commitment to disaggregate data by age, sex, disability and other diversity considerations, to enable AGD-sensitive approaches in all stages of the OMC. This entails "understanding and analysing the rights, needs, risks and priorities of all persons of concern, including women and girls, the underlying causes of the challenges they face and their capacities to address them." Assessments that take age, gender and diversity into account highlight gender gaps, inequalities, capacities and barriers to accessing rights, and enable UNHCR to design programmes that effectively address and reduce these.³ Without a gender-sensitive assessment, our programming will have significant gaps.

The section below summarizes the main elements related to conducting a gender-sensitive assessment in the context of the OMC. Remember that the steps to gather and analyse AGD-disaggregated information should be undertaken with the active involvement of persons of concern, whenever feasible and appropriate.

CONDUCTING A GENDER SENSITIVE ASSESSMENT


What data to collect?

 *Tip: Gender sensitive assessments centre on understanding the different and unique experiences, roles, statuses and values that women, girls, boys and men in the community have, and how this will affect the work to be undertaken by UNHCR.*

DEFINE YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS

- Identify what information you require, based on the objectives (purposes) you have identified, and guided by your strategic documents. Information needs should be clearly formulated, specific and clearly linked to the purpose. For example: If we are planning an education intervention, we need to know the number of school-aged girls in Camp A as of a certain date.
- Select indicators that best fit the purpose.⁴ Indicators should be SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.
- Questions should also help inform potential solutions to the problems identified. For example, how many female-headed households exist in the population of concern?
- Clarify the analysis plan, timeframe and resources in order to set realistic goals.

How to collect data?

 *Tip: A mix of primary and secondary information – both qualitative and quantitative – should be compiled and analysed to generate a comprehensive understanding of gender relations in a given context*

SECONDARY DATA REVIEW AND COLLATION⁵



Tip: Check the assessment registry to see what has already been assessed and when.

According to the UNHCR Needs Assessment Handbook, “needs assessments rely on both secondary and primary data and should always start with a desk review of available information, based on the analysis plan and in support of the analytical framework.”⁶ In this regard, secondary data is data that has been collected outside the context of the particular assessment exercise. Making good use of reliable secondary data is essential to avoid assessment fatigue and duplication of efforts and resources. Secondary data sources could be assessment reports conducted by UNHCR or other humanitarian and development actors, government authorities, civil society, women’s, youth and disability rights stakeholders, and research or educational institutions, among others. These may include:

- Available data about persons of concern, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other diversity characteristics.
- Data and reports, including gender equality assessments,⁷ produced by international, national or local institutions that are part of humanitarian coordination interventions, promote gender equality or protect women’s and girls’ rights in humanitarian urban, rural or camp settings.
- Country information produced or shared by UN gender experts (e.g. gender advisers in UN agencies, funds or programmes, Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap) advisers, others).
- Data in proGres and other available registration or profiling data.
- Participatory assessment reports, including needs assessments and sectoral assessments conducted by UNHCR or partners.
- Preparatory work or status papers on results under the multi-year, multi-partner (MYMP) strategies.
- Relevant UNHCR reports (Standards and Indicators Reports, Annual Protection Reports, Country Reports, reports on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), education, health, food-basket monitoring and income-generating projects, etc.).
- Information gathered through the operation’s feedback, complaints and response mechanisms.

- UNHCR and inter-agency monitoring systems (the SGBV database, information management system, child-protection database and others).
- Specific research studies on gender inequalities among relevant individuals and groups of concern.⁸

PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

If information gaps remain following the secondary data review, it may be necessary to conduct primary data collection. Primary data is data that is collected inside the context of the particular assessment exercise, i.e. collected specifically for its purpose. There are many methods to collect primary data; these should be considered within the wider context of planning for the assessment and based on the different AGD groups identified.⁹ General considerations include:

- Select a variety of key informants for interviews, including women, men, girls and boys from different age groups and social strata.
- Hold separate focus group discussions with women, men, girls and boys who are from different AGD groups and social strata.
- Provide a choice of male or female interviewers, facilitators and translators.
- Find and talk to formal and informal leaders, associations and networks of women, youth and persons of concern with specific needs.
- Consult specialized service providers, including governments, partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work on the rights of women, older persons, persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, young people and children, among others.
- Conduct interviews in safe settings where confidentiality can be maintained.
- Ensure that the venue is accessible to women and girls, and persons with disabilities or mobility restrictions.
- Choose times of the day when women, men, girls and boys can participate on equal terms, taking into account their domestic responsibilities and the gender roles they perform.

- Identify barriers to access and participation that different individuals and groups of concern may face; adopt measures to mitigate them (e.g. use visuals; provide transport to and from the data collection site; provide child-care and breastfeeding facilities).
- Include gender-sensitive questions and themes likely to be relevant to marginalized or less vocal community members, including women, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, etc.¹⁰
- Use standard language and categories, as used in [proGres](#), to record diversity and special protection needs. Examples include pregnant/lactating women; men/women with disabilities or serious health conditions; older men/women; unaccompanied and separated girls and boys; LGBTI persons; women, men, girls and boys with special legal or protection needs; minorities (national, ethnic, linguistic, religious minorities) and indigenous groups.
- Where primary data collection is conducted remotely, use technologies that are secure and actively address known or assumed gender barriers and access to technology.

How to analyse data?¹¹



Tip: Gender analysis is a process to make sense of the differences and similarities that exist between men and women of various age and diversity backgrounds across a range of issues to inform actions.

ASSESS DATA QUALITY

- Identify data limitations and communicate challenges transparently.
- Triangulate and validate the information collected, including through feedback from persons of concern and other stakeholders.

ANALYSE THE DATA

- Summarize, describe and compare data, disaggregated by sex, age and diversity using charts and graphic support where useful. Disaggregation points should be chosen based on the specific objectives and information needs identified.
- Compare data across different locations, identifying trends and discrepancies.
- Key analytical tasks should include understanding the rights, needs, risks and priorities of all persons of concern, in an AGD approach; identifying underlying causes and factors; determining severity; and identifying capacities to address challenges and risks.
- Careful interpretation of data will allow interventions to take account of women's, men's, girls' and boys' different short- and long-term needs and priorities, which in turn makes it possible to promote more equal access to and use of resources, information, assistance and services among persons of concern.

IDENTIFY GAPS

- Analysis also helps to identify whether any individuals or groups of concern were inadvertently left out of the assessment exercise, implying that their needs and priorities need to be further examined.

DOCUMENT FINDINGS

- Document both the analysis process and the analytical outputs (i.e. findings, conclusions, recommendations) for their effective and timely use in planning, programme review, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy and fundraising.
- Share analysis findings with key and diverse stakeholders, based on the identified objectives and bearing in mind data protection and security issues.¹²

How to use collected data and the analysis findings?



Tip: Disaggregated data is of use only when linked to concrete actions that are resourced adequately and seek to address the gaps and challenges identified during the analysis.

ASSESSMENT REPORT

- A concise assessment report should be distributed to disseminate the results of the analysis and assist in decision-making.¹³ The report should clarify: (a) the gender-sensitive assessment methodology that was used and challenges encountered; and (b) the main findings and recommendations for action to promote gender equality.
- Remember that different reports may need to be produced and disseminated via different platforms, depending on the targeted audience(s) and their purposes. For example, implementing partners may require disaggregated data with personal information to design and implement a needs response, while advocacy targets and donors may require only a short summary that highlights the key findings, without any personal information.

INFORM PROGRAM AND PLANNING

- Needs analysis must be linked to programme design, so that identified unmet needs can be addressed through appropriate and feasible response options.
- Develop and include concrete measures in key planning documents, including operating plans, to address the causes, challenges and gaps that were identified by the gender analysis.
- Do not refer to “AGD mainstreaming” or “gender mainstreaming” without adding concrete measures that can achieve this. Measures should be fully aligned to the findings of the gender analysis.
- Utilize standard language and categories (see UNHCR [popstats](#) and proGres).

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Identify the resources required, including funding and technical support, to address gender mainstreaming and targeted gender equality efforts that were developed and prioritized on the basis of the AGD-disaggregated data analysis.

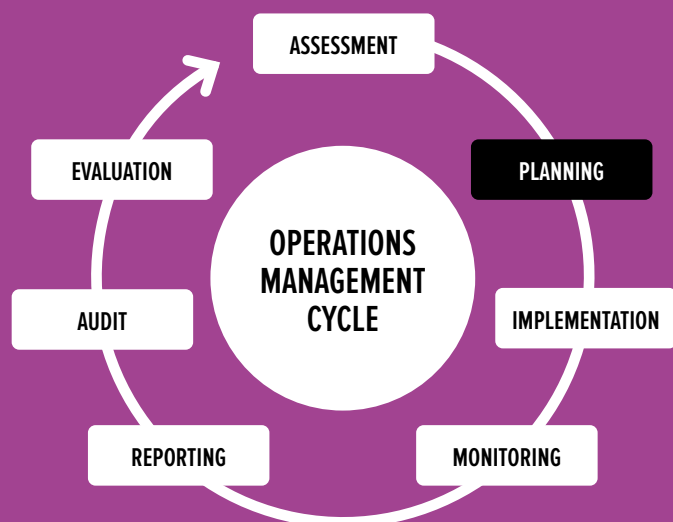
ADVOCACY

- Ensure that the gender analysis is shared as appropriate to support evidence-based advocacy.
- Support advocacy and fundraising efforts aimed at addressing the gaps and challenges identified through the gender analysis of disaggregated data.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Include areas of work developed to address gaps and challenges on gender equality in all programme response monitoring efforts
- Select indicators related to gender equality, including on the meaningful participation of women and girls
- Ensure that all relevant reporting, such as operations year-end reporting, includes reporting on measures taken to address gender equality concerns, progress made and remaining challenges.

PLANNING PHASE



UNHCR's AGD Policy (2018) stipulates that "Persons of concern should be consulted on the design of programmes and the corresponding decisions that are made" (p. 20). AGD-informed planning helps ensure that a response reflects the diverse needs and capacities of persons of concern, whose experience of forced displacement or statelessness varies based on their intersecting personal characteristics. Gender equality is a crucial element to include in UNHCR planning processes to ensure the agency is able to deliver effective protection and durable solutions.

MAIN COMPONENTS IN GENDER-SENSITIVE PLANNING

What are the steps in gender-sensitive planning?



Tip: Adopting a gender-responsive approach is different from simply including women as an "add-on".

DEFINING THE OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOMES

- Objectives and outcomes must take into consideration and demonstrate interventions that address the specific challenges, risks, needs and capabilities of women, girls, boys and men, including those with disabilities, the elderly and LGBTI persons of concern – as highlighted through the gender analysis. Particular attention is required to ensure that processes and interventions do not exacerbate or entrench existing gender inequalities, and that they help in securing equal access to and control over resources, information, services and assistance; equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes; access to documentation; and the prevention, mitigation and response to sexual and gender-based violence.
- [The IASC Gender with Age Marker](#)¹⁴ should be used by all operations during the planning phase to assess the level of gender equality integration into the planning process. The marker is versatile and can be used to assess protection and solutions strategies, multi-year multi-partner strategies, country operating plans, projects and other programmatic interventions and strategies.
- Persons of concern should be consulted on the design of programmes and the corresponding decisions that are made. For example, provide opportunities for community representatives, including women leaders and representatives of women's rights networks, to validate the operations plan's gender priorities.
- Involve relevant stakeholders and partners and representatives of different persons of concern groups and define their roles and responsibilities in implementing the respective intervention, programme or project in a participatory and inclusive manner.
- Design and use diverse preferred and trusted communication and feedback channels.

PLANNING APPROACHES



Tip: A complementary approach that includes both gender mainstreaming and targeted actions is recommended

Gender mainstreaming:

- Gender mainstreaming¹⁵ is required in all UNHCR programmes,¹⁶ which must consider women's, men's, girls' and boys' various:
 - needs, abilities and protection risks;
 - capacity to access and control resources and support; and
 - capacity to participate actively and meaningfully in decision-making processes.
- AGD-inclusive programming means incorporating the above elements "into assessments, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation."¹⁷
- An example of gender mainstreaming in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector includes ensuring that adequate numbers of separate WASH facilities for female and male persons of concern are well lit, lockable from the inside and accessible to children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Targeted actions

- Based on gender analysis, all relevant operations must undertake targeted actions and interventions to address existing gender inequalities that are contributing to persistent discrimination against women and girls and exacerbating inequalities between men and women. These interventions should address persistent barriers that prevent women and girls from accessing information, assistance and services. They should also facilitate, support and strengthen women's empowerment and their equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes.
- An example of a targeted action in the WASH sector includes ensuring that all women and girls of reproductive age have access to adequate sanitary materials.

STAFFING AND OFFICE STRUCTURE

- Set out the staffing, processes and office structure required to implement the activities necessary to meet the gender-related objectives and outcomes. Here, it is important to have technical gender expertise where needed.

DEVELOPING A COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

- Identify organizations, structures and mechanisms at both the national and local level to work with on the promotion of gender equality and the implementation of the programme across various operational settings (internally displaced persons (IDP), refugee, mixed, urban, rural and camp settings)
- From the beginning, map and include relevant partnerships and collaborations with women's organizations and other stakeholders who work on promoting gender equality and women's rights.
- Ensure that partnership agreements (Memorandums of Understanding, Letters of Understanding and Project Partnership Agreements) clearly outline gender equality priorities, activities and expected results.


DEVELOPING THE RESULTS CHAIN

- Select performance and impact indicators from the results framework to monitor results towards gender equality.¹⁸
- Disaggregate indicators and targets in the Operations Plans to ensure gender-related needs and protection risks are monitored by your programmes.



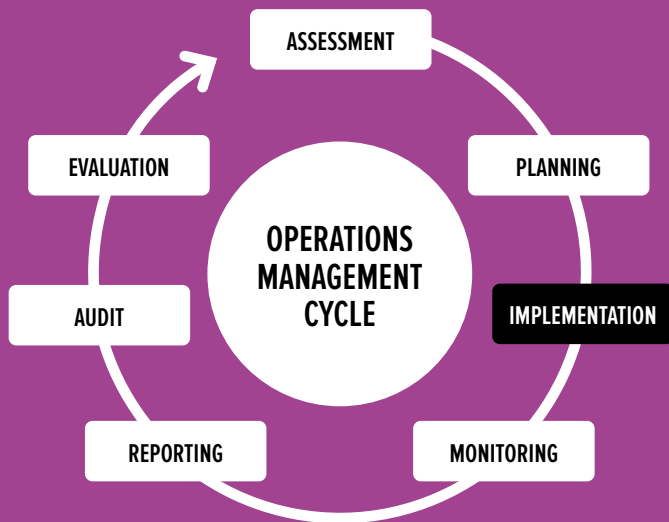
📷 In the Humanity and Inclusion rehabilitation centre, refugee women and men have been trained to repair mobility aids, such as wheelchairs in Dadaab, Kenya. © UNHCR/Sebastian Rich

PRIORITIZING APPROPRIATE BUDGETS

 *Tip: women's needs and gender equality-related work are priorities for UNHCR and not secondary or optional work*

- Use sex, age, disability and other diversity-disaggregated data and analysis to take decisions on prioritization.
- Identified gender-equality interventions must be paired with realistic budget allocations, including for technical gender expertise where this is necessary.
- Budget considerations should be guided by the UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (2018), UNHCR's Global Strategic Directions (2017-2021) and the operation's Multi-Year Multi-Partner Protection and Solutions Strategy.¹⁹

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE



According to the [UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#): “Persons of concern are engaged during programme implementation, where possible, according to their priorities and capacities. Implementation modalities and interventions are designed and delivered to respond to the different risks, needs and capacities of diverse women, men, girls and boys.”²⁰ This requires: (a) developing an operations plan that clearly addresses identified gender priorities; (b) mobilizing the human and financial resources required to implement the plan, including specialized gender expertise; and (c) selecting operational and implementing partners who possess the necessary gender knowledge and skills.

MAIN COMPONENTS IN GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Gender-responsive implementation



Tip: At each stage of the OMC, action points on how to integrate gender equality in UNHCR are linked to each other. If gender equality is not addressed in one stage, it will lead to the exclusion of this work in the following phases.

INCEPTION

- If gender issues are not included or addressed appropriately in the Assessment and Planning phases of the OMC, it is necessary to ascertain if the operations plan, project or strategy is aligned to UNHCR’s commitments and mandatory actions on gender equality as articulated in the Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (2018) and global commitments, including Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.²¹
- Adapt and revise the plan and/or strategy with a gender lens and analyse the budget to determine if the allocations are appropriate to address the gender issues identified at the Assessment phase.
- Seek gender balance in the appointment of staff to ensure there are no impediments in outreach activities to women and girls or identify mitigation measures to address these.
- Provide capacity development on gender issues generally and on gender in humanitarian action specifically for staff, partners and others as needed. Recommend that all staff undertake the UNHCR Gender Equality E-Learning and the SGBV E-Learning programmes.
- Revisit the results-based framework indicators that were selected to ensure that indicators to measure progress on gender equality priorities are appropriate.
- Ensure that processes and tools are in place to guarantee the collection of sex, age, disability and other diversity-disaggregated data.

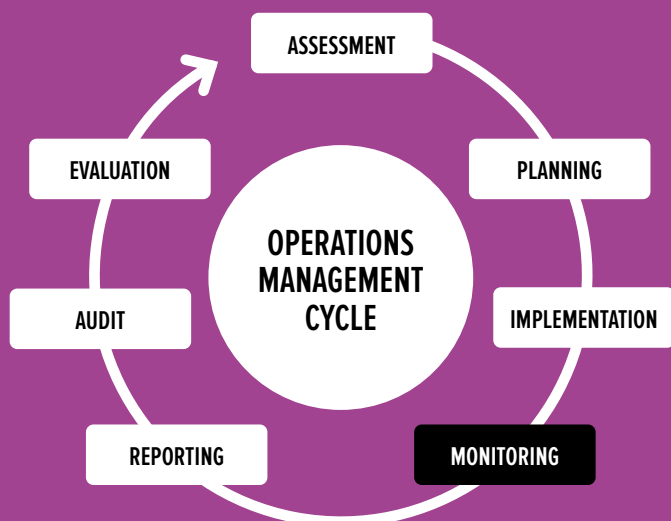
ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION

- Ensure that all decision-making processes involving persons of concern have a 50 per cent representation from women of concern, through the setting up of contextually appropriate mechanisms that allow for their equal and meaningful participation.²²
 - Make sure all programme activities such as trainings, meetings, workshops, distributions, etc. involve women, men, boys and girls equitably. This involves actively addressing any barrier to participation, be it physical (such as distance, disability or insecurity); social (such as gender roles and responsibilities); cognitive (such as education, confidence); and so on.
 - In line with Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) commitments on Accountability to Affected People and Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, establish appropriate management systems that solicit, hear and act upon the voices and priorities of affected people in a coordinated manner.²³
 - Proactively seek to harness the capacities and resources of persons of concern, including women, individually and as communities, for programme implementation. The use of participatory methodologies beyond consultation is valuable in this regard and can include the selection of programme approaches that allow women, men, girls and boys to be actively and equally involved in implementing activities.
 - Inform persons of concern about implementation plans, expected results and progress on gender-related interventions
 - Ensure the use of preferred trusted communication channels to establish and strengthen opportunities for dialogue and two-way communication with persons of diverse backgrounds.
 - Establish accessible, confidential and gender-responsive feedback, complaints and response mechanisms. These should ensure that the chosen methods are accessible to women and girls of diverse backgrounds. In this light, the involvement of local women's networks in communication, advocacy and outreach would be valuable.
- Based on observations made and feedback and complaints received, adjust programmes where required if they are creating, perpetuating or aggravating gender inequalities or other issues.
 - To develop accountability, include gender-responsive budget analysis in mid-year reviews/ reports to illustrate the links between commitments made and results achieved on gender equality and women's rights with the allocation and use of budgets.

EXIT

- To ensure sustainability and follow-up actions, it is necessary to share and pass responsibilities over to the appropriate local/national partner with the knowledge, experience and skills to work on gender equality and women's rights.
- From the onset, link interventions to ongoing efforts throughout the OMC to ensure sustainability and develop local ownership. This means continuously consulting with and providing feedback to partners and local stakeholders, as well as persons of concern and their communities.
- Effective transfer of gender-related knowledge products, tools and capacity must be undertaken with partners and persons of concern.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PHASES



Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requires the collection and analysis of response monitoring data from different groups, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other diversity considerations, to assess whether programmes are on track, adjust implementation where possible and needed, and determine impact on different groups.²⁴ While they are represented as two separate phases of the Operations Management Cycle, monitoring and evaluation are discussed here together as closely linked to each other. Note as well that in the UNHCR OMC, monitoring can overlap with the implementation phase.

MAIN COMPONENTS IN GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluating progress towards gender equality and women's rights

INCLUSION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ALL MONITORING AND EVALUATION INTERVENTIONS

- Within monitoring and evaluation activities, include an assessment of how the implementation process has integrated gender equality measures, the impact on persons of concern, and the capacity and performance of partners on gender equality.

DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

- The collection and analysis of data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other diversity is necessary to measure progress on gender equality and women's rights as a result of interventions, advocacy, etc. Ensure that programme monitoring activities are designed in a way that allows this disaggregation at both the collection and analysis steps.
- The specific diversity disaggregation points selected will depend on the objectives identified at the outset (Phase 1) as well as what is appropriate and feasible in a given context.

SELECTION OF GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS

- Select gender-sensitive indicators and objectives to make it possible to obtain qualitative and quantitative measures of the benefits to women and the benefits to men, and to assess if interventions contributed to narrowing (or widening) the gender gaps identified in the assessment phase.
 - **Quantitative** indicators are numerical, i.e. they relate to things that can be counted or calculated. This includes for example the number and percentage of women and men who participated in an activity.
 - **Qualitative** indicators are non-numerical. They include for example perceptions, feelings,

attitudes, experiences and behaviours. This type of indicator is especially important to use when monitoring programmes, as the presence of women and marginalized groups during an activity may not necessarily reveal whether they benefited or could meaningfully participate. AGD programming emphasizes the importance of measuring the *quality* of experience or participation, not just its existence.

EQUAL AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

- Ensure a participatory and inclusive monitoring and evaluation process:
 - Adopt multiple/diverse methods to monitor and evaluate activities to ensure meaningful and equal participation and inclusion of diverse and representative groups of women, men, girls and boys, as well as groups that need specific gender protection.
 - Communicate openly with persons of concern about monitoring and evaluating the gender outcomes of interventions.
 - Ensure that M&E data is analysed to determine the specific (differentiated) impact of programmes on different groups.

PROGRAMME ADJUSTMENT

- The UNHCR AGD Policy (2018) requires UNHCR operations to adapt programmes and strategies in response to input from persons of concern, and to document this in country operations plans and annual reporting (Core Action 5).
- Identify gaps and challenges based on M&E processes and other sources, such as feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Take measures to ensure the effective and timely use of information obtained from feedback and complaint mechanisms.
- Ensure that necessary adjustments in programmes are identified and implemented. This may entail modifying interventions (e.g. in scope, location, nature, targeted groups, etc.), designing additional interventions, reassessing resources, reconsidering or strengthening partnerships, etc.

Key areas to monitor and evaluate

NEEDS AND CAPACITIES

Questions will include:

- Are the identified needs of different persons of concern, including those of marginalized groups (such as women, girls, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities) being met adequately?
- Which needs are being met only partially, and which needs are not being met at all?
- Have programmes and activities strengthened the capacities and abilities of different persons of concern? During programme implementation, are these capacities applied?
- What corrective actions do stakeholders and persons of concern propose to improve results and impact?

RISKS

Questions will include:

- Do programmes **reduce or increase protection risks**, including risks of SGBV and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)?
- What specific risks have been reduced or increased as a result of programmes?
- Which groups have been more affected positively? And negatively?
- What corrective actions do stakeholders and persons of concern propose to improve results and impact?

PARTICIPATION

Questions include:

- Are women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds included at each phase of the OMC, using participatory methodologies that incorporated their capacities and priorities?
- Are communication approaches with women, men, girls and boys designed to use existing preferred trusted channels and means that are appropriate and accessible to all diverse groups in a community?

- Do women and girls participate equally and meaningfully in committees of persons of concern, and/or community management and leadership structures?²⁵
- Are different women, men, girls, and boys of concern (including persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, older persons, and minorities) **involved in designing and implementing** programmes?
- Which groups are **excluded** and why?
- What are the **main barriers** to participation that different groups face?
- How can programmes be adapted to mitigate or remove these barriers?

ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES

Questions will include:

- Do all persons of concern (regardless of gender, age or other factors) have **full and equal access** to resources, services and humanitarian support?²⁶
- Are all persons of concern able to **decide** how to use the resources to which they have access?
- What **barriers** to access do they face and how are these barriers addressed by UNHCR programmes to facilitate inclusion?
- How do the roles performed by men and women influence their access to and control over resources in the context of UNHCR programmes?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Questions will include:

- Are adequate **communication, feedback and complaint mechanisms and two-way communication with persons of concern** in place and adequately functioning based on the assessed communication preferences of diverse groups?
- Can all persons of concern access these mechanisms?
- If not, what barriers prevent access to these mechanisms?
- Are feedback and complaints promptly and adequately addressed?

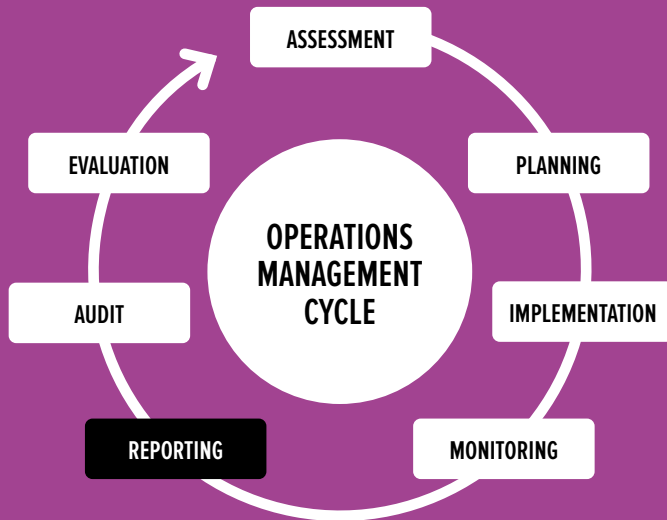
- Do the feedback and complaints received require adjustments to programming? If so, what are the adjustments proposed by persons of concern and stakeholders?
- Were persons of concern, **stakeholders and partners adequately informed** about decisions made and their rationale, through means that are appropriate and accessible to all groups?

RESULTS AND IMPACTS

Questions will include:

- In addition to meeting needs, has the programme **reduced (or increased) gender inequality**? What steps were taken to address increased gender inequality resulting from the programme?
- Were any **unintentional gender-related impacts** on particular groups observed?
- In what areas were positive results achieved (i.e. access to resources, control over resources, participation in decision making, other) for women, girls, boys and men?
- What elements of **resistance** to change were identified? How could programming address these challenges?
- Did programmes **involve men and boys** to enhance long-term results and reduce the potential for conflict and resistance in the community on gender equality programming being undertaken? If no, why? What measures could be taken to increase their involvement in the future? If yes, what results were obtained?

REPORTING PHASE



Reporting on gender equality involves describing the situation of women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds, the actions taken to address the diverse needs and concerns, and their impact over time. Gender-sensitive reports illustrate UNHCR efforts towards gender equality and can be powerful advocacy and resource mobilization tools. Reporting on gender equality activities and results is key for UNHCR to be transparent with and accountable to persons of concern and all stakeholders about progress achieved, the ways their feedback influences programming and how resources are used to achieve results on gender equality. Reporting on gender equality activities and results is also essential to inform future decisions about the programme, and for sharing and documenting information about relevant strategies and practices.

MAIN COMPONENTS IN GENDER-SENSITIVE REPORTING

Key components of gender-sensitive reporting

DATA

- Ensure that the reports effectively use relevant quantitative and qualitative data on the achievements of targets for different AGD groups, disaggregated as relevant and appropriate.
- Consult persons of concern and community representatives, including women leaders and representatives of women's rights networks, to obtain relevant information, including challenges faced by different groups during programme implementation.
- Include description of the participatory methods used for collecting and analysing information on sensitive gender-related topics²⁷ in relation to programmes, and in relation to women, men, girls, and boys of concern and vulnerable groups.



📷 Dahabo Abdi Ibrahim, a 30-year-old Somali refugee, offers remedial classes to students in Hagadera camp in Dadaab.
© UNHCR/Sebastian Rich

PROGRAMMING

Reporting must include information about the following:

- Strategies implemented for promoting equal and meaningful participation.²⁸
- Methods used to mainstream gender in sectoral interventions.
- Details about how targeted actions have addressed specific gender gaps, inequalities and barriers identified during the assessment phase.²⁹
- Engagement with and mobilization of relevant national organizations (national authorities, development and humanitarian actors, NGOs and civil society organizations (CSO); host communities; women leaders and women's rights organizations; and with men and boys) in the promotion of gender equality.
- Gender-related advocacy activities and information campaigns at national level and among persons of concern.

- Mobilization of specialized gender expertise in programme activities (by the operation and by partners).
- Information on where gender-related programming requires improvement to strengthen its impact and drive institutional learning.

Refer to Annex 2 for examples of gender-sensitive reporting in protection programmes.

THE IASC GENDER WITH AGE MARKER OVERVIEW

The Gender with Age Marker (GAM) looks at the way essential programming actions address gender- and age-related differences in humanitarian response. It was developed in response to requests to strengthen the original IASC Gender Marker by including age and, most significantly, by adding a monitoring component. In addition to measuring programme effectiveness, it is a valuable teaching and self-monitoring tool, allowing organizations to learn by doing in developing programs that respond to all aspects of diversity.

With the 2019 Humanitarian Planning Cycle (HPC), the GAM replaced the previous IASC Gender Marker applied to appeal projects since 2009. Its use is similarly required in the Financial Tracking System (FTS), and Member States are asked to commit to only funding partners who report to the FTS using the IASC Gender with Age Marker, and subsequently update the marker based on monitoring data.

The GAM assesses projects for 12 essential programme elements known as **Gender Equality Measures** or **GEMs**. Four key GEMs are considered in the project *design phase*:

- Gender Analysis (GEM A)
- Tailored Activities³⁰ (GEM D)
- Influence on Project (GEM G)
- Benefits (GEM J)

Eight additional indicators or GEMs are reviewed in project monitoring, including elements such as feedback and complaints mechanisms, GBV prevention, sex and age disaggregated data (SADD), satisfaction and communication with communities. Good programming requires that affected people participate in and influence all stages of a project.

Programmes should logically flow from the gendered needs analysis, through tailoring or adapting activities in response to analysis, to who benefits from the intervention. GAM coding reflects the presence and consistency of these actions, as well as the integration of gender and age within them. Users highlight that the GAM draws attention to gender- and age-related concerns that might otherwise be missed.

HOW DOES IT WORK? AUTOMATIC CODING

The GAM codes projects on a 0 to 4 scale and suggests simple actions to improve project responsiveness and consistency. Codes are generated automatically based on answers to multiple-choice questions.

Each GEM code is based on evidence of the required programme action or step, plus gender and age. If all three are present, the GEM automatically codes 4; if none are included, it codes 0.

It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of the GAM is not to evaluate or judge projects. For the GAM to have its intended impact on project quality, it must be clear that the code received is in no way tied to project acceptance or funding. **It is the process of completing the GAM that improves the quality of action**, not the score. The only evidence the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and donors require – as the best guarantee that gender issues are being considered and addressed – is that the GAM process has been completed.

The GAM can also be applied to higher-level documents such as programme strategies, Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs), humanitarian response plans (HRPs) and Period Monitoring Reports (PMRs). The tool is a web-based Kobo application supported by OCHA. It is also available off-line for use in remote areas.

For more information, visit:

<https://iascgenderwithagemarker.com/en/home>

Or email: iasc-gam@un.org

EXAMPLES OF GENDER-SENSITIVE INTEGRATION INTO DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE PROGRAMME CYCLE³¹

1. GENDER-SENSITIVE ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE³¹

Relevant questions to ask when assessing gender in Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM).³²

GENDER IN CCCM PROJECT NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

- What are the demographics within the camp population? (# and average size of households; household composition by sex and age; # of single heads of household who are women, girls, boys or men; # of pregnant/lactating women by age; # unaccompanied girls and boys by age, elderly women and men, women and men with disabilities or who are chronically ill).
- What are the protection risks and needs of the displaced women, girls, boys and men?
- Is affirmative action needed so that women and girls can participate meaningfully in camp governance, camp facility management and use of camp services?
- Are male and female adolescents/older people able to voice their needs and contribute to their own self-reliance?
- What arrangements are needed for females and males with special needs: youth, older persons, single heads of household, unaccompanied children, and those with disabilities or chronic illness? (E.g. protection, mobility, privacy).

2. GENDER-SENSITIVE PLANNING EXAMPLE

[IASC, Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action: key elements to consider when planning gender-sensitive food distribution, 2017.](#)

EXPECTED RESULTS

The outputs of the intervention that will achieve the specific objective.

- Factors that hinder access are identified.
- Physical access to ensure participation is adjusted.
- More marginalized participants in the community are reached.

EXPECTED RESULTS INDICATORS (OUTPUT INDICATORS)

Indicators to measure the extent the intervention achieves the expected result.

- Women and girls report their satisfaction with the access process and outreach methods.

GENDER-ADAPTED PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES

- Consult women, girls, men and boys about times, frequency and locations of food/input distributions, workshops and employment.
- Adapt infrastructure (e.g., seating for persons with physical disabilities, provide sheltered areas, etc.) and services (separate lines (queues) for women and men) to support access according to specific needs.
- Set outreach teams to mobilize and reach potentially unreachable women and girls.



📷 Kepler students photographed on campus. © UNHCR/Antoine Tardy

3. GENDER-SENSITIVE IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLE

[IASC, Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action: key elements of gender-sensitive implementation on shelter.](#)

SHELTER-GENDER CHECKLIST

Access

1. Male and female heads of households and single women and men have the same access to housing and shelter supplies.
2. Obstacles to equal access are promptly addressed.

Participation

1. Women and men are equally represented and participate in the design, allocation and construction of shelters and camp facilities.
2. Women and men, adolescent girls and boys have equal opportunities for involvement in all aspects of shelter construction, receiving equal pay for equal work.

Training/Capacity building

1. Equal opportunities exist for training for women, girls, boys and men in construction skillstraining.
2. Percentage of women and men trained in shelter construction.
3. Percentage of women and men involved in shelter construction.

Actions to address GBV

1. Routine spot checks and discussions with communities to ensure people are not exposed to sexual violence due to poor shelter conditions or inadequate space and privacy.
2. Mechanisms put in place to ensure people can report any harassment or violence.

Targeted actions based on gender analysis

1. The specific needs of girl- and boy-headed households are met.
2. Where construction materials are supplied, female-headed households have direct access to materials and have construction skills training support.

4. GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION EXAMPLE

IASC, Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action: key elements to consider when monitoring gender in health programming.

HEALTH-GENDER CHECKLIST

Monitoring and evaluation based on sex- and age-disaggregated data

1. Data on demographics, mortality, morbidity and health services are routinely collected and are disaggregated and reported by age and sex and a gender analysis is applied.
2. Percentage of participatory assessment reports addressing the needs of women, girls, boys and men equally.
3. Formal monitoring and participatory evaluation mechanisms reporting the health impact of humanitarian crises on women, girls, boys and men.

5. GENDER-SENSITIVE REPORTING EXAMPLE

IASC gender marker tip sheets are key gender-sensitive elements to consider when reporting on protection.

GENDER IN PROTECTION PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Both female and male beneficiaries of all ages are provided with timely and appropriate protection through, for example, direct assistance to extremely vulnerable individuals and isolated persons with specific needs; referral systems; and information and legal counselling services.
- Women and men benefit equally from projects addressing issues of access to adequate housing, land and property.
- Gender equality is promoted through support for protection mainstreaming by other clusters and protection activities integrated into the response of other humanitarian sectors.
- Data collected through protection monitoring systems allow for a gendered analysis of the protection situation (risks, needs, incidents, trends) and for adapting the protection response accordingly.
- Advocacy, awareness-raising, training and capacity building project activities effectively integrate gender dimensions.
- Gender equality is promoted through greater gender-awareness among all project staff members.

RESOURCES

CARE, [Rapid Gender Analysis Toolkit](#).

Data 2X, see <https://www.data2x.org/>.

Feinstein International Center, [Sex & Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies](#), 2011

IASC, [Commitments on Accountability to Affected People and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), 2017.

IASC, [Gender and Age Marker \(GAM\)](#).

IASC, [Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action](#).

IASC, [Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#) (2015).

IASC, [Policy \(and Accountability Framework\) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action](#), 2017.

OCHA Services, [Indicator Registry](#) [search for “gender”]

Sphere Project, [Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in humanitarian response](#) (2018).

UN Women, [UN system-wide action plan on gender equality and women’s empowerment](#) (2012).

UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity \(AGD\) Policy](#), 2018.

UNHCR, [Evaluation Policy](#) (2016).

UNHCR, Gender Equality E-Learning Course (available on Learn and Connect).

UNHCR, [Handbook for the protection of women and girls](#) (2008).

UNHCR, [Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents](#).

UNHCR, [Needs Assessment Handbook](#), 2017.

UNHCR, [Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern](#) (2015), with [Guidance and Toolkit](#) (Aug 2018)

UNHCR, [Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations](#) (2006).

UNHCR, [UNHCR’s Strategic Directions 2017–2021](#), June 2016.

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), [Integrating Human Rights and Gender in Evaluations](#) (2014).


ENDNOTES

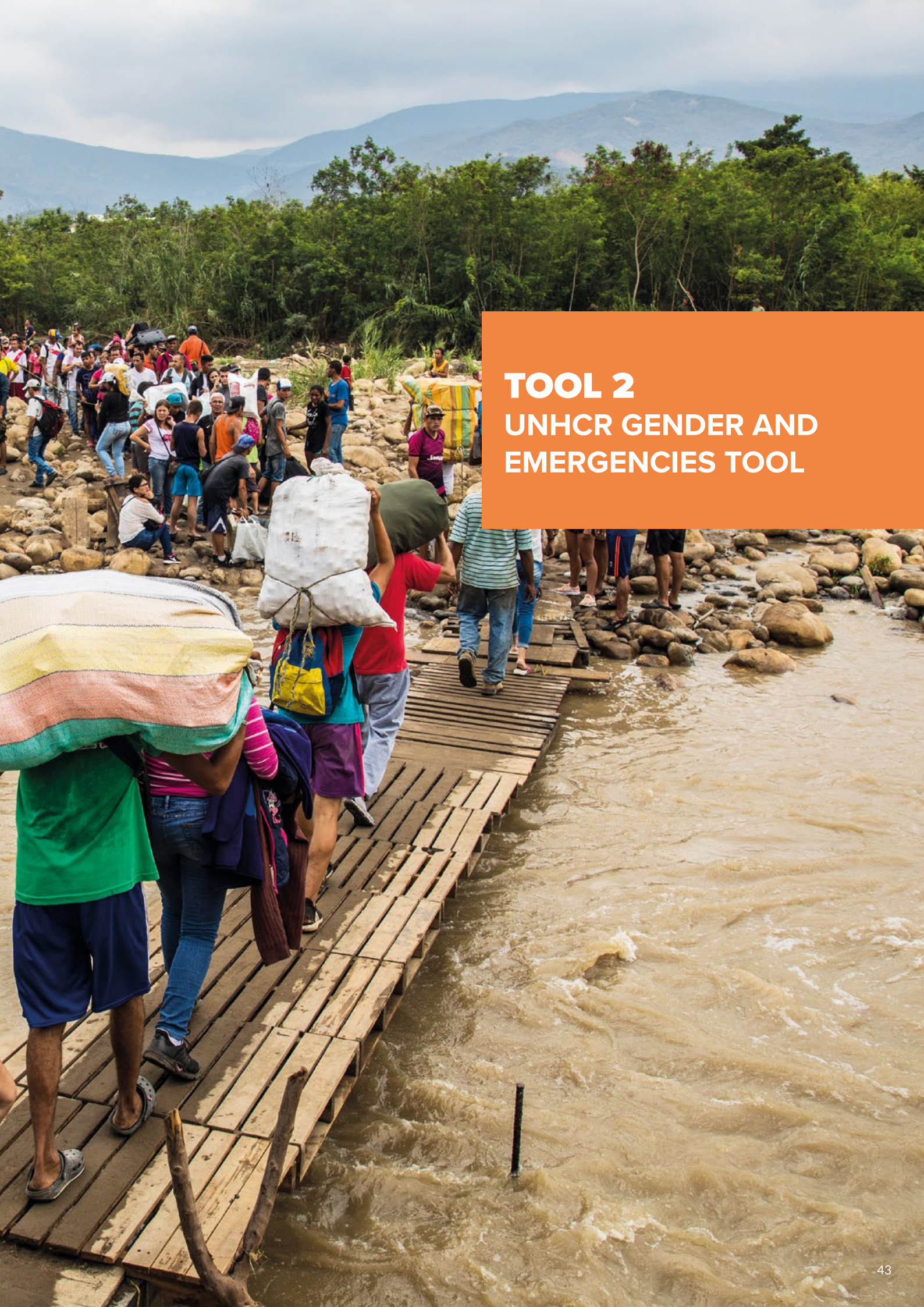
- ¹ For more, see Chapter 4, UNHCR Operations Management, within the [UNHCR Programme Manual](#).
- ² For more, refer to introduction section of the Gender Equality Toolkit.
- ³ For more information, see UNHCR, Gender Equality E-learning Course (Module 2, Section 3).
- ⁴ For example, recording that “n households” received assistance provides no information about the vulnerabilities or needs of households. Information should be broken down based on household composition. A methodology developed by USAID and applied by UNHCR in Yemen does this in the following way: (a) in households where adults are present, MF = male and female adults, MnF = male no female, and FnM = female no male; (b) in households of children (with no adults present) BnA = boy no adult, GnA = girl no adult, and (most commonly) GBnA = girl and boy, no adult.
- ⁵ See UNHCR, *Needs Assessment Handbook*, pp. 73–78 for complete guidance on secondary data reviews.
- ⁶ See UNHCR, *Needs Assessment Handbook*, p. 43.
- ⁷ Consider, among others: OECD, *Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)*; the *Gender Development Index (GDI)* and *Gender Inequality Index (GII)* in UNDP, *Human Development Reports (HDR)*; *Beijing+20 National Reports*; up-to-date country profiles in UN Women, [Global Database on Violence Against Women](#); UNDESA, [World Population Prospects](#) (for sex- and age-disaggregated national population estimates); and Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International reports.
- ⁸ List adapted from UNHCR, [Programming for Protection \(P4P\) Learning Programme, Module 9 – Participatory Assessment](#), p. 9.
- ⁹ See UNHCR, *Needs Assessment Handbook*, pp. 57–71 for guidance on planning needs assessment, and pp. 78–90 for guidance on primary data collection. Remember that *Grand Bargain* commitments require UNHCR to conduct joint multi-sectoral assessments and joint analysis whenever possible and appropriate.
- ¹⁰ See the questions in UNHCR, *Gender Equality E-Learning Training* (Section 1 - Gender equality and primary data collection).
- ¹¹ See UNHCR, *Needs Assessment Handbook*, pp. 91–100 for complete guidance on data analysis in the context of needs assessments.
- ¹² For guidance on data sharing, see UNHCR, *Needs Assessment Handbook*, pp. 101–104, as well as PIM, [Framework for Data Sharing in Practice](#), 2018. Remember that the [Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR](#) (2015) applies when the data in question is personal data.
- ¹³ UNHCR, *Programme Manual* (Module II), p. 89.
- ¹⁴ The IASC gender with age marker (GAM) replaces the old IASC Gender Marker and has been piloted since 2015. The IASC GAM codes programs and projects on a 0–4 scale, based on responses to questions about 12 key gender equality measures. The tool can be used at the design/planning stage, and the monitoring stage.
- ¹⁵ For a definition of gender mainstreaming as well as of other key gender terms, please refer to the glossary of terms and concepts section in the toolkit.
- ¹⁶ UNHCR, *Gender Equality e-learning course* (Module 2 – Section 3).
- ¹⁷ UNHCR, [Updated Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#) (2018).
- ¹⁸ These are included in UNHCR’s Results Framework, which includes sex-disaggregated indicators as well as specific indicators measuring outcomes for women and girls.
- ¹⁹ See [UNHCR’s Strategic Directions 2017–2021](#).
- ²⁰ UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity \(AGD\) Policy](#) (2018), p. 20.
- ²¹ For more on SDG 5, which is on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>.
- ²² Refer to Gender Equality Tool 3: Increasing the Participation of Women and Girls, in the Gender

Equality Toolkit, for additional guidance on enhancing women's participation in programming

- ²³ See IASC [Commitments on Accountability to Affected People and Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation](#) (2017).
- ²⁴ Various monitoring and evaluation mechanisms assist UNHCR to implement gender equality in its programmes. They include mandatory participatory assessments, annual AGD reporting in Focus, annual UN System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) reporting, and the IASC gender marker application.
- ²⁵ The UNHCR AGD Policy (2018) commits UNHCR operations to ensuring 50% female participation in management and leadership structures.
- ²⁶ The UNHCR AGD Policy (2018) includes five Core Actions related to advancing gender equality, three of which are related to assistance, programmes and services, including SGBV prevention and response services.
- ²⁷ Including gender-based violence, resource management and participation in decision-making.
- ²⁸ For additional guidance on enhancing women's participation in programming, see Gender Equality Tool 3: Increasing the Participation of Women and Girls, in the Gender Equality Toolkit.
- ²⁹ Examples include actions that promote gender equality by making access to and control over resources more equal; increases in equal, active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes; interventions that secure more effective protection from sexual and gender-based violence.
- ³⁰ Activities tailored to address gender- and age-related differences
- ³¹ You can find additional examples and sector specific tip sheets by visiting the [IASC Gender with Age Marker Tip Sheets](#).
- ³² IASC gender marker tip-sheet. For more on additional sector tip-sheets, see the [IASC Gender with Age Marker Tip Sheets](#).



 Venezuelan people cross the border to get to Colombia by muddy footpaths on the banks of the Tachira River between Venezuela and Colombia. © UNHCR/Vincent Tremeau



TOOL 2

UNHCR GENDER AND EMERGENCIES TOOL

INTRODUCTION

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It is widely acknowledged that gender is a key factor structuring how crises impact women, men, boys and girls. UNHCR recognizes that gender equality is fundamental to the well-being and rights of all persons of concern, and it is an important organizing principle of our mandate to provide protection and solutions to persons of concern. This is emphasized within the Age, Gender and Diversity Policy and the Global Strategic Directions, as well as in numerous international commitments.¹ Thus UNHCR has committed to ensuring that gender considerations are accounted for throughout our work, including within emergency contexts.

Recognizing that our interventions and processes have the potential to reduce or reinforce existing inequalities, especially during emergencies, UNCHR uses a two-pronged approach to integrate gender equality in our work, applying a gender mainstreaming approach complemented by targeted actions to address specific gaps, challenges and needs as identified. This complementary approach ensures that gender is adequately mainstreamed and integrated, thus enabling more effective, inclusive and efficient emergency preparedness efforts and responses.

In this light, the purpose of the Gender and Emergencies Tool is to support colleagues in strengthening gender equality in emergency settings. It is meant to complement existing resources (e.g. UNHCR Emergency Handbook) by providing concrete and concise gender-specific actions to consider. These actions are therefore not exhaustive.



📷 Syrian refugees arrive across the border, en mass from Syria on the 17th of June 2014. © UNHCR/Andrew Harper

The tool is divided into two sections. *Section 1* sets out the conceptual and operational framework for gender mainstreaming in UNHCR emergency preparedness and response. Readers should assume that the conceptual frameworks and core resources listed in this section apply throughout. By contrast, *Section 2* lists actions and resources that are directly relevant to the specific phases of an emergency or the topic in focus. This approach has been adopted to reduce repetition.

The tool focuses on a set of minimum actions. These are necessary to integrate gender, first in the immediate situation, and then in subsequent phases. Where possible and relevant, actions have been prioritized in the order in which they should occur, and actions that should occur immediately are distinguished from those that should occur later. It should be noted that some actions take place simultaneously or in parallel, while others need to be repeated because they require a continuous effort or need to be adjusted as an emergency moves through its different phases.

WHY GENDER EQUALITY MATTERS IN EMERGENCIES

COMMITMENTS AND PRINCIPLES

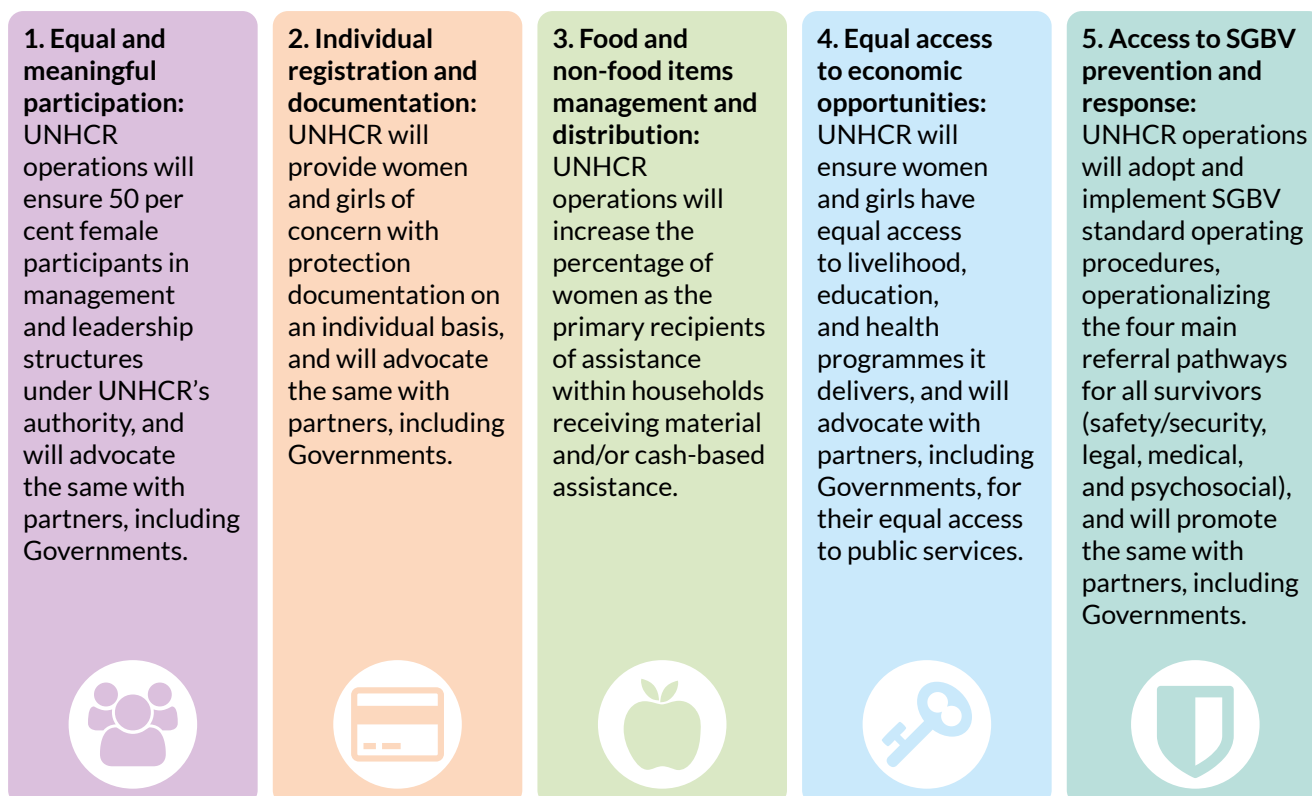
This tool is designed to guide UNHCR colleagues as they promote gender equality in their daily work. It gives practical advice on how to integrate gender equality effectively in UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response. It identifies key actions that colleagues should take immediately, and also later on, during the phases of preparedness, planning and response management. It further covers leadership, partnership and coordination in emergencies. The tool recognizes that sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in emergencies is a central crosscutting issue that is rooted in gender inequalities and as such its elimination is vital for achieving gender equality on many levels; however, it does not address SGBV in depth as this is covered in detail in other tools.²

Principled and effective humanitarian action cannot be achieved in the absence of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Responses that recognize the different needs, priorities and concerns

of women, men, girls and boys, and their diverse identities and backgrounds, are likely to target their interventions more accurately and effectively, provide more appropriate assistance and save more lives.

UNHCR has undertaken to integrate a gender-equality dimension in all aspects of its work. This commitment is set out in UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD), which consolidates UNHCR's 2001 commitment to women and girls and its AGD approach. It also outlines UNHCR's priorities on accountability to affected people (AAP). Each of these commitments builds on and complements the others.³ The AGD policy draws deeply from lessons learned from promising practices and UNHCR's experience of the needs, capacities and protection risks of persons of concern (PoC), taking into account age, gender, disability and other aspects of diversity in displaced communities. It defines ten mandatory core actions that, taken together, should lead programmes to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of all. Five of these core actions are specifically intended to advance gender equality and update UNHCR's five

Figure 1: UNHCR's commitments to women and girls



2001 Commitments to Refugee Women (see Figure 1 above).⁴ The updated versions of these five core actions on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, launched in 2018, are:

Women and girls participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, and committees of persons of concern. At a minimum, UNHCR operations will ensure 50 per cent female participants in management and leadership structures under UNHCR's authority, and will advocate the same with partners, including Governments.

Women and girls are provided with individual registration and documentation, directly or through support provided by UNHCR. At a minimum, UNHCR will provide women and girls of concern with protection documentation on an individual basis, and will advocate the same with partners, including Governments.

Women and girls have equal access to and control over management and provision of food, core relief items and cash-based interventions. Depending on the context, UNHCR operations will increase the percentage of women as the primary recipients of assistance within households receiving material and/or cash-based assistance.

Women and girls have equal access to economic opportunities, including decent work and high-quality education and health services. At a minimum, UNHCR will ensure women and girls have equal access to livelihood, education and health programmes it delivers, and will advocate with partners, including Governments, for their equal access to public services.

Women and girls have access to comprehensive SGBV prevention and response services. At a minimum, UNHCR operations will adopt and implement SGBV standard operating procedures, operationalizing the four main referral pathways for all survivors (safety/security, legal, medical and psychosocial), and will promote the same with partners, including Governments.

A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH

UNHCR believes that emergency interventions have the potential to transform gender relations. Beyond the immediate needs and risks they address, assistance and protection services can support longer-term efforts to redress gender inequality. Ultimately, the goal is to advance gender equality and empower women and girls without doing harm.

To do this, emergency responses must be informed by a gender analysis and take into consideration the different needs and gender-specific concerns of all persons and groups throughout the response. A differentiated approach helps to address access gaps and compounded forms of vulnerability. Interventions should adopt a long-term perspective and reflect a detailed understanding of the contextually specific roles and responsibilities of women and men of different ages and backgrounds and how these change under the impact of the emergency. To acquire this understanding and achieve positive long-term effects, responses should work closely with national authorities and institutions, and with host communities.

Yet, in the conditions of an emergency, it is hard to think beyond immediate needs or plan for long-term transformation. A change in mindset and investments in training and resource allocation are required to convince colleagues and partners that progress towards gender equality is not just possible but a vital component of emergency preparedness and response.

A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH...

aims at moving beyond the specific short-term improvements that an intervention can make to help individuals, communities and societies at large to understand and challenge the power dynamics, attitudes, behaviors and social systems that perpetuate inequalities between men and women, and thus contribute to greater gender equality. This is in line with UNHCR's core Strategic Directions 2017–2021, and more specifically the commitment to empower people of concern, recognizing them as agents with the potential to determine and build their own future and contribute to the development of the communities they live in. While gender transformation is inherently a long-term goal, examples of positive changes in gender relations that are possible in emergency settings include women increasingly claiming their rights in response to the rising number of widows and female-headed households resulting from conflicts and activities directed at supporting them; and women reluctant to step back into their traditional (restrictive) roles after being exposed to different and more equal roles and responsibilities while in displacement.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The AGD approach and UNHCR's commitment to gender equality both contribute in vital ways to UNHCR's efforts to be accountable to affected people and protect them from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). These responsibilities are continuous, from emergency preparedness and through the response, to achievement of durable solutions.

In line with the strategic direction to empower, UNHCR personnel are expected to "[h]old ourselves accountable to the people we serve in all aspects of our work; ensure confidential feedback mechanisms are in place; ensure programme and activities take account of diverse, ethnic, gender and other identities; recognize, utilize and build on the education, skills and capacities of forcibly displaced persons; ensure refugees, internally displaced and stateless persons have access to reliable information; and actively pursue innovative ways to amplify the voices of the people we work for."⁵ The building blocks of AAP are: communication and transparency; inclusive and participatory programming; continuous

and transparent communication with PoC; feedback and response systems; and learning and adaptation.

UNHCR is at the forefront of efforts to suppress SEA as well as sexual harassment of PoC, in line with UNHCR's Code of Conduct and the UN Secretary General's Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. SEA is a grave breach of trust and a betrayal of UNHCR's mandate to protect displaced and stateless people. All such practices are unacceptable and must be eradicated.

DIVERSITY

To advance gender equality, it is important to consider the issue of intersectionality. Displaced individuals have diverse identities, which inform their experiences of displacement. Drawing on its extensive field presence and proximity to people it serves, UNHCR has led the adoption of an approach that values the diversity of experiences, capacities and aspirations that displaced women, men, girls and boys have. UNHCR recognizes the variety of ethnic, racial, socio-economic, gender, disability and other identities, and acknowledges that all PoC voices, perspectives and priorities must be heard and acted upon. The AGD policy affirms that UNHCR is determined to protect all PoC, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, race, disability, age or other characteristics. It recognizes that identity influences a person's opportunities, capacities, needs and risks and that targeted action is required to meet the specific needs of marginalized groups, including LGBTI persons, to prevent discrimination and respect their dignity and humanity.⁶

THE IMPACT OF EMERGENCIES ON WOMEN AND MEN OF DIFFERENT AGES AND BACKGROUNDS

Human rights abuses, violence and other violations force women and men of different ages and backgrounds to flee their homes in search of protection. The vulnerabilities and capacities of individuals and social groups evolve over time and across contexts and determine their ability to cope with and recover from an emergency.

Gender equality is rarely given priority in humanitarian action, with research demonstrating the low funding committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian settings.⁷ Societal beliefs and practices, legal structures in countries of origin and asylum, exclusionary institutional processes, insecurity and socioeconomic pressures all work to perpetuate and exacerbate gender inequality in emergencies. These same factors frequently constrain women's mobility, decision-making and access to humanitarian information, assistance and services, and heighten their exposure to and risks of SGBV.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT CRISES REVEALS THAT:⁸

- ➔ In times of displacement, women and girls make up 50 per cent of refugee, internally displaced and stateless populations.⁹
- ➔ 60 per cent of preventable maternal deaths occur in the context of crises.¹⁰
- ➔ One of every five refugee and displaced women in complex humanitarian settings is estimated to have experienced sexual violence.¹¹
- ➔ Girls living in conflict-affected countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school.¹²
- ➔ During crises, women and girls take on more care-related tasks (such as providing food and water and caring for the sick).
- ➔ During conflict, men and boys are often expected to engage in fighting and risky behaviour due to social expectations and ideas about masculinity.¹³
- ➔ In crisis settings, women often become new heads of their households due to loss of male family members and family separation. In the Syrian emergency, women-headed households accounted for one in four of all Syria refugee families across Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt.¹⁴
- ➔ Gender and age-related factors have been shown to impact not only the kinds of injuries suffered in armed conflict but also the ability to access treatment.¹⁵
- ➔ The exclusion of women from preparedness efforts exacerbates their vulnerability and ability to deal with future crises.¹⁶



📷 At one of the events to mark UN Women's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in the northern Brazilian city of Boa Vista. © UNHCR/Allana Ferreira

SGBV is a critical protection concern in emergencies, and it is a key element of UNHCR's protection mandate. UNHCR recognizes that gender inequalities and power imbalances, which often privilege masculine systems and attitudes, are at the root of SGBV. While SGBV disproportionately affects women and girls, it also affects men and boys, as well as other categories of forcibly displaced and stateless persons, including children, young adults, persons with disabilities, members of minority groups and LGBTI persons. UNHCR has a responsibility to ensure protection of all PoC.

ENSURING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN EMERGENCIES

GENDER IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Gender and minimum preparedness actions¹⁷

OVERVIEW

UNHCR can make sure that its own preparations for an emergency take account of gender by considering gender issues from the outset of a crisis; sharing information on gender; applying relevant sex, age, disability and other diversity disaggregated data when designing protection and assistance interventions; and improving the capacity of colleagues to address gender concerns.

Externally, UNHCR can partner with organizations that possess expertise on gender to foster learning and share knowledge, cooperate on communications and advocacy, fill UNHCR capacity gaps and complement UNHCR strengths.

Partnerships and coordination create opportunities to share information on gender issues, prepare and plan collaboratively, enhance local ownership and capacity, strengthen advocacy and mobilize resources.¹⁸

UNHCR's Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (PRRE) guides emergency preparations, requiring, inter alia, adoption of an age, gender and diversity approach to make sure that all needs are met.¹⁹ It also stipulates that operations must include an SGBV prevention and response strategy in their contingency plans.²⁰

While not an exhaustive list, the actions below are meant to ensure that sufficient preparation and response capacity is in place to enable UNHCR to act promptly when an emergency strikes. By definition, preparations take place before the emergency occurs. Since circumstances, needs and capacity influence the timing and sequence of preparatory planning, the list

does not distinguish “immediate” from “later” actions. The actions focus primarily on analysis and planning, partnerships and capacity building.

KEY ACTIONS

- ✔ Maintain up-to-date contact lists of UN agencies, partners, donor focal points and other stakeholders, including those with emergency response capacities and specialist gender expertise.
- ✔ Integrate AGD analysis in mapping and assessment processes and survey designs; data collection and analysis; and reporting. Give due consideration to the context and the specific sectors in which interventions will be made.
- ✔ Identify what information is needed to understand gender needs and other relevant identities; map available sources of information.
- ✔ Ensure that women, girls, men and boys from a range of backgrounds in the community have equal access to communications and early warning mechanisms.
- ✔ Ensure that systems for registration (where this is UNHCR's responsibility), gathering and sharing baseline data, making assessments and disseminating information are in place. Make sure they can adequately gather, analyse and share gender-specific information, including sex, age, disability and other diversity disaggregated data.
- ✔ Identify needs for capacity development on gender equality of staff, partners and other relevant actors.
- ✔ Integrate training and information on gender in preparedness activities and planning; include partners.
- ✔ Ensure that senior management is familiar with UNHCR's policies on gender equality and SGBV as applicable to emergencies.

- ✔ Include leadership and capacity on gender issues in UNHCR's emergency response, including through surge capacity mechanisms. Do not restrict this just to SGBV prevention, response and mitigation capacity.
- ✔ Appoint and deploy female colleagues at all levels. Create the conditions for female deployment and encourage partners to do the same.
- ✔ Make colleagues, community members and partners aware of UNHCR standards and mechanisms to protect PoC from SEA, including through dissemination of the Secretary-General's Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.²¹
- ✔ Strengthen the capacity of colleagues, partners, government and communities to prevent, mitigate and respond to SGBV.²²
- ✔ Ensure that reporting mechanisms and related focal points are established to receive and address complaints about SEA, sexual harassment and other sensitive issues. Ensure they can be scaled up as required.²³
- ✔ In collaboration with partners, draft and insert minimum gender standards in sectoral preparedness plans, focusing on shelter, camp coordination and management, and protection. (See the example below from Nepal.)
- ✔ Underline the need for gender expertise in emergency preparedness and planning, including in standby partnership agreements with the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector.
- ✔ Share gender-related information with relevant partners and cluster/sector leads.
- ✔ Ensure that the government and relevant actors discuss and pre-approve a list of gender-sensitive relief items and actions.

NEPAL: MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY

The Humanitarian Inter-Cluster Gender Working Group in Nepal developed a resource guide which drew on good practices and lessons learned from efforts to integrate gender equality during the 2015 earthquake. The guide describes how coordination responsibilities under the leadership of the Nepal UN Coordinator (UNC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) assisted the response to protect and promote the human rights of women, girls, boys and men, taking account of their diversity, and reflect their needs, interests, resources and capacities in preparedness and response plans. It includes a list of key actions across clusters.

Source: [Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Preparedness and Response in Nepal: A Resource Guide](#) (2016).

DELIVERING THE RESPONSE: GENDER IN RESPONSE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Gender response in emergencies: planning

OVERVIEW

Once a crisis starts, new information becomes available and relevant. Gender analysis looks at the different needs, priorities and capacities of women and men, taking account of age and background, and how these change in the course of an emergency. A response that fails to measure and address gender-related needs and capacities will not generate programmes that are effective and of a high standard.

The urgency and demands on resources that characterize emergency settings can make data collection and analysis very difficult. In the initial rush to assist, insufficient attention may be given to gender and other diversity issues, causing long-term flaws in the response.

A guiding principle of UNHCR programming is that PoC should participate in every phase of the operation cycle, including in emergencies. Where possible, discussions exclusively for women and exclusively for men should be held to allow individuals

and groups to express themselves freely. Where opportunities to consult are limited, as they are at the outset of an emergency, priority should be given to women and girls.

It is also important to evaluate the influence of the environment and context. Urban, rural and camp settings are highly diverse. They create a variety of opportunities and protection risks for women and men of different ages and backgrounds. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the context's impacts on gender relations and on operations and coordination.

KEY ACTIONS

Immediate

- ✔ Map communities to ensure that plans and interventions recognize and address the diversity of their members.
- ✔ Where UNHCR is responsible for this function, individually register all women and girls, giving particular attention to those with special needs (such as pregnant and lactating women, single mothers, older women and women with disabilities).
- ✔ Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for SGBV. Operationalize the four main referral pathways (safety and security, legal, medical, psychosocial) and clarify UNHCR's role with regard to them.
- ✔ Consult women, girls, men and boys of different backgrounds, from both refugee and host communities, when designing protection and assistance programmes and propose solutions. When resources or time restrict consultation, prioritize women and girls, making sure their participation is meaningful, they are able to speak freely and decision-making is influenced by their needs and challenges.
- ✔ Identify potential risks, including SEA, and take immediate steps to mitigate and address them.²⁴
- ✔ Identify and train community networks in refugee and host communities who can support outreach programmes. Confirm the networks include women and facilitate women's participation in these networks.

- ✔ Train partners and male and female enumerators to enable them to reach out effectively to all members of the community.
- ✔ Select indicators to measure the extent to which identified needs and priorities are met and gender inequalities change.
- ✔ Work to persuade government and partners that women should be represented in response planning on the same basis as men, including women of different ages and backgrounds; and in the same manner should hold management and leadership positions in decision-making processes.²⁵

In the following weeks

- ✔ Continue to work with PoC to identify their needs and protection risks. Adopt participatory approaches and use a variety of communication methods and tools to ensure that all groups in the community can participate.
- ✔ Expand the collection of data disaggregated by age, sex, disability and other diversity considerations. Integrate the data in programme designs, outputs and country operating plans.
- ✔ Based on sex, age, disability and other diversity analysis, assign funding for gender-related interventions in operating plans and budgets; where necessary, budget for a comprehensive gender analysis.
- ✔ Programmes facilitating early recovery must include measures for women, girls, men and boys based on gender analysis.
- ✔ Apply the [IASC Gender with Age Marker](#) to these processes to ensure gender and age considerations are integrated in all emergency responses from the planning stage onwards.
- ✔ To obtain gender expertise, make use of rosters and Gender Focal Points. Draw on senior colleagues who have technical experience in gender equality integration.
- ✔ Invest in and develop the capacity of colleagues and partners to promote gender equality in humanitarian action. Make use of programmes offered by the Global Learning and Development Centre and other agencies.

- ✔ Set aside funds for coordination, including budgets to develop gender expertise and gender-specific activities.
- ✔ Map and establish partnerships with other actors who work on gender equality issues and integrate them in country and regional emergency preparedness plans.
- ✔ Cooperate in sectoral and cross-sectoral assessments and other efforts to integrate gender across sectors.

Gender response in emergencies: Implementation and monitoring

OVERVIEW

By this point in the emergency, gender analysis has become routinely integrated in the implementation and review of response programmes; gender-related information has accumulated; colleagues with specific expertise on gender are operational; AGD-appropriate results and indicators, including transformative results, are integrated and monitored; and feedback collection and handling is taking place.

UNHCR operations promote the participation of women in leadership and management structures and processes (such as camp management committees), encouraging shared decision-making and equalizing gender roles in community participation and mobilization. Additionally, creative and varied means and channels of communication should be in use to reach all groups in the community.

Remote programming has become the reality in many insecure contexts. The use of remote and mobile data collection, call centres, hotlines and third-party monitoring have accordingly expanded as well. As a result, it has become necessary to evaluate the gender impact of these changes. For example, displaced women and girls may become more difficult to reach because they are illiterate or have less access than men to mobile phones and other technologies, or because no female enumerators are available in their location.

Another challenge posed by remote management, especially where third parties are responsible for delivering and monitoring assistance, is how to ensure

joint accountability and protect PoC from abuses and rights violations by those who assist them.

BANGLADESH: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Women community outreach members, community groups and elected leaders contributed to improved identification of female refugees at heightened risk, independent access to information for women and girls, and the provision of culturally sensitive peer support on issues of trafficking, early marriage, girls' education and health.

Source: UNHCR's Approach to Age, Gender and Diversity (2019)

KEY ACTIONS

🔔 Immediate

- ✔ Give PoC, including men and women of all ages and backgrounds, accurate information about their entitlements, the roles and responsibilities of UNHCR and its partners, and how programmes work.
- ✔ Wherever possible, in line with the 2018 AGD policy, ensure that women are the primary recipients of assistance.
- ✔ Integrate sex, age, disability and other diversity disaggregated data in reporting on interventions and results.
- ✔ Integrate data from gender analysis in monitoring and evaluation systems.
- ✔ Establish safe, accessible and responsive systems for collecting and responding to feedback.²⁶ Take care to include women and girls and other potentially marginalized groups.
- ✔ Find out what safety and security concerns women and men have about the assistance and services that UNHCR provides. Take steps to resolve them.
- ✔ Ensure that 50 per cent of those who participate in the management and leadership structures of programmes UNHCR supports are women. Develop context-specific ways of facilitating this participation, including by having single-sex meetings.

- ✔ Strengthen the provision of individual protection documentation for women and girls. Encourage partners, including the government, to do likewise.
- ✔ Identify and reduce barriers to women's and girls' participation in and access to humanitarian services and assistance. (Provide fast-track or separate queuing systems, transport, home delivery, etc.)
- ✔ Where community facilities are shared, ensure that safe and secure latrines, showers and similar facilities are segregated by gender, to improve protection.
- ✔ Ensure that women and girls, including those at risk, have equal access to livelihood projects.
- ✔ Establish a gender-balanced team that can effectively reach out to all groups in the community.
- ✔ To prevent, mitigate and respond to SGBV, ensure adequate technical support is available.
- ✔ Ensure that all those responsible for monitoring and implementing activities possess essential gender expertise and understanding.
- ✔ Enrich the range of communication channels to ensure all groups in the community have access to information.
- ✔ Ensure that measuring and monitoring systems are gender sensitive, and where possible continue to use the IASC gender with age marker for monitoring. At a minimum, employ sex, age and disability disaggregated data both for targeting and to understand outcomes, including the unintended outcomes for women, men, girls or boys.
- ✔ Revise and adjust programmes according to gendered information provided by monitoring exercises.
- ✔ Systematically collect and document promising practices and lessons learned on gender, including through year-end reporting.

SAFE SPACES NETWORKS IN THE AMERICAS

Safe Spaces Networks established in each country bordering Venezuela, include organizations providing holistic services for SGBV survivors. Similarly, five local networks in Apure, Táchira, Zulia, Bolívar and Caracas carry out activities favouring identification of SGBV incidents and promoting a minimum package of accessible services (psychosocial support; medical services; sexual and reproductive health services; legal assistance; case management).

Source: UNHCR's Approach to Age, Gender and Diversity (2019)

🕒 In the following weeks

- ✔ Strengthen colleagues' ability to do gender analysis.
- ✔ Strengthen and expand systems for collecting and responding to feedback and complaints. Make sure that women and girls and other potentially marginalized groups have access.

LEADING AND COORDINATING: GENDER IN COORDINATION, PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

OVERVIEW

No single organization or actor alone can address the diverse needs of women, men, girls and boys. To promote gender in emergencies, coordination is vital. It can involve exchanging information, joint assessment and planning, programming or resource mobilization.

At the same time, it is necessary to apply different levels of influence, for which all the skills, strategies and approaches are unlikely to be found in one organization. Coordination and partnerships between bodies, including local bodies, that have different functions and scale, is critical. Such "vertical" alliances can increase UNHCR's effectiveness and improve gender outcomes during a response.

UNHCR's AGD policy recognizes the need to work with other actors, including governments, to address inequality and build environments that empower disenfranchised people.

RWANDA: ASSESSING GENDER ISSUES IN CAMPS

UNHCR Rwanda and UN WOMEN sponsored and co-facilitated a joint inter-agency gender assessment in six camps. The assessment identified good practices when addressing gender equality concerns in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and health, as well as multi-sectoral support for survivors of SGBV and child abuse. The challenges included: low female refugee representation in leadership positions, disparities between men and women in health outcomes, harmful coping mechanisms among girls and women in long-term camps. The assessment made recommendations relevant to each sector considered.

Source: UNHCR, *AGD Accountability Report* (2016).

KEY ACTIONS

Immediate

- ✔ Incorporate gender-related information and analysis in sectoral response plans.
 - ✔ Consult and participate in inter-agency and other emergency coordination mechanisms on gender (GenCaps, gender theme groups, the GBV sub-cluster, etc.).
 - ✔ Make use of partnerships and cross-sectoral collaboration to explore creative ways to promote gender equality in key sectors (protection; camp coordination and camp management (CCCM); shelter; WASH; etc.).
 - ✔ Make sure that relevant sectors (WASH, health, fuel and energy, livelihoods, food security, education, shelter, CCCM) act to prevent and respond to SGBV and address its links to gender inequality.
 - ✔ Make use of local, regional and global gender capacity, knowledge and expertise.
 - ✔ Encourage the inclusion of local groups on gender equality and women's rights in coordination structures.
 - ✔ Identify opportunities to lead or coordinate gender initiatives (to adopt an AGD approach to emergency preparedness and response, for example).
- ✔ Encourage UNHCR's partners to familiarize themselves and comply with relevant standards and tools on gender and be accountable to PoC.
 - ✔ Develop advocacy and resource mobilization messages for donors and other stakeholders that promote and explain the value of gender work in emergencies.
 - ✔ Help to include gender needs in Flash Appeals, consolidated appeal processes (CAPs) and other consolidated appeals.

In the following weeks

- ✔ Take steps to ensure that programmes and the humanitarian response as a whole are robustly and clearly accountable with respect to gender equality.
- ✔ Deliver gender programming on the scale that is needed and as is indicated by gender analysis.
- ✔ Encourage alliances on gender equality to be cooperative and complementary. Assist them to empower women locally, nationally and globally.
- ✔ Expand and diversify partnerships, including with women's organizations. Develop partnerships that empower women and girls who live in restrictive or challenging environments.
- ✔ In alliance with others, make sure that programmes that promote gender equality are evidence-based.

RESOURCES

CARE, [Gender and Localizing Aid: The potential of partnerships to deliver](#) (2017).

CARE, [Preparing a Rapid Gender Analysis \(Gender in Emergencies Guidance Note\)](#).

CARE, [Women and Girls in Emergencies](#) (2018).

IASC, [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#) (2015).

IASC, [Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA](#) (2012).

IASC, [The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#) (2018).

IASC, [The IASC Gender with Age Marker \(GAM\)](#) (2018).

OCHA, "Gender and Preparedness" in [Gender Toolkit](#) (2012).

UN Secretary-General, [Bulletin: Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), ST/SGB/2003/13.

UNHCR, [Action Map on PSEA](#).

UNHCR, [Emergency Handbook](#) (2015, 4th ed.).

UNHCR, Module 16: [Addressing SGBV in Emergencies](#), in [SGBV Prevention and Response](#) (2016).

UNHCR, [Policy on Age, Gender, and Diversity](#) (2018), UNHCR/HCP/2018/1.

UNHCR, [Policy on Alternatives to Camps](#) (2014).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ For more, see the “Rationale for the Systematic Application of Gender Equality” subsection in the introductory section of the Gender Equality Toolkit.
- ² For more see the [IASC GBV Guidelines](#) and UNHCR [SGBV Prevention and Response Training Package](#)
- ³ UNHCR, *Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity* (2018), p. 3. At: <https://www.unhcr.org/5aa13c0c7.pdf>
- ⁴ UNHCR, *UNHCR Commitments to Refugee Women* (2001) were updated in the Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (2018). The 2001 Commitments to Refugee Women is at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/479f3b2a2.html>.
- ⁵ UNHCR, *Strategic Directions 2017–2021* (2017), pp. 24–25. At: <https://www.unhcr.org/5894558d4.pdf>
- ⁶ For more, see UNHCR, *Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons in Forced Displacement* (2011). At: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4e6073972.pdf>. See also UNHCR, *Working with Persons with Disabilities in Forced Displacement* (Need to Know Guidance Series, 2011). At: <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/manuals/4ec3c81c9/working-persons-disabilities-forced-displacement.html>.
- ⁷ UN Women, “Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Settings” (2015). At: <https://wps.unwomen.org/protecting/>
- ⁸ UN Women, at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures#notes>.
- ⁹ At: <http://www.unhcr.org/women.html>.
- ¹⁰ At: <https://bit.ly/2DjFm8j>
- ¹¹ At: <https://www.unhcr.org/5a86b5237.pdf>
- ¹² At: <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/the-situation/>
- ¹³ At: <https://bit.ly/2XPhR08>
- ¹⁴ At: <https://bit.ly/2QSNPXN>
- ¹⁵ At: <https://bit.ly/33rxA6K>
- ¹⁶ At <https://bit.ly/2Dnu1Us>
- ¹⁷ Minimum preparedness actions (MPAs) are activities that all relevant operations must undertake in advance to prepare for an anticipated refugee emergency. This tool focuses on actions that are relevant to gender. See UNHCR, *Emergency Handbook* at: <https://emergency.unhcr.org/>
- ¹⁸ For more, see the partnership and coordination section below.
- ¹⁹ UNHCR, *Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies* (2014). At: <https://bit.ly/2rynuDH>
- ²⁰ For more on this, see UNHCR’s SGBV guidelines.
- ²¹ UNHCR’s course in prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the UN’s course on prevention of harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority are both mandatory for all UNHCR personnel.
- ²² Refer to [Module 16](#) of UNHCR’s training package on SGBV prevention and response (see key resources below) and the [IASC GBV Guidelines](#) for more information.
- ²³ For an overview of PSEA actions in an emergency, see UNHCR’s compliance with the SG’s bulletin on special measures for PSEA. At: <https://bit.ly/2Op5nte>.
- ²⁴ Further guidance and information on SGBV can be found in UNHCR, [Addressing SGBV in Emergencies \(Module 16\)](#); and IASC, [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#).
- ²⁵ It is to be noted that UNHCR’s results framework requires 50% female representation and participation in all decision-making structures as part of UNHCR’s commitment to the Grand Bargain.
- ²⁶ This can be achieved, for example, through community meetings, focus group discussions, hotlines, interactive methods of communication or outreach by male or female volunteers.



📷 Foni Joyce Vuni, 25, a Youth Delegate whose parents fled from conflict in Sudan in 1991, speaks at the High Commissioner's Dialogue at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. © UNHCR/Jean Marc Ferré



TOOL 3
INCREASING AND ENHANCING
THE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

DELEGATE

INTRODUCTION

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For UNHCR, the participation of persons of concern, especially enhancing women and girls' participation, is a strategic imperative. It has been identified as one of UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities for many years. The participation of women and girls in leadership and management structures in particular is a key commitment made by UNHCR and supported by various internal and external policy frameworks; it is also a key element for gender mainstreaming.

This tool focuses on UNHCR's commitment to ensure that women and girls of concern can actively and meaningfully participate on equal terms in decision-making, including in management and leadership structures. The tool is divided into two parts. The first focuses on UNHCR's policy frameworks regarding the participation of women and girls. The second highlights practical actions to support colleagues in addressing some of the barriers that limit or prevent the meaningful participation of women and girls in interventions as well as in decision-making and leadership. The section provides pointed tips and guidance to 1) assess the level of participation; 2) address constraints and barriers; 3) move to active and meaningful participation in UNHCR's Operations Management Cycle; and 4) engage with men and boys.

UNHCR'S POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

WHAT DOES EMPOWERMENT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Under the 2018 Age, Gender and Diversity policy, UNHCR has undertaken to strengthen both participation and inclusion in the context of achieving accountability to persons of concern (PoC). The policy affirms that a participatory and inclusive approach is central to UNHCR's community-based approach and to its protection programmes.¹ According to the policy, "at a minimum, country operations will employ participatory methodologies at each stage of the operations management cycle to incorporate the capacities, priorities of women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds into protection, assistance and solutions programmes."²

UNHCR's commitment to ensure that all persons of concern, including women and girls, can participate equally, actively and meaningfully in decisions that affect them is in line with numerous international human rights laws and policies, including the [Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women](#) (CEDAW, 1979) and [UN Security Council Resolution 1325](#) on women, peace and security ([SCR 1325](#), 2000).³ More recently, The Global Compact on Refugees explicitly calls for the "meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls".⁴

In this regard, **meaningful participation** implies "the full and equal involvement of women (and girls) in all decision-making processes and activities in the public and private spheres that affect their lives and the life of their community. It also includes working with the community, especially men, to open the space for women to participate and support their participation."⁵ Concretely, the participation of women and girls is meaningful when they are not merely spectators but active participants in decision-making: sharing ideas, providing input, determining priorities, setting agendas and participating in solutions.

Note that not everyone is equally positioned to participate, especially within decision-making and leadership structures. There are often gendered and other barriers that determine or influence the possibility, scope and meaningfulness of participation. These include power imbalances, gender inequalities, social and legal status, domestic and household responsibilities, physical capabilities, education and resources, among others. To ensure participation, these barriers must be identified and addressed.

Empowerment is critical to women and girls' meaningful participation and has both individual and community dimensions. "At its simplest, empowerment consists of providing support and capacity building to affected populations so that they have the knowledge and the opportunity to take informed decisions, provide solutions and take part in decision-making. Empowerment is a process – the process through which women (and men) in disadvantaged positions increase their access to knowledge, resources and decision-making power, and raise their awareness of how to participate in their communities, in order to have greater control over their own environment and their future."⁶

BOX 1: WHAT DOES EMPOWERMENT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Empowerment is not something that is done for women. Rather, it is a process that engages women in reflection, inquiry, and action. It "refers to a range of activities, from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilization, which challenge basic power relations. For individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systemic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationships. Empowerment therefore is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces that marginalize women and other disadvantaged [groups] in a given context."⁷

TAKING ACTION TO PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Having adopted the Commitments to Refugee Women in 2001, UNHCR has undertaken to mainstream the inclusion of women in decision-making processes. An important step in this direction is the inclusion in UNHCR's global strategic priorities (GSPs) of a gender-specific impact indicator (“% of active female participants in leadership/management structures”). GSPs are indicators drawn from the results-based management (RBM) framework that set key priorities for UNHCR operations worldwide.

The gender-specific indicator was included because UNHCR recognizes the positive impact of women and girls' participation in decision-making processes, as well as the harmful influence of discriminatory practices, persistent institutional and structural barriers, restrictive gender norms, limited literacy and education levels, and the competing and burdensome responsibilities that prevent many women from taking leadership roles. UNHCR also recognizes that discrimination and gender-related inequalities, which disproportionately disadvantage women and girls, increase sharply during conflicts and in post-conflict and forced displacement settings. In particular, women and girls are at greater risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV),⁸ while, when they are separated from male family members, their productive and reproductive tasks (caring for children, elderly persons, sick and injured family members) become heavier.⁹

SPECIFIC EFFORTS ARE THEREFORE NEEDED TO:

- ➔ assess the degree to which women and girls of concern participate in decision-making structures and processes;
- ➔ understand the barriers that prevent them from participating; and
- ➔ take targeted actions to remove barriers so that they may participate actively and meaningfully.

In recognition of the above, UNHCR Operations have worked to reduce barriers to women and girls' active and meaningful participation. Such efforts include providing leadership training to women; advocating for women's rights; supporting women's committees; providing literacy programmes; supporting women-led efforts; creating or supporting income-generating activities; and raising awareness of gender roles in the community.

In 2018, an analysis of performance revealed that 55 per cent of the 58 situations reporting on women's participation in leadership and management structures maintained or increased the participation of women in decision-making and leadership.¹⁰ This demonstrates the commitment and achievements in this regard, while highlighting the importance of strengthening women's participation across operations.

HOW TO ASSESS LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

The section below lists questions and considerations that are helpful when assessing barriers, gaps and needs with respect to participation, including current participation in decision-making structures and processes.

Assessing participation of women and girls of concern in decision-making structures and processes

TO ASSESS THE DEGREE TO WHICH WOMEN AND GIRLS OF CONCERN, INCLUDING THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES:

Map formal and informal community decision-making structures and processes in both camp and non-camp settings, and women's and girls' participation in them.

- ➡ What proportion of **women and girls** participate in such structures and processes? (What percentage of all the participants are female?)
- ➡ Does participation vary according to the **topics discussed**? (Consider, for example, security and protection from violence, nutrition, education, health, assistance and infrastructure development.)
- ➡ Can women and girls **access and manage information** on the same terms as men and boys? (Compare, for example, their literacy and education, and the communication methods and channels they use.)
- ➡ What quality of participation are women and girls achieving? Are they **able to express themselves freely**? Do they have the **capacity to express themselves**? (Consider, for example, their literacy and education, and also the influence of traditional norms. Are women and men allowed to speak in public forums? Are public forums designed and set up in ways that encourage or discourage women's and girls' participation?)
- ➡ Are women and girls of concern **able to initiate new discussions** and put new topics on the agenda?

- ➡ Are women's and girls' voices heard when decisions are made? Are **their opinions taken into account**?
- ➡ In the past year, have women's recommendations been translated into action?
- ➡ What mechanisms are in place to provide feedback on input, concerns and priorities that women and girls have vocalized?
- ➡ Are there representative numbers of women leaders in the community?
- ➡ Are women leaders involved in decision-making? If yes, how and to what extent (substantial, non-significant, only on certain topics)?
- ➡ Do women leaders represent the needs and priorities of all women and girls in the displaced community, including older women, women and girls with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ women and girls, and those who belong to minority, indigenous or disadvantaged communities? If yes, do all women leaders have the same capacities to participate in decision-making and influence decisions?

TO ASSESS AND ANALYSE FACTORS THAT PREVENT WOMEN AND GIRLS OF CONCERN FROM PARTICIPATING ON EQUAL TERMS WITH MEN AND BOYS.

Consider norms that may influence participation.

Carefully analyse and identify:

Specific norms that prevent women and girls from participating in decision-making processes on equal terms with men and boys. (Consider laws; discriminatory norms and social patterns; religious norms and textbooks; and customary and traditional practices, including the allocation of productive and reproductive labour between family members.)

Discrimination or exclusion that affects women and girls of concern. Are women and girls excluded from all decision-making structures or processes? Do they discuss and take decisions on some specific matters (for example, matters related to the private or domestic sphere) but not others?

The capacity of all women and girls to participate and influence decisions equally. Do certain groups



Members of a Syrian women's solidarity group meet in Istanbul. © UNHCR/Claire Thomas

of women or girls suffer more discrimination or exclusion than others? Consider:

- Women and girls of various ages (children, youth, older persons).
- Women and girls who have special legal or protection needs (unaccompanied and separated girls; women and girls with disabilities or serious health conditions; pregnant or lactating women; single mothers).
- Women and girls from minority or disadvantaged groups (in terms of nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, language and socio-economic status, among others).

Consider the design and implementation of UNHCR's programme interventions. ¹¹

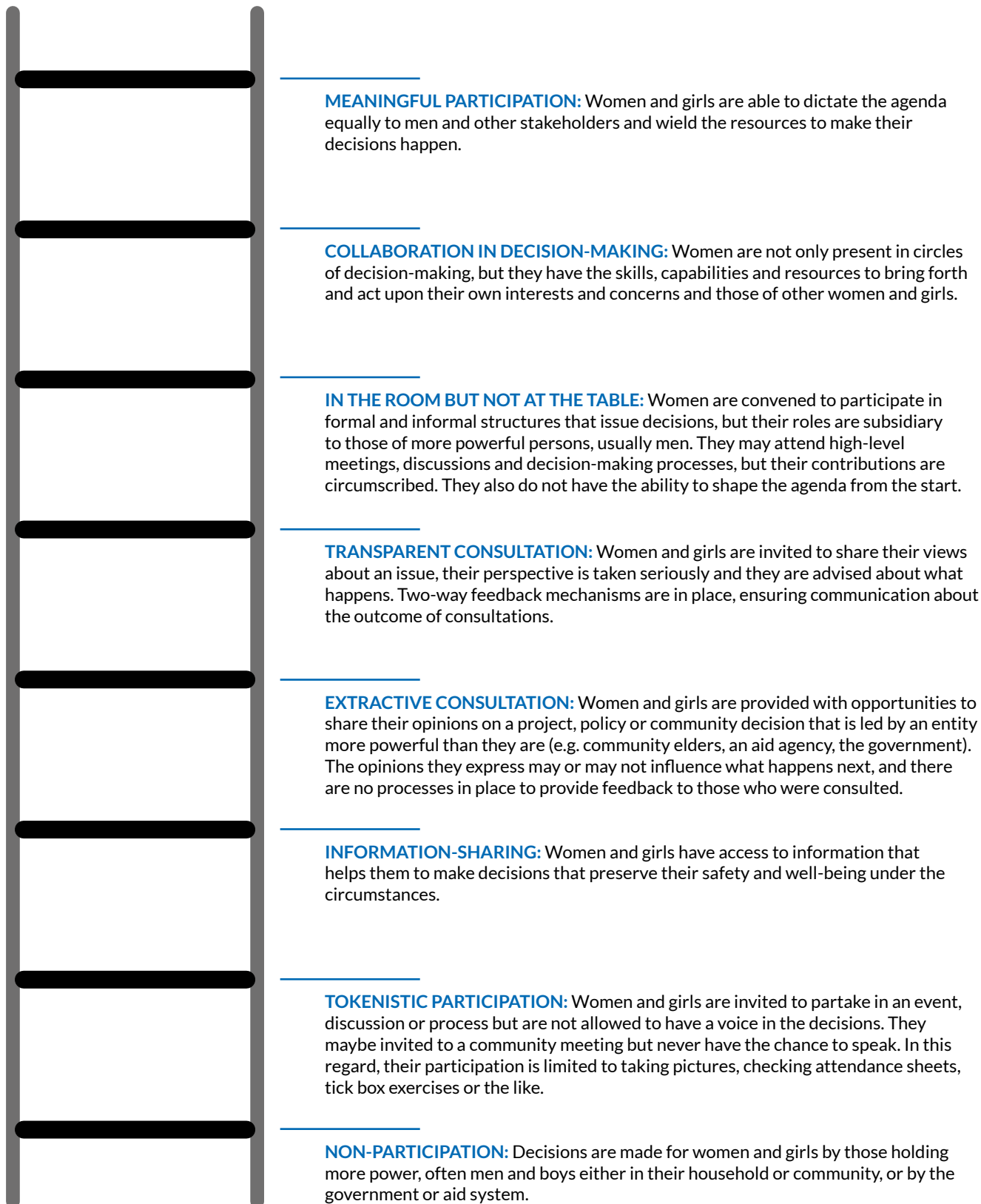
- Do assessment exercises duly **identify the different capacities** of women and girls of concern (for example: their capacity to access and manage information, assistance or services; move about freely; ensure their physical safety; and express themselves freely in public)?

- **Are these different capacities adequately considered and acted upon** when programmes are designed, planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated to ensure that individuals and groups of women and girls of concern participate on equal terms?
- What level or types of participation (if any) do UNHCR interventions facilitate and promote? What are some steps that can be taken to improve the meaningfulness of participation within these interventions? Note that the ladder of participation is a useful resource in this regard (see below).

Note: See UNHCR, Gender Equality Tool on Gender Equality in UNHCR Operations Management (Gender Equality Tool 1 of 5) for more information on how to integrate a gender approach effectively and increase the participation of women and girls of concern in all phases of UNHCR's Operations Management Cycle.

THE LADDER OF PARTICIPATION

The Ladder of Participation is a helpful resource to conceptualize and assess the quality of participation, not only for women, but also for persons of concern from all groups. Forms of participation range from empowering to tokenistic. This ladder of participation provides a range of steps with specific examples, arranged in ascending order from non-participation or tokenistic forms to more meaningful and empowering forms.



Data sources to use when analysing barriers to participation:

Secondary sources. Consult relevant documents available nationally and in UNHCR. (See UNHCR, *Gender Equality Tool 2 – Gender Equality in UNHCR the Operations Management Cycle, Step 2: Reviewing secondary data.*)

Primary sources. Collect primary data in consultation with PoC, including women and girls with special needs and women and girls of concern who already participate in decision-making. (See UNHCR, *Gender Equality Tool 2 – Gender Equality in UNHCR the Operations Management Cycle, Step 3: Collecting primary data.*)

BOX 2: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY.¹²

Several United Nations Security Council resolutions (SCR) on women, peace and security state that women should participate on equal terms and be fully involved in peace and security efforts, and should play a greater role in decisions associated with conflict prevention and resolution.¹³ Despite these, **women's participation in peace and security related decisions, including peace negotiations and peacebuilding initiatives, continue to be insufficient.**¹⁴ This is particularly true of forcibly displaced and stateless women, who are rarely included in national or local peace and security policymaking. Targeted action is needed to redress this significant gap.

HOW TO ADDRESS CONSTRAINTS AND BARRIERS

Across many societies, women and girls experience the disproportionate and systematic impacts of gender-based discrimination enshrined and embedded in laws, institutions and social norms, as well as attitudes and practices. Discriminatory gender roles often mean that women and girls are considered to be dependent on their husbands or older male relatives.¹⁵ As such, they are often not consulted and their views are not heard on issues that directly affect their lives. These exclusionary practices take place at all levels: household, community, national and international. In situations of forced displacement, women and girls experience persistent exclusion from decision-making processes and forums, including on

important long-term decisions that affect them such as whether to return, integrate locally or relocate.¹⁶

Below are some examples of practical actions that can be taken to promote the participation of women and girls (bearing in mind local context and whether such actions are relevant).

Barriers to the participation of women and girls in decision-making processes and actions to remove them.

BARRIER: COMPETING AND HEAVY PRODUCTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- ➔ Arrange meetings and activities at times that take account of the daily schedule of women and girls and the distance they may have to travel.
- ➔ Where possible, **compensate** the women and girls who participate for any lost income.
- ➔ Support setting up **community-based systems** to do essential tasks (prepare food, wash clothes, care for family members who are old, sick or have disabilities, etc.). **Rotate responsibilities** and actively involve **men and boys** in efforts to free time for women and girls.
- ➔ Provide **childcare and breastfeeding facilities** at the locations where meetings and activities occur.

LOCATION AND EXPOSURE TO SGBV AND OTHER RISKS

- ➔ Provide **secure transport** for women, girls and vulnerable persons to and from the locations where meetings and activities occur.
- ➔ Where feasible, establish **safe and easily accessible meeting facilities**, bearing in mind context.

BARRIER: ILLITERACY/LOWER EDUCATION LEVEL

- ➔ Promote **visual** ways to picture problems and ideas during consultations and discussions.
- ➔ Consider technologies such as voiceover applications and audio description (rather than written messages) to provide information, consult and monitor activities.¹⁷
- ➔ Use alternative means (such as **music and drama**) to help women and girls to express themselves.

- ➔ Always consider **multiple means of communication and information** to reach out to all.
- ➔ When providing assistance, take into account **alternatives to ATM and smart cards**, while ensuring these include voice output, audio and visual feedback and graphic icons to provide navigation and access.

BARRIER: LEVEL OF COMFORT IN PUBLIC, INCLUDING WHEN DEALING WITH SENSITIVE TOPICS

- ➔ Organize **separate discussion and decision-making groups** for women and girls.
- ➔ **Guarantee the confidentiality** of information that is shared.
- ➔ Use **women facilitators, enumerators and translators** so that female participants feel free to express themselves in their own terms and on sensitive topics.
- ➔ Organize **confidence-building and public-speaking training** for women and girls.
- ➔ To build their confidence and their willingness to share experiences, strengthen or encourage the formation of local **networks of women and girls of concern**.
- ➔ Promote the inclusion of women and girls of concern in **women's rights networks that are active in host communities**.

BARRIER: ACCESS TO AND USE OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- ➔ Identify **formal and informal communication channels** that women and girls use regularly and employ them to communicate relevant information about decision-making processes.
- ➔ Encourage **women community leaders and women's rights organizations** who work with PoC to promote more inclusive and comprehensive communication.
- ➔ Prepare **information tools** (for example, explanatory notes or visual materials on relevant topics) to promote open and inclusive communication with women and girls of concern.
- ➔ Place relevant information in **locations that women and girls use frequently and regularly** (for

example, women's and girls' water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, distribution points for sanitary materials, maternal health and childcare facilities, girls' educational and recreation areas, etc.).¹⁸

- ➔ Use women's rights organizations and **women's networks** to locate and communicate with women and girls of concern.

BARRIER: DISABILITY

- ➔ Organize **awareness-raising** activities at the community level that affirm the right of women and girls with disabilities to participate in decision-making processes.
- ➔ Encourage **family members** to support the same right.
- ➔ Create an **enabling environment** for women and girls of concern with disabilities. Provide information on their needs and assist them to participate in decision-making (for example, by making safe transport available to and from events, ensuring the presence of carers and facilitators, etc.).

BARRIER: MINORITY AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

- ➔ Organize **awareness-raising** activities that affirm the right of women and girls from minority and disadvantaged communities to participate in decision-making.
- ➔ Involve **female representatives** from minority and disadvantaged communities in decision-making processes.

BARRIER: SPECIAL LEGAL OR PROTECTION NEEDS

- ➔ Take into consideration the needs and constraints to participation of unaccompanied and separated girls; women and girls with disabilities or serious health conditions; pregnant and lactating women; single mothers.

BARRIER: DISCRIMINATORY ATTITUDES AND RESISTANCE TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

- ➔ Co-operate with **community leaders and women's rights advocates** that work with women and girls of concern to advance local buy-in and ensure women and girls participate in local decision-making processes, including at camp level.

- ➔ **Establish quotas for women’s participation** in all camp-based decision-making mechanisms. Include quotas for women of different ages and women and girls with special needs.
- ➔ **Persuade local authorities** and community actors (including women’s rights organizations and women’s networks) to set minimum **quotas** for women and girls from forcibly displaced and host communities in decision-making mechanisms.
- ➔ Involve men and boys in **gender equality awareness-raising initiatives** at the community level. Encourage them to understand and support the specific concerns of women and girls.
- ➔ Show how women’s and girls’ participation and knowledge can improve UNHCR interventions and enhance the protection of individuals and the community as a whole.
- ➔ **Identify male allies**, including community and religious leaders, to act as gender equality champions.

Note: Table 4 of this tool provides more detailed information on how to involve men and boys in efforts to promote gender equality and increase the participation of women and girls in decision-making.

PROMISING PRACTICE 1: SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSING CONSTRAINTS AND BARRIERS.

Efforts are made to develop initiatives that meet the needs and interests of women and girls and encompass home-based livelihoods activities and childcare. In **Burkina Faso, Jordan, Uganda** and **Yemen**, daycare in camps and community centres allows mothers to continue their studies and to engage in livelihoods and community activities.

Source: UNHCR’s Approach to Age, Gender and Diversity (2019).

PROMISING PRACTICE 2: SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

In 2015, Syrian refugee women in the Turkish city of Gaziantep established the Women’s Committee of the Future, supported by the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), a non-governmental organization (NGO). It is the first urban network of Syrian women refugees and asylum-seekers in the city. The network is a support group for its 15 members and works to empower refugee women, increase Syrian refugees’ access to services and enhance their protection through advocacy, rights education and community-based campaigns. UNHCR has supported the group’s activities and helped network members to build their capacity.

Source: UNHCR, [Gender equality promising practices – Syrian refugees in the Middle East and North Africa](#) (2017).

MOVING TO ACTIVE AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN UNHCR’S OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT CYCLE

As outlined above, women, girls, men and boys of concern, including those with specific needs and protection concerns, have the right to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them during every stage of UNHCR’s operations management cycle (assessment, planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

Table 3 below¹⁹ highlights some of the actions that UNHCR Operations and local, national and international partners can take to strengthen women’s and girls’ active and meaningful participation. These actions are illustrative, not exhaustive.

Recommended actions to strengthen the participation and empowerment of women and girls of concern

COORDINATE

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ Check with other **UN agencies** what programmes they run. Discover to what extent women and girls of concern access their empowerment and other programmes.
- ➔ Identify **women's and adolescent girls' groups** in the displaced and returnee communities; local women's associations; NGOs that have experience of gender analysis, women's leadership training and working with children of different ages, especially girls.
- ➔ If relevant, encourage the creation of a group in the community to promote the empowerment of women and girls.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ Work with **schools, teachers, parent-teachers' associations, health centres and adolescents' groups** to identify the best ways to promote girls' participation and empowerment.

ASSESS, ANALYSE AND DESIGN ACCORDINGLY

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ Undertake **participatory assessments** with displaced women, girls, men and boys. Analyse the extent of women's participation and identify obstacles they face.
- ➔ Together with women and girls, analyse their **capacities and skills** and identify **gaps** in support.
- ➔ Agree with the community and partners on **targeted actions** that will enhance meaningful participation by women and girls.
- ➔ Design activities (for example, leadership training, rights training, discussion of SCR 1325) that will create a supportive environment. Include **activities with men and boys**. (See Table 4.)
- ➔ Take a **life-cycle approach** to assessment. Discuss with girls the discrimination they will face from

birth until adulthood. Help them identify points of vulnerability in their lives and design appropriate responses that will help overcome them.

- ➔ Assess and design **communication, dialogue and feedback systems** that use preferred trusted channels and means that are appropriate and accessible to women and girls from diverse backgrounds.
- ➔ Put in place measures to operationalize the **Accountability to Affected People (AAP)** framework and the **prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)**.
- ➔ Apply the [IASC Gender with Age Marker](#)²⁰ to assess the level of gender- and age-related integration into planning of interventions.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ Ensure that **disaggregated data on girls and boys** of different ages is collected and updated systematically. This is necessary to ensure that decisions are informed, and that girls are taken into account and are not invisible during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- ➔ Do not assume that adults necessarily understand what is important for girls (or boys).
- ➔ Create opportunities for girls to **articulate their own concerns**, priorities and interests (for example, through participatory or self-initiated processes of consultation).
- ➔ Use **child-friendly and age-appropriate strategies** (for instance, games, role plays, drama, drawing, etc.) to allow girls (and boys) to express their concerns and ideas.
- ➔ Make sure that planning takes account of the views that girls (and boys) express. Make sure they are able to contribute to programmes they have identified as priorities.

INTERVENE TO PROTECT

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ With the community, develop **specific actions** that enable women and girls to participate meaningfully in community meetings. For example, hold preparatory meetings in advance with women and girls; allot a specific time in meetings when only women and girls will speak; ensure that the timing, location and set up of meetings enable women's and girls' participation; etc.
- ➔ Use preferred, trusted and accessible **communication, feedback and complaints mechanisms** that women and girls have identified.
- ➔ Proactively **inform women** about forthcoming meetings, training sessions, etc., and help them to prepare what they want to say well in advance.
- ➔ Ensure that women at heightened risk have avenues and mechanisms available to them that enable them to raise concerns and participate in decisions. Make sure they are guaranteed **confidentiality** with respect to their personal situation and are not exposed to further harm or trauma.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ Create **safe and supportive girl-friendly spaces** and environments where girls can express themselves, learn about their rights, develop strategies to protect their safety and their health, practise team building, develop leadership and play.
- ➔ Build **girls' social assets**:
 - Inform them of their **rights** and help them acquire skills to exercise them.
 - Help them to **build connections** with other girls; develop safe spaces to meet friends; have adults in their lives to whom they can turn in times of need; and find mentors to help them reach their future goals.
 - Create opportunities for girls to experience being part of a team and to develop **leadership skills**.
 - Enable them to find their **own voice** and recognize that they can identify their needs and act on them as full members of society.

- Encourage girls in later childhood and early adolescence to see themselves as economic actors and acquire **basic financial literacy**, enabling them to find decent work.

- ➔ At puberty, work with girls to help them understand the changes in their bodies. Help them to be aware of their **sexual and reproductive rights** and to choose when and how they wish to become sexually active, including whether and when they eventually wish to enter into marital partnerships and have children.
- ➔ Give girls and boys of all ages the space to participate.²¹
- ➔ Encourage girls to **play sports**, including at after-school clubs and other recreational facilities.
- ➔ Provide care arrangements for the children of **teenage mothers** and assist the mothers to continue or return to their education.

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL CAPACITY

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ Collaborate with other agencies to increase the **capacity of the national ministry responsible for women's rights**, for example by providing training, gender expertise, etc.
- ➔ When working with other ministries on issues related to women's participation, include the ministry responsible for women's rights.
- ➔ Work with structures that are negotiating return to ensure that **women participate and are fully represented in peace negotiation processes** and reconciliation and reconstruction bodies (as required by SCR 1325).

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ Work with the government (education authorities, departments that receive asylum-seekers or determine refugee status) to **improve understanding** of the value of girls' and boys' participation in projects and programmes that affect them. Take steps to reduce opposition to such participation.
- ➔ Support the **training of government and other officials** who work with girls and boys of

concern (for instance social workers and health professionals) to ensure they are aware of children's rights, are committed to the principle that children must be listened to and understand the various factors that can lead to girl children being invisible.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ Work with community leaders (women and men) to **sensitize the community** to the value of women's participation.
- ➔ Agree with the community on **representation quotas** for women before any process of election to camp committees, etc.
- ➔ Encourage and support women's **community-based organizations**.
- ➔ Before any internal or local elections, agree with the community on strategies to **increase women's participation in voting** and facilitate support for female candidates.
- ➔ Encourage women to take leadership positions. Assist them to **strengthen their negotiating skills and strategies** and become role models in their communities.
- ➔ Work with women and men to **prepare men for the changes** that will occur when women are empowered.
- ➔ Encourage men to **value their domestic contributions** (including childcare, food preparation, etc.), which help women to participate in decision-making and public life.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ Work with different groups in the community to **make them aware** of the value of gender equality as well as girls' rights and potential. Agree on strategies to support both, which include continued education and access to sports, play and health care.
- ➔ **Assist parents** to promote and protect their children's rights.
- ➔ **Involve parents, guardians, teachers, elders** and other community members in efforts to

raise awareness of the value of girls' and boys' involvement and meaningful participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects that affect them.

- ➔ Ensure processes are **transparent and honest**, and that children understand what a given programme or project is about and the boundaries of what they are able to influence.
- ➔ Involve female teachers, health workers and young women in secondary or further education. Encourage them to become **role models and mentors for girls' empowerment** and participation.

MONITOR, REPORT AND EVALUATE

MEASURES TARGETING WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- ➔ Working with women in the community, **monitor** how information is transmitted (on decisions, assistance, livelihood projects, security mechanisms, return, etc.).
- ➔ **Work with male and female community members and leaders** to monitor responses and prevent any backlash against women who speak up and participate.
- ➔ Together with women and girls, **evaluate processes** regularly and draw on their experiences to improve programme design and adapt interventions in response to new knowledge gained through feedback, in both the short and long term.²²

ADDITIONAL MEASURES SPECIFICALLY TARGETING GIRLS:

- ➔ **Agree with girls (and boys) on criteria for monitoring participation** at the outset of a programme.
- ➔ **Solicit girls' (and boys') views** on what should be evaluated and ensure girls and boys play a part in evaluation programmes.
- ➔ **Give feedback** to girls and boys on the results of monitoring and evaluations. Discuss the results with both in child-sensitive and accessible ways.

PROMISING PRACTICE 3: PROMOTING THE ACTIVE AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

UNHCR operations, including **Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Pakistan, Panama, Rwanda, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Yemen, and Zambia**, engaged women in leadership structures and roles. As such, women and girls: supported sensitizations and advocacy for women's rights; established Women's Committees to foster mediation and conflict resolution within families and communities; were engaged in decision-making processes and management related to community issues; supported distributions, protection, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), health, education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) etc.; and helped support SGBV prevention and respond to SGBV and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) cases.

Source: *UNHCR's Approach to Age, Gender and Diversity* (2019).

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH MEN AND BOYS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND ENHANCE WOMEN AND GIRL'S PARTICIPATION

As noted in previous sections, barriers that prevent women and girls from participating in decision-making processes often originate in patriarchal customs and norms, including discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. Gender equality and the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls cannot be achieved without male engagement. Reaching out to boys and young men is also critical because beliefs about gender roles are formed at an early age.

Table 4. Involving men and boys in efforts to promote the empowerment of women and girls of concern and their meaningful participation in decision-making.

BARRIERS:

- ➔ **Socialization.** In many societies, men are often expected to be in control, authoritative and successful providers and protectors. They

may also be considered solely responsible for community and family decision-making.

- ➔ **Impacts of forced displacement.** Men and boys may suffer loss of status, boredom, frustration and powerlessness due to changing gender roles. They may resort to violence or other negative coping mechanisms in response.
- ➔ **Entrenched patriarchy** may cause men to resist the empowerment of women.
- ➔ **Discrimination** against women and girls, and **SGBV**, are evidence of unequal power relations between men and women.
- ➔ **Men and boys lack opportunities to engage in open discussion** about gender roles, their fears and expectations, and ways in which they can provide support.
- ➔ Men and boys **fear derision or ridicule** by other men and boys.
- ➔ Women and girls **lack understanding of the strategic importance of male engagement.**

ACTIONS:

- ➔ **Understand gender roles, responsibilities and identities** in the local society and the impact of forced displacement on these roles, responsibilities and identities.
- ➔ **Emphasize positive norms and values** that are elements of masculine identity in local cultures and communities.
- ➔ **Engage boys of all ages**, particularly adolescents, in efforts to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls.
- ➔ Design **interventions that encourage greater ownership of gender equality by men.**
- ➔ Develop programmes that encourage **men and women to work together.**
- ➔ Plan for and **mitigate potential resentment or backlash from men and boys** that might come about as a result of attention being paid to the needs and priorities women and girls. Men might feel as if they are "last in line" due to their changing gender roles in displacement contexts. Address these concerns head on. Note that global data do not support assumptions that men and boys' needs are deprioritized; in fact, women's empowerment programming and funding targeting specific needs of women and girls remains minuscule.²³

- ➔ **Carefully design messages and organizational, programmatic and community approaches**, including leveraging the experiences and expertise of women community leaders and local gender equality stakeholders, **to secure positive change and gains made to advance the rights of women and girls.**
- ➔ **Engage with respected men** and invite them to act as agents of change and role models on gender equality and against violence against women and girls.
- ➔ Find **different and strategic entry points to discuss** gender equality and women's and girls' participation in decision-making.
- ➔ **Cooperate with human rights groups, women's rights groups and male gender-equality champions and allies.** Invite them to work with UNHCR to address gender-related discrimination and SGBV against women and girls of concern. Together, implement programmes for men and boys.
- ➔ **Work with partners and local authorities** to devise and promote educational materials for men and boys and for women and girls on gender equality, women's and girls' rights and the importance of participation, and the unacceptability of discrimination, violence and abuse.
- ➔ Identify and share **good practices when working with men and boys** to promote gender equality and strengthen the participation of women and girls in decision-making.
- ➔ Address misconceptions that men and boys might have around gender equality.
- ➔ Adopt a **rights and community-based approach** to tackling discrimination and violence against women and girls of concern. Include power analysis and gender analysis in programme design.
- ➔ Raise awareness of **unequal power relations and how discrimination can affect every member** of a community, male and female, young and old. Note that certain groups of men and boys also suffer from exclusion and that gender inequality impacts men and boys.
- ➔ **Raise the awareness of professionals** (such as health workers and teachers). Support the inclusion of gender equality in school curricula.
- ➔ **Work with groups of men and boys** in the displaced and returnee communities to:
 - Determine and understand how men and boys are socialized.
 - Teach men and boys critical thinking skills to help them question inequitable and discriminatory views and practices.
 - With men and boys, identify ways to **challenge narrow definitions and perceptions of gender roles and relations.** Show that masculinity is compatible with shared decision-making and responsibility for productive and reproductive tasks.
 - Support **creative programmes (e.g. theatre and radio)** that promote positive male roles and behaviours.
 - **Seek input from men and boys to evaluate the impact of awareness-raising initiatives.** Ask participants whether they have changed their attitudes and behaviour and whether attitudes have changed in the wider community.
 - Hold focus group discussions with women and girls to **monitor and evaluate changes in male attitudes and behaviour.**
 - Be aware that men and boys have also faced discrimination and experience human rights violations, including SGBV. Respond appropriately and apply standard operating procedures and referral mechanisms that respond and support male survivors of SGBV.

**PROMISING PRACTICE 4:
PROMOTING GLOBAL LEVEL
PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP**

In 2019 UNHCR supported a gender audit of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) and the processes leading up to it. The audit was led by refugee women from diverse backgrounds with the purpose of drawing attention to gender equality related challenges in refugee contexts and supporting integration of gender equality measures concretely through the GRF pledging process and in the identification of good practices.

RESOURCES

IASC, [Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action](#), 2018.

IASC, [Gender and Age Marker](#) (GAM).

IASC, [Policy \(and Accountability Framework\) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action](#), 2017.

IOM and Women's Refugee Commission, [Women in Displacement](#) online platform, 2018.

UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report](#), 2015

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UNHCR, [Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations](#) (2006).

UNHCR, [UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017–2021](#), June 2016.

UNHCR, [Gender equality promising practices – Syrian refugees in the Middle East and North Africa](#) (2017).

UNHCR, [Understanding Community-Based Protection \(Policy Paper\)](#), 2013.


UN Women, [Facts and figures: Peace and Security](#)"

ENDNOTES

- ¹ See UNHCR, Programming for Protection (P4P) Learning Programme (available on UNHCR's intranet), and key UNHCR protection and programming guidance tools, including: [Emergency Handbook](#) (2015); [Handbook for the protection of women and girls](#) (2008); [A Community-based approach in UNHCR operations](#) (2008); [Understanding Community-Based Protection](#) (Policy Paper, 2013); and [Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations](#) (2006).
- ² UNHCR [Age, Gender and Diversity policy](#) (2018)
- ³ For a comprehensive list of international human rights normative frameworks that affirm the right to participation of women and girls, see Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), [Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action. Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs, Equal Opportunities](#) (2006), p. 32.
- ⁴ UNHCR, [Global Compact on Refugees](#), 2018.
- ⁵ UNHCR, Gender Equality Unit, Leading the Change: A Guidance Note on Women's Participation in Decision Making (internal document), p. 3.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Srilatha Batiwala, quoted in L. V. Klasen, Miller, Clark, and Reilly, p. 9. In UNHCR, *Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls* (2008), p. 41.
- ⁸ For a detailed description of key changes that occur during forced displacement, see UNHCR, [A community-based approach in UNHCR Operations](#) (2008), Chapter 2, p. 13.

- ⁹ “Productive labour” refers to types of productive activity (for example, producing and trading in agricultural goods, or running a small business); such activities are usually paid for. “Reproductive work” refers to types of work that are necessary to the well-being of family members (for example: care of children, the elderly and people who are sick or have disabilities; collection of wood and water; food preparation; cleaning and maintaining the household, etc.); these services are not usually paid for.
- ¹⁰ [UNHCR 2018 Global Strategic Priorities Progress Report](#)
- ¹¹ Consider both interventions that UNHCR implements directly and interventions implemented with or by UNHCR partners.
- ¹² UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report](#) – 2015, p. 15.
- ¹³ United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015).
- ¹⁴ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), “Facts and figures: Peace and Security”. At: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures#notes>.
- ¹⁵ It is important to remember that “gender identities and gender roles: (i) are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes; (ii) are context and time-specific, and changeable: gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context but can change over time or due to a change in family, community or societal circumstances; (iii) may create differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities expected and assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities.” From UNHCR, Gender Equality Unit, *Leading the Change: A Guidance Note on Women’s Participation in Decision Making* (internal document), p. 4.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 5.
- ¹⁷ Technology can be both an obstacle and an enabler. In many contexts, too, men and women often differ in their use of mobile phones, e-cards and ATMs, as do the older people and people with disabilities.
- ¹⁸ Map camp areas that women and girls of concern use frequently and regularly.
- ¹⁹ Adapted from UNHCR, *ibid.*, pp. 42–44.
- ²⁰ The IASC Gender with Age Marker (GAM) replaces the old IASC Gender Marker and has been piloted since 2015. The IASC GAM codes programs and projects on a 0–4 scale, based on responses to questions about 12 key gender equality measures. The tool can be used at the design/planning stage and the monitoring stage.
- ²¹ Younger and older children have different concerns, as do girls and boys. To recognize this, it may be more effective to run separate consultations and training sessions for different age and diversity groups and sexes.
- ²² For more on gender equality considerations in evaluation, see the monitoring and evaluation section in UNHCR, **Gender Equality Tool 1 – Gender Equality in UNHCR’s Operations Management Cycle**.
- ²³ At: <https://bit.ly/2XPFISK>



 An internally displaced woman, counts money she has just received from UNHCR through its winter cash grant programme in Sana'a, Yemen. © UNHCR/Mohammed Hamoud



TOOL 4
GENDER ANALYSIS TOOL FOR
CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS IN THE
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT CYCLE

INTRODUCTION

UNHCR's Operations Management Cycle (OMC) provides clear entry points for transforming standard activities undertaken through cash-based interventions (CBIs) into ones that include the specific gendered needs of women, girls, men and boys, as well as analysing the impact of these activities with a view to advancing gender equality and supporting the empowerment of women and girls.

This gender analysis tool¹ aims to strengthen how cash-based interventions particularly impact the lives of women and girls, and how the usually process-oriented CBIs can contribute to transforming gender relations and facilitating a positive protection environment for persons of concern (PoC). This is important not only as an aspirational goal for UNHCR programmes, but also as a sustainable measure that foregrounds the strengthening of a more equitable and just society. The implementation of CBIs is not a stand-alone objective or an end itself; rather, it is a tool through which UNHCR's protection mandate can be met, with protection being incomplete without sound gender equality programming. For all these reasons, it is essential that CBIs strengthen and develop their gender analysis in order to identify and respond well to the specific gender-related needs of women and girls, boys and men, and individuals belonging to LGBTI communities. Conducting and weaving in a strong gender analysis across key stages of the CBI OMC will also allow practitioners to better understand how intersecting identities and vulnerabilities impact PoC's access, and how to mitigate and be prepared to respond more effectively.

Gender analysis helps integrate a gendered perspective into all levels of design and delivery of an intervention. Carrying out this analysis is a critical first step that will help:

- ➔ clarify how gender influences a project;
- ➔ assess the potential positive and negative impact of CBIs on women and men;
- ➔ examine the capacity of institutions, markets and the socio-cultural-political environment to address gender issues; and
- ➔ make recommendations for strengthening the project to address gender issues

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This tool covers three key areas of the CBI OMC: a) Assessment and analysis; b) Planning and Implementation; and c) Monitoring. It focuses on the gender equality dimension relating to CBIs, as a way of complementing existing tools such as the [Cash Feasibility and Response Analysis Toolkit](#). It should be noted that OMC phases are not strictly distinct from each other, with several overlaps among them. For example, monitoring has to be undertaken throughout implementation. The tool has been designed in a manner where additional activities can be added to the tables based on the diverse contexts in which the CBI is being rolled out. Given the complexity and breadth of UNHCR's operational contexts, this tool lists some of what could be considered the minimum actions to ensure that a sound gender analysis is built into the CBI.

GENDER ANALYSIS FOR CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Assessment and analysis

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- ➔ At the level of persons of concern, identify the key female and male stakeholders and their interests (positive or negative) in the project. Questions to consider include:
 - Who is most dependent on the resources at stake (women or men)? Is this a matter of livelihood or economic advantage?
 - Who has access to the market and what barriers do they face in securing such access?
 - Do women, men and LGBTI persons have equal access to the market?
- ➔ Assess the influence, importance and potential impact of the CBI on female and male stakeholders. Questions include:
 - Who has control over economic resources and decision-making within households and the community?
 - What is the role of women in leadership and decision-making processes relating to CBI?
 - How many women are engaged in income generation and what is the nature of such income generation?
- ➔ Identify how best to engage female and male stakeholders and those with specific needs (particularly those who are prioritized/targeted). Consider:
 - What process will elicit the most autonomous responses from female stakeholders in particular? Does this need to be done through consultations in same-sex groups, household visits, key informant interviews or through partners?
- ➔ At the partner level, from a gender perspective, it is important to understand stakeholders' prior experience with integrating gender equality into CBIs. Questions to consider will include:
 - How well was gender equality and diversity inclusion considered in previous similar interventions that might have been undertaken by stakeholders? Have there been any concerns regarding code of conduct and programming that does not meet "Do No Harm" requirements?
 - Is there potential for the stakeholders to take their prior experience into consideration for future collaborations?
 - Do any of the stakeholders have a visible track record of excluding women? For example, where bank accounts require women to provide consent by male family members.
 - What training does the potential partner request/require to increase gender-sensitivity and understanding of risk mitigation?
- ➔ Identify and explore the most suitable partnerships that have previous experience on gender equality integration and are able to implement these measures. Questions to answer are:
 - Who are the best-suited external partners among non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, Financial Service Providers (FSPs) and traders who can implement a CBI that is equitable and takes into consideration diversity and inclusion needs?
 - At the level of the multi-functional team (MFT), it is important to consider if there is existing diversity, know-how, willingness and capacity to address and respond to gender equality integration within the CBI. It will be important to explore how this can be rectified if this

does not exist. Additional questions to answer include:

- Is there gender equality-related expertise within the MFT and is the gender focal points network or the gender working group involved in this project?
- The relevant cluster or working group for the CBI should seek out and advocate for gender-based violence (GBV) situation analysis, which can include information on reported incidents, anecdotal reporting and other information available in joint or sectoral assessments and analyses, and analysis from GBV specialists.³
- During the conduct of the Cash Protection Risk Matrix ensure that sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) specialists/focal points have been consulted.
- Consult the GBV Risk Analysis tool in the GBV Cash Compendium for a list of specific issue areas and topics that need to be considered during assessment and analysis.
- Have the stakeholders, particularly those with direct engagement with recipients, completed code of conduct and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) training?

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND CAPACITY

- ➔ Identify the specific needs and capacity of women and girls through the adaptation of standard assessment forms used for CBIs. For example, when assessment forms say, “Assess needs of persons of concern,” this must be broken down further to “assess the needs of women” and “assess needs of men.” In most cases the unseen sex is female,⁴ and so articulation of assessment questions which ask questions broadly on “persons of concern” do not provide adequate information.
- ➔ Where it does not create a protection risk, gather qualitative information on persons from LGBTI communities. This must be done in a cautious manner and with confidentiality standards put in place to ensure the Do No Harm principle.
- ➔ Disaggregate primary and secondary data gathered through assessments. When data are not disaggregated they do not provide any information on the status of women in the community, or the protection benefits and risks that women and men could experience from the CBI. Sex, age,

disability and other diversity specific data are key to identifying which groups are being marginalized and for what reasons, and to design an elective response.⁵

- ➔ Include in the CBI assessment report an objective that seeks to ensure women’s equal access to CBI, including within its community-based management structures. This is aligned to UNHCR’s Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) 2018.⁶

MARKET CAPACITY

- ➔ Market surveys should include and ask about gender-related issues, in both rapid-onset emergencies and in slow-onset or protracted crisis.
- ➔ Non-binary survey questions on gender should be included to ensure that there is an informed understanding of the existing market capacity vis-à-vis the needs of female, male and gender non-conforming individuals. Questions to ask can include:
 - What are the specific needs women and LGBTI individuals have from the market? Does the market stock these commodities? Are they available at reasonable prices and in stock? What is the supply chain for these commodities?
 - Will lack of stock of items required by women or LGBTI individuals raise protection risks that they might face? For example, if the market does not store or has inadequate supply of sanitary materials, what is the impact on women and girls, including on their mobility.

- ➔ Identification of core goods must be informed through participatory and meaningful consultations with women, as well as LGBTI individuals where this is possible.

MARKET ANALYSIS⁷

- ➔ Consult women, girls, men and boys and persons with specific needs on availability and accessibility of safe markets during market analysis.
- ➔ Consider any potential tensions or violence between target beneficiaries and local traders in the market.

AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATE DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- ➔ Identify if women and men possess adequate identification as required to access various cash delivery mechanisms.
- ➔ Understand whether or not women have access to and control over the technology required in certain cash delivery modalities (for example, mobile phones) and whether documentation, literacy or digital skills related to delivery mechanisms put recipients at risk of protection incidents.⁸
- ➔ Ascertain whether or not women have access to and control over bankcards, bank accounts and cash vouchers issued to them. This assessment is important before the delivery mechanisms are finalized.
- ➔ Based on initial assessments, if financial management training is identified as a gap, it must be provided to women and other PoC who require them.

PROTECTION RISKS

- ➔ Provide consistent opportunities for women and girls to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes on CBIs with the purpose of voicing their priorities, needs and challenges.
- ➔ Provide opportunities for women and girls to influence community-based decision-making relating to cash-based interventions.
- ➔ Reflect the needs of women and girls in the design of CBIs and communicate this back to them, making adaptations where required based on feedback received.
- ➔ CBIs must be designed to not contribute to household- or community-level SGBV. Proactive risk mitigation actions need to be embedded, and safety must be considered at all stages of implementation.
- ➔ Regular monitoring, using various methods, must be undertaken to detect any risks related to the introduction/use of cash. Immediate action must be taken to adjust programming in such instances.

- ➔ It is important that CBIs targeting women undertake to engage men and boys not only to build ownership and acceptance, but also to respond to challenges they experience so they do not feel marginalized by the humanitarian response.
- ➔ Remember that SGBV is not the only gender-based issue to be concerned with when it comes to CBIs. It is important to understand and respond to women and girls', as well as LGBTI individuals' mobility, ability to influence decision-making and control over and access to services and information when it comes to CBIs. A lack of such access will lead to protection risks which must be prevented and mitigated through the informed design and implementation of CBIs.
- ➔ Do not let assumptions play a role in determining what the protection risks and benefits of a potential CBI intervention will be. It is important that primary and secondary data is gathered and analysed; these evidence-based analyses – rather than individual assumptions which are often coloured by unconscious cultural, racial and gender-based prejudice and stereotypes – should inform design, planning and implementation. For example, CBIs not targeting women out of fear that it could increase SGBV, which should instead be addressed through developing an informed understanding of household and community dynamics and working with male and female persons of concern when it comes to implementing CBIs.

POLICY OR LEGISLATIVE BARRIERS

- ➔ Identify possible legislative gaps that could impact women's ability to participate in CBIs. Similarly, this is an important assessment to make to ensure the safety and protection of LGBTI individuals. For example, if homosexuality is criminalized in a given country, it will be important to take this into consideration especially when it comes to data collection and implementing strict confidentiality measures.
- ➔ Assess the political will in the government on gender equality and women's empowerment issues. For example, if the country has a progressive legislative framework that encourages women's employment, including that of refugee women, leverage this framework when it comes



📷 Tree planting nursery provides jobs and resources for refugees in Tanzania. © UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

to designing cash for work for women in a manner where they have the opportunity to step out of stereotypical (sewing, crafts, etc.) income-generation models which are beneficial to them and their families.

- ➔ Assess strategic partnerships required to support a gendered CBI. For example, where there are strong and progressive line Ministries working on social development and/or gender equality issues, seek to develop partnerships with them.

ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFYING CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

- ➔ Eligibility and qualifying criteria must be developed in consultation with communities, including through the meaningful participation of women and LGBTI individuals (where this is possible and without increasing the protection risk to them).
- ➔ Such criteria must not be gender blind or gender neutral and must ensure that sex, age, disability and other diversity disaggregated data, as well as key points from consultations with PoCs, are reflected thoroughly in the criteria. For example, if disaggregated data shows a high percentage of female-headed households, this must reflect within the eligibility and qualifying criteria.

Planning and implementation

CHOICE OF DELIVERY

- ➔ Identify women's and men's preferences when it comes to cash delivery mechanisms (*refer to protection risks and benefits column in the Assessment section*).
- ➔ Identify if women have the required support services in place to access the specific mode of cash delivery chosen for the CBI. For example, do women have childcare support and/or access to travel costs?
- ➔ Continue the use of conditional cash transfers to reverse gender inequalities within populations of concern. For example, households can be given conditional cash transfers requiring that girls are enrolled and retained in schools.
- ➔ Where cash for work schemes are being developed, it is necessary to analyse the viable options available for women and LGBTI individuals in a manner that upholds the Do No Harm principle.

TARGETING

- ➔ Do not assume that all women and girls are vulnerable while developing targeting criteria. Targeting must be not only informed by sex, age, disability and other diversity disaggregated data analysis but also determined in consultation with communities, including through provision of opportunities for women and LGBTI individuals to voice their priorities. This is important to ensure that targeting processes are clear and transparent, and developed through a process of public endorsement.
- ➔ All forms of targeting, i.e. household targeting, geographic targeting and self-targeting, must include a gender dimension to ensure that women and LGBTI individuals are not being left out of targeting processes. This is particularly important for methodologies such as community-based targeting which allow communities to categorize households within their own community as poor or vulnerable, and to develop their own targeting criteria. Facilitation of such processes must ensure equal and meaningful inclusion of women.
- ➔ Economic data collected from households must also consider who has power and influence at the intra-household level on decision-making on economic issues (*refer to column above on protection risks and benefits in the Assessment section, and the column below on risk mitigation*).
- ➔ Registration and verification exercises must ensure all targeted individuals are consulted. This is specifically necessary when targeting is done at a household level, as it is necessary to understand the power dynamic within the household and consult with women in households, separately from male family members, on the benefits of the CBI.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

- ➔ CBIs must be linked to fully functional AAP community-based communication and feedback structures and mechanisms. These should be accessible to persons of concern in their diversity.
 - Are there checks and balances developed which ensure that PoC, including women and girls and LGBTI persons, are not subjected to human rights violations such as transactional sex demands in order to access their CBI? What mechanisms are in place to ensure Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and that PoC are both aware of such mechanisms and able to use them if necessary?

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

- ➔ Communication and information strategies must be developed taking into consideration the specific needs of PoC. For example, in several displacement contexts there might be a high degree of illiteracy among women and girls of concern. In such situations, CBI communication strategies should focus on providing face-to-face information through awareness-raising sessions in women's spaces, or where possible and if in use, through radio programmes. Innovative use of street theatre, art and youth groups are other such examples.
- ➔ Key information should not just be shared with community leaders, with the expectation that it will cascade down to all individuals, including women, persons living with disabilities and LGBTI individuals. Key information must be shared with all PoC and through use of various communication methodologies as highlighted in the point above.
- ➔ Communication and information strategies must include feedback loops so that the information shared is not just one way, from the agency to PoC, but allows PoC to feedback and communicate.

ENTRY AND EXIT STRATEGY

- ➔ When prolonged in-kind assistance is being moved to cash-based assistance, it should be introduced along with financial management training, where required, specifically within communities where women have not taken on this role pre-displacement.
- ➔ Entry of cash assistance must be linked with other measures that are required for sustainable solutions. Among these, it is important that educational and income-generation opportunities are explored and offered to PoC, including women and girls.
- ➔ During exit, it is important to link up those PoC, such as women who need the assistance and persons living with disabilities, to social protection interventions to ensure that the departure of cash assistance does not create a situation of negative coping mechanisms.

INFORMATION GATHERING

- ➔ Disaggregated data collection through monitoring processes, including focus group discussions, CBI post distribution monitoring (PDM), surveys and key informant interviews, is necessary to understand the level of assistance, protection risks, continuing challenges and levels of satisfaction women, girls, boys and men experience vis-à-vis CBIs.
- ➔ Analysis of this information is crucial to understand if there have been increased protection benefits or risks faced by women and LGBTI individuals in particular. For example, has the CBI resulted in an increase in the social status of women? Are the benefits experienced by male and female recipients equitable?
- ➔ If risks have been identified, immediate programme adjustment is required.

Monitoring

INCLUSION OF WOMEN

- ➔ Women, including those on leadership committees or those accessing women's spaces, should be involved in monitoring processes.
- ➔ Agency and partner staff conducting monitoring exercises should include trained female staff.

GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS

- ➔ All CBI should have gender-sensitive indicators. These indicators must be designed based on the nature of the CBI. Examples of gender-sensitive indicators can include the following sex-disaggregated indicators:
 - # of PoC assisted with CBI
 - % of PoC who rate CBI as their preferred modality for assistance
 - % of PoC who report feeling at risk (unsafe) receiving, keeping or spending CBI
 - % of PoC who report facing one or more problem receiving, keeping or spending CBI
- ➔ Gender-sensitive CBI indicators can also include the following:
 - % of women beneficiaries of the CBI
 - % of women with increased income-generation ability
 - % of young and adolescent girls in school
 - % of women registered for cash assistance
 - % of women with disabilities who have been included in the CBI
 - % of women who have reported satisfaction with the CBI of which they are a beneficiary
 - % of households that have reported better household and community relations
 - % of women who reported safety concerns with regard to cash delivery

RESOURCES

- CARE, [Cash and GBV Compendium](#), 2019.
- Concern Worldwide and Oxfam, [Gender issues in cash transfer programmes](#).
- GSMA, [Connected Women The Mobile Gender Gap Report](#), 2019
- Oxfam, [Working with markets and cash: Standard operating procedures](#), 2013.
- UNHCR, [Cash Assistance and Gender](#), 2019.
- UNHCR, [Cash Feasibility and Response Analysis Toolkit](#), 2017.
- UNHCR, CBI Learning Programmes Modules.
- UNHCR, [Market assessment companion guide and toolkit](#), 2017.
- UNHCR et al, Cash and Protection [Protection risks and benefits analysis tools](#).
- WFP, [Gender and markets: VAM case study – Lake Chad Basin](#), 2016.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ This tool was developed by Rebecca Eapen as part of the UNHCR Cash-Based Intervention Learning Programme.
- ² Please see [UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#) which defines diversity. The policy also addresses participation and inclusion in the context of AAP and gender equality.
- ³ <https://bit.ly/35CMKrf>
- ⁴ Ebrahimi P., Gender issues and language articulation: A brief look at pros of gender-neutral language articulation, 2009. Available at: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED505673>
- ⁵ IASC gender tip-sheet for cash-based interventions. Available at: <https://bit.ly/34tRIq4>
- ⁶ UNHCR Age Gender and Diversity Policy. Available at <https://bit.ly/2QWYls8>
- ⁷ <https://bit.ly/2qGvuTq>
- ⁸ Connected Women The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2019: <https://bit.ly/2QWjyaP>



📷 Women from the Riyad displacement camp in Darfur work at a nearby brick factory to help support their families in 2005. They were particularly vulnerable to sexual attack by Janjaweed militia during their work. © UNHCR/Hélène Caux



TOOL 5
GENDER EQUALITY
AND ADVOCACY TOOL

ADVOCACY AND GENDER EQUALITY

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Advocacy refers to a “set of coordinated activities that seeks to ensure the protection of persons who are of concern to UNHCR by promoting changes that bring policy, practice or law into line with international standards.”¹ It is a strategic process that involves analysis, planning and action.

UNHCR believes that evidence-based advocacy “plays a vital role in efforts to influence decision makers and stakeholders to adopt practices and policies that will protect refugees, internally displaced people, stateless persons and other affected populations. [...] Advocacy can [also] help to transform attitudes, systems and structures that put populations of concern at risk.”²

THE PROTECTION OBJECTIVES OF ADVOCACY

- To **end human rights violations**, including violence against women and girls, by encouraging stakeholders to fulfil their protection responsibilities.
- To ensure that stakeholders deliver humanitarian assistance in a safe and dignified manner that gives all persons of concern (PoC) **equal access** and enables women and girls to **participate meaningfully** in decision-making processes that affect them.
- To ensure that stakeholders **make funds** and resources available to meet the needs of PoC, taking into account the special needs and capacities of women, girls and vulnerable groups.
- To bring policies, practice and laws into **compliance with international standards** (including for the protection and promotion of women’s and girls’ rights).
- To promote **greater acceptance** of PoC by host communities and combat discrimination and xenophobia, including gender-based discrimination.



📷 Young Afghan photography students attend a training course at the Technical and Vocational Training Organisation (TVTO) in the city of Mashhad, north-east Iran. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

UNHCR and its partners exercise advocacy through different mediums, including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research, and lobbying. When combined strategically with a host of protection and programming activities, advocacy can have transformative impacts, helping catalyse political will, and reshape attitudes, systems, structures and processes.³

Key to UNHCR's advocacy work is ensuring the following principles and standards⁴:

- 1 **'Do no harm'** so that advocacy efforts do not negatively affect access to or protection of persons of concern, the credibility of UNHCR, access to UNHCR or partners for relevant populations, or partnerships.
- 2 **Impartiality and neutrality** are critical values within humanitarian action. These should be preserved at the field, regional or global levels to promote and foster dialogue, access, and open channels of cooperation.
- 3 **Public or restricted dissemination of advocacy messages**, whereby this is decided upon on a case-sensitive basis, bearing in mind a host of factors, including the above mentioned principles, risks, context, and the interests of and where possible input from the population(s) of concern.

As discussed previously (see Introduction), UNHCR uses a two-pronged approach to achieve gender equality results. This approach relies on **mainstreaming gender** in each and every aspect of our work combined with using **targeted actions** to address specific gaps, challenges or needs identified. This same approach is relevant to our advocacy work.

The **Gender Equality and Advocacy** tool is designed with this approach in mind. The tool is divided into two sections. The first section includes a non-exhaustive set of questions to guide users on how to incorporate (e.g. mainstream) gender in advocacy planning and work. The second section, on the other hand, includes tips for targeted gender-equality advocacy, with the purpose of addressing inequalities and enhancing the empowerment of women and girls.

In this regard, gender equality advocacy refers to advocacy meant to bring about changes in attitudes, practices, policies, laws and processes relating to addressing power imbalances between men and women and contributing to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This type of advocacy centres on influencing not only people, but also organizations and structures with power to influence and change discriminatory individual, institutional, corporate, social and other attitudes and practices, processes and laws, among others, so that women and girls of varying backgrounds may enjoy their rights on a more equal footing.

INTEGRATING GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN ADVOCACY

Based on common advocacy strategy methodologies, the section below includes a series of questions to consider in order to strengthen gender equality in UNHCR's advocacy work. These are meant to spur thinking and to help ensure that gender is being considered at different stages and levels of our advocacy work.⁵

GENDER-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN ANALYSIS, PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING STAGES OF UNHCR ADVOCACY

ANALYSIS

WHAT IS THE ISSUE THAT YOU WANT TO ADDRESS?

Within your problem analysis, integrate an age, gender and diversity perspective. This will help you formulate more effective interventions. Regardless of the issue, gender relations shape outcomes and often a gender analysis is critical to reveal root causes of problems.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ What are the gendered factors that contribute to this issue?
- ➔ How are diverse women, men, boys, girls and LGBTI persons (e.g. persons with disabilities, older persons) affected?
- ➔ Are there specific population groups that are more affected by this issue? Why?
- ➔ Have women, men, boys, girls and LGBTI persons of diverse backgrounds been consulted and how have their approaches to the issue compared?

PLANNING

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE AND HOW WILL YOU ACHIEVE IT?

Be strategic and gender-responsive in formulating your advocacy priorities and identifying clear objectives, the scope of your advocacy and pathways for achieving the desired change. Having an **advocacy strategy** is important in this regard.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ How does the issue identified align with UNHCR's mandate and key policies and commitments, including on gender equality?⁶
- ➔ How will the changes that you are advocating for contribute to improved conditions for women, men, boys, girls and LGBTI persons of concern?
- ➔ Are gender considerations reflected in your priorities and pathways for change? How will these contribute to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
- ➔ If not properly considered, how might having a gender-blind advocacy strategy undermine your efforts?

WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO INFLUENCE?

Conduct a gender-sensitive **stakeholder mapping** and **power analysis** to help you identify who can decide or influence the outcomes of your advocacy. A stakeholder mapping and power analysis are key to informing your advocacy strategy, approach, resource allocation and use, and choice of potential partners.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ How aware are your target stakeholders of gender inequality? What is their attitude (or track record) relating to gender equality issues and the empowerment of women and girls?

- ➔ What influence do they have and who has influence over these stakeholders? How might this impact or inform the approach they may take in relation to the advocacy issue identified?
- ➔ How have you considered gendered power relations within your stakeholder and power analysis?
- ➔ Has your power mapping demonstrated the need to create space for advocacy on gender equality?

HOW WILL YOU ACHIEVE CHANGE?

Define your **advocacy strategy**, bearing in mind your **approach**⁷, priorities, organizational risks, allies and resources. This can include deciding: a) whether you work behind the scenes using indirect advocacy, work more overtly through public advocacy or using hybrid forms; b) the language, tactics and messaging that are appropriate and effective for your target stakeholders; and c) potential partners, alliances and coalitions to work with.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ How have the results of the age, gender and diversity problem analysis been used to inform the advocacy strategy? Have these been shared with your partners and allies to ensure cohesive messaging?
- ➔ Have you included gender-related analysis of risks, potential challenges and opportunities?
- ➔ What are some of the arguments, actions or approaches that may undermine efforts to persuade or influence key stakeholders?
- ➔ What opportunities exist or can be created for building strategic collaboration or partnerships with gender equality stakeholders around the advocacy issue? Do your strategy and asks reflect gender equality values?

IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT ARE YOUR ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES?

Break down your advocacy objectives into concrete and implementable actions. These should be articulated into strategic asks or positions.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ Have your articulated asks and positions included relevant practical and strategic interests of women, men, boys, girls and LGBTI persons?⁸
- ➔ Do your activities pose any gender-based risks or harm?

WHAT ARE YOUR ADVOCACY MESSAGES AND HOW WILL YOU DELIVER THEM?

Use evidence-based, gender-sensitive, persuasive and targeted messages to reach your intended audience. Consider who and what is most suitable and credible in delivering these messages.

Gender-specific questions to consider:

- ➔ How are women and men, girls and boys, and LGBTI persons portrayed or represented in your messages? Do your messages reify or defy gender stereotypes?
- ➔ Who is delivering your messages?⁹
- ➔ Have you included gender equality-specific messages?
- ➔ What steps have you taken to account for gender-related bias and negative attitudes that may influence how your messages are received?

MONITORING

ARE YOU GATHERING EVIDENCE AND MEASURING EFFECTS ON AN ON-GOING BASIS?

Collect rigorous evidence and monitor your advocacy efforts to ensure that you are on track; identify areas that require greater attention or a revised approach and adjust where needed.

- ➔ Is your monitoring data disaggregated by age, sex, disability and other diversity?
- ➔ Does your data and advocacy monitoring demonstrate attention to the potentially different effects on women and men?
- ➔ Have your activities posed risks or harm?
- ➔ Are gender equality considerations reflected explicitly in your monitoring measures and selected indicators?

ADVOCATING EFFECTIVELY FOR GENDER EQUALITY¹⁰

Advocacy for gender equality within and on behalf of UNHCR must be grounded in a thorough knowledge and understanding of organizational policies and priorities related to gender equality as well as international commitments and frameworks.¹¹ Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are fundamental to the realization of human rights and sustainable development, as they are also critical for effective humanitarian action. Without understanding and responding to the specific needs, challenges, priorities and capacities of diverse women, men, boys and girls and LGBTI persons of concern, humanitarian interventions are at best partial. In this light, it is critical to base advocacy efforts on a solid appreciation of the impact of gender on the lives of persons of concern. Table 2 below highlights actions to consider for effective gender equality advocacy.

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR EFFECTIVE GENDER EQUALITY ADVOCACY

HAVE KEY AND CLEAR MESSAGES ON GENDER EQUALITY

These should:

- ➔ **Outline** the gender equality-related protection priorities you are addressing.
- ➔ Specify the solutions proposed.
- ➔ Consider tools that can be used to reinforce your message (maps, infographics, case studies testimonies, open or private letters, statements by key actors, VIP quotes, etc.).

BASED ON THESE PRIORITIES SUPPORT THE INCLUSION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE OVERALL PROTECTION AND RESPONSE STRATEGIES.

These should include:

- ➔ Main gender equality-related protection needs.
- ➔ Solutions to address these protection needs, including those of women and girls.

FOCUS YOUR ADVOCACY STRATEGY ON WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE.

- ➔ **Identify who you want to primarily influence** (examples could include: UNHCR colleagues, national decision makers, technical staff in national or local organizations, PoC, civil society organizations (CSOs), international humanitarian or development partners, actors whose behaviour creates protection concerns, media, the wider public, etc.).
- ➔ **Identify the best approach to most effectively communicate your message(s)** (informally, through personal communication, formally, through public media, other).¹² Brief yourself on these key actors. Do they understand the main gender-based inequalities, risks and protection concerns of PoC? Will your target audience support the actions you propose? Will they oppose your arguments? Adopt an approach that is appropriate for the actor you seek to influence.

USE EVIDENCE, FACTS, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, ETHIC NARRATIVES.

- ➔ The content of your advocacy messages should emerge from a well-informed, evidence-based gender analysis. Do not build advocacy messages on rumours or unconfirmed information.¹³
- ➔ **Collect and validate evidence continuously through** the means available to you to monitor the situation and collect information, including through talking to PoC.
- ➔ Take steps to fill gaps in evidence (for example, by researching government, academic and civil

society reports, or interviewing well-informed sources).

- ➔ Gather up-to-date information from relevant national and local institutions and organizations, with a focus on those working in humanitarian situations.¹⁴
- ➔ Make sure all sources of information are reliable.
- ➔ **Make sure that all your advocacy messages are concise and consistent**, both internally and over time. Avoid jargon. If you must use jargon, explain what it means.
- ➔ When utilizing human stories, **ensure that narratives are told with sensitivity to a host of ethical considerations**, bearing in mind the safety and dignity of the persons involved.

RESPECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONAL INFORMATION.

This is particularly relevant when advocating on sensitive issues, including SGBV or other human rights violations, and using human stories and narratives. Be sure not to personalize the information.

CONSIDER POSSIBLE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR ADVOCACY.

Ask: Do these messages promoting gender equality create any risks or potential negative consequences?¹⁵

ENGAGE WITH MEN AND BOYS IN YOUR ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES.

When you involve men and boys in promoting gender equality, collect information on good practices. Such approaches are likely to be effective in programming as well as in your communications and advocacy.

USE EXISTING RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS

- ➔ **Identify allies internally and externally.** Build or strengthen links and networks with UN-based gender equality mechanisms,¹⁶ relevant official national and local institutions that promote gender equality, specialist gender bodies, women's rights organizations and other formal or informal networks that can promote and protect gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian and refugee urban, rural and camp settings.

- ➔ **Consult extensively and cooperate with others.** Wherever possible, avoid competitive advocacy. Instead, seek to work with other stakeholders (including national institutions, the international community, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and CSOs) to develop complementary forms of advocacy. Advocacy is often more effective when a variety of partners communicate the same message.¹⁷
- ➔ You can obtain technical gender advice and information from UNHCR's Gender Equality Unit, partners and UN agencies, and gender advisers (GenCaps).

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

- ➔ Are your messages having influence? Have key actors responded to and addressed the gender inequalities, concerns or obstacles that your advocacy has identified?
- ➔ Adjust your advocacy actions in light of the progress made and results achieved.

SEEK ADVICE FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR AND MANAGERS AND KEEP THEM INFORMED

- ➔ Make sure to brief your supervisor and managers about your advocacy actions. It may be useful to share messages, supported by information on the context, on gender-related protection needs, on challenges and gaps that you have identified, and your proposals for addressing them.
- ➔ Get advice and clearance from your supervisor and management.
- ➔ Think about circulating short updates that report on the results of your advocacy. These might consider a range of questions: Who received your advocacy messages? How did you communicate (formal meetings, informal communications, public, private)? What results can be reported? Were there unforeseen consequences? Is further action required from your supervisor or management? Do you need specialized expertise, communications support, more information, financial resources?

| RESOURCES

Diakonia. [How to do Advocacy with a gender perspective: a guide and a checklist.](#)

UNHCR, Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing positive outcomes for people of concern to UNHCR, Forthcoming 2020.

UNHCR, Emergency Handbook, [Advocacy in Emergencies.](#)

UN Women, [Toolkit for youth on advocating and achieving gender equality by 2030](#), 2018.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ From UNHCR, Emergency Handbook, [Advocacy in Emergencies](#)
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ From UNHCR, Emergency Handbook, [Advocacy in Emergencies](#).
- ⁵ These are adapted from Diakonia's "How to do Advocacy with a gender perspective: a guide and a checklist". At: <https://bit.ly/2R2pJu1>
- ⁶ For more on the gender equality commitments and UN policy frameworks, refer to the section *Rationale for the systematic application of gender equality* in the Introduction of the Gender Equality Toolkit.
- ⁷ For more, refer to the forthcoming (2020) *Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing positive outcomes for people of concern to UNHCR*.
- ⁸ Practical interests refer to the interests articulated and strategic interests
- ⁹ Remember that representation matters. For example, if you've selected someone who has worked to undermine gender equality or women's empowerment or has made problematic statements in this regard, that will send the wrong idea.
- ¹⁰ Freely adapted from UNHCR, [Emergency Handbook](#)
- ¹¹ For more, refer to the UNHCR Gender Equality Toolkit section on *Rationale for the systematic application of gender equality in the Introduction*.
- ¹² Messages may be public or restricted and may be disseminated via meetings, reports, photos, videos, statistics, maps, infographics, case studies or press releases. Always prepare well-informed, evidence-based messages, and consider the impact a chosen channel will have, the need for confidentiality and potential harm to your sources of information, PoC, partners or UNHCR.
- ¹³ In an emergency setting, nevertheless, it may sometimes be appropriate to initiate advocacy before detailed evidence has been gathered and confirmed. (For example, it might be appropriate to issue an advocacy message on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), certain that incidents have taken place, but before comprehensive evidence is available.) In such cases, make sure to consult with management before taking action.
- ¹⁴ As far as possible, use information you gather for programming as well as advocacy.
- ¹⁵ For example: (a) host authorities may restrict access to persons of concern if they take exception to advocacy messages; (b) individuals may be endangered if advocacy messages divulge confidential personal information; (c) inappropriately framed messages can stir up prejudice against vulnerable individuals or groups; (d) ill-advised advocacy can have unexpected indirect consequences (for example, poorly formulated and uncontextualized calls to stop SGBV may cause families to keep girls at home). There may also be risks to the security of colleagues and assets, to funding and to partnerships and cooperation with national governments, international actors or other organizations.
- ¹⁶ Such as UN or national gender and SGBV working groups or networks.
- ¹⁷ Remember that PoC, including children and young people, are often the best advocates for their protection and concerns. In some settings, for example, it can be effective to convene meetings that enable minority groups to talk directly to local authorities.



📷 At Ethiopia's western Tsore Refugee Camp, hundreds of women attend vocational training within the support provided to SGBV survivors. © UNHCR/Diana Díaz



RESOURCE PACKAGE
GENDER EQUALITY

GENDER EQUALITY TOOLS AND GUIDELINES

UNHCR: Gender Equality Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to support colleagues and partners to integrate gender equality in the work and activities of UNHCR. It contains user-friendly guidance, tips, information, resources, glossary of terms, and examples of field practices in order to support the achievement of gender equality. These are relevant to all staff regardless of their function or the operational context.

The toolkit includes guidance on:

- 1 Key gender-related frameworks and concepts in both UNHCR and the UN, as well as responsibilities for gender mainstreaming in the UN system, including sample terms of reference for Gender Focal Points.
- 2 Gender equality across the Operations Management Cycle (OMC).
- 3 Gender in emergencies including emergency preparedness and response, as well as UNHCR's leadership and coordination roles.
- 4 Gender analysis in cash-based interventions (CBI) in the OMC.
- 5 Addressing challenges to women's participation and tips on strengthening their inclusion.
- 6 Integrating gender considerations in advocacy and undertaking gender equality specific advocacy work.

IASC: Gender handbook for humanitarian action (2017)

➔ [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Arabic](#)

The gender handbook provides humanitarian actors with guidance on gender analysis, planning and actions to ensure that the needs, priorities and capacities of women, girls, men and boys are considered in all aspects of humanitarian response. The handbook also provides practical guidance for doing so across sectors. The handbook is organized in three parts. The first explains the basics of gender and why the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment is essential to effective, participatory and equitable humanitarian protection and assistance. The second part explains how to integrate gender into the different phases of a programme cycle, using the United Nations-led humanitarian coordination process as the working example. The third part provides specific guidance for 11 sectors. The handbook is available in four languages.

CARE: The Rapid Gender Analysis Toolkit

➔ Available [here](#)

The Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) toolkit contains guidance on every step of a Rapid Gender Analysis, including how to identify and meet the different needs, capacities and coping strategies of women, men, boys and girls in a crisis situation. The tools can be adapted to suit each operational context. In addition to the Guidance Notes, the RGA toolkit includes tools for primary data collection, secondary data review, analysing the data collected, and making recommendations. There is also a Report Template that should be used when drafting the RGA reports.

IASC: Gender with Age Marker (GAM)

➔ Available [here](#)

A gender marker is a simple technical tool for checking whether projects or programmes have meaningfully considered gender equality. The GAM applies both gender and age considerations, and it assesses projects at the design as well as the implementation stage. During the design of a programme or a project, the marker applies four key gender equality measures (GEMs) to assess whether gender and age considerations have been integrated. The remaining eight 'supporting' GEMs appear in the Monitoring Phase; they are used to reflect on which areas of the programme or project are working well and what needs to change to address gender/age gaps. The GAM codes projects and programmes on a 0 to 4 scale based on answers to questions about the Gender Equality Measures (GEMs) and suggests simple actions to improve programmes responsiveness and consistency. The GEM codes help us identify where attention to gender and age can be strengthened and where programming elements are missing. After a GAM code is generated users can generate an action plan to support programme improvements. The GAM is available for use in multiple languages.

On the GAM website you can find a number of useful resources on how to apply the GAM to your projects and programmes:

- ➔ [GAM overview](#)
- ➔ [GAM coding logic](#)
- ➔ [Gender Equality Markers \(GEMs\)](#)
- ➔ [Sector tip sheets](#)
- ➔ [GAM PowerPoint presentation](#)
(useful for trainings)
- ➔ [Test version of the marker](#)

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND IRC:

A Toolkit for Integrating Menstrual Hygiene Management into Humanitarian Response

➔ Available [here](#)

A toolkit that provides streamlined guidance to support organizations and agencies seeking to rapidly integrate MHM into existing programming across sectors and phases.

IASC: IASC GBV Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

➔ Available [here](#)

The Guidelines provide practical resources, essential actions, areas of inquiry, and Thematic Area Guidance to help plan and apply GBV prevention and mitigation interventions across all sectors.

UNHCR AND SAVE THE CHILDREN: Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Toolkit: A practical guide to launching interventions

➔ Available [here](#)

The Toolkit provides support to operations in addressing the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs of adolescents and to systematically mainstream adolescent-friendly SRH services.

UNFPA AND WOMEN ENABLED:

Women and Young Persons with Disabilities: Guidelines to providing Rights-based and Gender Responsive Services

➔ Available [here](#)

The guidelines provide tools and guidance for making GBV and SRHR services more inclusive of and accessible to women and young persons with disabilities and for targeting interventions to meet their disability-specific needs.

UNHCR: SGBV Prevention and Response Training Package

➔ Available [here](#)

The Training Package is designed to help facilitators deliver introductory, interactive training on the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

GENDER EQUALITY E-LEARNING AND TRAINING COURSES

UNHCR: Sexual and Gender-Based violence (SGBV) e-learning (level 1-3)

➔ Available [here](#)

Level I covers the key concepts that will help you recognize and understand SGBV. You will start exploring what UNHCR can do to prevent, mitigate and respond to common types of SGBV in displacement settings. Level II covers the key approaches you should adhere to when addressing SGBV, as well as why addressing SGBV is a legal obligation. In addition, this level covers multi-sectoral measures to prevent, mitigate and respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in emergency settings. Level III covers prevention and response strategies in greater detail.

UNHCR: Age, Gender and Diversity Approach

➔ Available [here](#)

Over the course of two modules the course looks at what the Age, Gender and Diversity Approach means and how the AGD approach is implemented.

IASC: Different Needs – Equal Opportunities (IASC)

➔ Available [here](#)

An Online course on Gender Equality developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. The course takes the learner to the fictive country of Hatuk where torrential storms have killed thousands of people. In this emergency setting the course takes the learner through basic and critical steps to promote gender equality and to develop a gender sensitive response to the emergency. The course is 3 hours long and is built on the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action.

UN WOMEN: I Know Gender

➔ Available [here](#)

The first three modules of this online course covers key gender concepts, international frameworks for gender equality; and how gender equality is promoted throughout the UN System. A number of additional modules are available on more specific topics such as women's economic empowerment; women's leadership and decision-making; women, peace and security etc.

UN WOMEN: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Gender Equality

➔ Available [here](#)

The Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development training course aims to develop and strengthen awareness of gender equality and women's empowerment issues within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UN WOMEN: Understanding violence against women and girls

➔ Available [here](#)

The course provides an understanding of violence against women and girls, its extent, drivers and impact. It also provides evidence-based guidance for policy-makers and stakeholders in complementary fields to better understand the key pillars for preventing it from occurring in the first place and responding to it when it does occur.

REPORTS AND PROMISING PRACTICES FROM THE FIELD

UNHCR: Learning from Experience to Advance Gender Equality – Promising Practices in Asia (2019)

➔ Available [here](#)

The report documents promising practices on gender equality from four UNHCR operations in Asia. The case studies cover access to land rights in Sri Lanka, SGBV coordination in Sri Lanka, livelihoods and community-based protection in Malaysia and IDP registration and national identification in Pakistan.

UNHCR: Gender Equality Promising Practices Syrian Refugees in the Middle East and North Africa (2018)

➔ Available [here](#)

This report contains in-depth information on seven gender equality promising practices that are part of UNHCR's response to the Syria crisis in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

UNHCR: Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report (2017)

➔ Available [here](#)

The 2017 AGD Accountability Report presents the activities undertaken by UNHCR to implement the AGD approach. It is structured around the key challenges that were reported by diverse groups of concern during participatory assessments, and provides examples of promising practices and innovative projects that were implemented by UNHCR and partners to overcome these challenges.

AGD accountability reports from previous years are available on the UNHCR [website](#).

UNHCR: Tearing Down the Walls: Confronting the Barriers to Internally Displaced Women and Girls' Participation in Humanitarian Settings (2019)

➔ Available [here](#)

Research study on barriers to IDP women and girls' meaningful participation in humanitarian settings. The study is based on fieldwork in Niger and South Sudan and includes a number of recommendations to strengthen the meaningful and equal participation of internally displaced women and girls in decision making and leadership processes.

UNHCR: Her Turn: It's Time to Make Refugee Girls' Education a Priority (2018)

➔ Available [here](#)

Global level UNHCR report highlighting some of the key challenges and barriers women and girls face in accessing education. It also includes recommendations for how to address some of these challenges and ensure that girls have equal access to education.

UNFPA: Young Persons with Disabilities: Global Study on Ending Gender-based Violence and Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

➔ Available [here](#)

The study focuses on gender based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) in the context of young persons with disabilities. It provides an analysis as well as recommendation on the situation of young persons with disabilities, GBV, and SRHR.

UNHCR: Cash Assistance and the Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

➔ Available [here](#)

The report draws on research conducted in Lebanon, Ecuador and Morocco to highlight the value of cash assistance in providing a sense of safety and dignity, and easing the financial burden on refugees and others of concern. It provides learning and recommendations when using cash assistance to address protection concerns, focusing on SGBV.

UNHCR: Protecting Persons with Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities

➔ Available [here](#)

The report presents analysis, challenges, efforts, and practices from the field on UNHCR's work to provide protection and solutions to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Asylum-Seekers and Refugees.

UN WOMEN: Issue brief: Making the SDGs count for women and girls with disabilities

➔ Available [here](#)

The brief highlights the importance of mainstreaming disability into all efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5), highlighting critical issues for ending poverty (SDG 1) and ensuring healthy lives (SDG 3) for women and girls with disabilities and the need to closing data gaps on gender and disability.



📷 Maria Sakha 73 in a local community centre for those displaced by the conflict in Ukraine, which houses an elderly home. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

GENDER EQUALITY GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Access and control over resources

This concept has three parts: resources, access and control. The first, resources, refers to means and goods, including economic (household income) or productive means (land, equipment, tools, work, credit); political means (capability for leadership, information and organization); and time. Access and control have slightly different meanings. Access refers to the ability to use and benefit from specific resources (material, financial, human, social, political, etc.) whereas control over resources also entails being able to make decisions over the use of that resource. For example, women's control over land means that they can access land (use it), own land (can be the legal titleholders), and make decisions about whether to sell or rent the land. Access and control over resources is a key element of women's empowerment, and by extension, the achievement of gender equality.¹

Diversity

Refers to different values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnicities, nationalities, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, health, social and economic status, skills and other specific personal characteristics. Diversity characteristics vary from person to person and intersect, making each person unique. These differences must be recognized, understood, respected and valued by UNHCR in each context and operation in order to address effectively the needs of all persons of concern. Respecting diversity means recognizing and valuing those differences and creating a protective, inclusive and non-discriminatory environment in which everyone's rights are upheld.²

Gender

Refers to the socially constructed roles for women and men, which are often central to the way in which people define themselves and are defined by others. Gender roles are learned, changeable over time and variable within and between cultures. Gender often defines the duties, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and privileges of women and men in any context.³

Gender analysis

A process or tool used to examine how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situations or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males, their access to and control of resources, and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted.⁴

CONDUCTING A GENDER ANALYSIS

To mainstream a gender perspective, it is important to apply a gender analysis. This involves asking whether an activity reproduces, widens or narrows the gender gap. In the absence of a gender analysis, we are likely to reproduce a cycle of gender gaps and discrimination. To conduct a gender analysis of policies, programmes or other initiatives, ask the following questions: (1) What are the gender roles of men and women in the refugee population? (2) Based on your understanding of gender roles, what is the division of labour between men and women? (3) How do different values attached to gender roles and labour affect access to decision-making, services and benefits, and control over resources (especially those provided by your organization)? (4) Do policies, programmes or other initiatives in question reproduce, widen or narrow this gap? How? (5) What can be done to narrow the gap?

Source: UNHCR, *Gender Training Kit on Refugee Protection and Resource Handbook* (2002), p. 89.

Gender audit

A participatory gender audit is a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology to promote organizational learning at the individual, work unit and organizational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender. A gender audit is essentially a “social audit” and belongs to the category of “quality audits”, which distinguishes it from traditional “financial audits”. It considers whether internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective and reinforce each other and whether they are being followed. It establishes a baseline; identifies critical gaps and challenges; and recommends ways of addressing them, suggesting possible improvements and innovations. It also documents good practices towards the achievement of gender equality. A gender audit enhances the collective capacity of the organization to examine its activities from a gender perspective and identify strengths and weaknesses in promoting gender equality issues. It monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming, helps to build organizational ownership for gender equality initiatives and sharpens organizational learning on gender.⁵

Gender blind

Refers to interventions that do not take into account the different roles, responsibilities and diverse needs of women, girls, men and boys. A gender-blind intervention assumes that gender is not an influencing factor in projects, programmes, policies or processes. It also maintains the status quo and does not help transform the unequal structures of gender relations.⁶

Gender equality

Refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of all genders are respected.⁷

Gender Focal Point (GFP)

A humanitarian actor of any gender who is typically a staff member of the United Nations, an international organization or non-governmental organization (NGO). GFPs are committed to contributing to and ensuring the implementation of a gender-responsive humanitarian response. Gender focal points promote gender equality and mainstream gender to help build the capacities of colleagues and partners to implement and coordinate effective programming. Establishing a gender focal point system is a common strategy to strengthen the internal capacity of organizations on gender equality. Within UNHCR, the roles and responsibilities of GFPs have not been standardized, and they vary across operations. While gender focal points perform a crucial role in promoting gender equality in UNHCR, it is important to stress that all UNHCR staff and affiliate workforce share responsibility for integrating and delivering gender equality, and that ultimate responsibility lies with senior management, supported by key programme and protection colleagues.⁸

Gender gap

The term gender gap refers to any disparity between women and men’s condition or position in society. It is often used to refer to a difference in average earnings between women and men, e.g. “gender pay gap.” However, gender gaps can be found in many areas, such as the four pillars that the World Economic Forum uses to calculate its Gender Gap Index, namely: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment.⁹

Gender identity

Refers to a person’s innate, deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the person’s physiology, the sex assigned at birth or the gender attributed to them by society. It includes both the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.^{10 11}

Gender mainstreaming

A comprehensive strategy that aims to achieve greater gender equality by integrating a gender perspective into existing programme areas and policies. More specifically, it is defined as “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The goal is gender equality.”¹²

Gender norms

Refers to ideas about how men and women should be and act. We internalize and learn these “rules” early in life. This sets up a lifecycle of gender socialization and stereotyping. Put another way, gender norms are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time.¹³

Gender parity

Another term for equal representation of women and men in a given area, for example, gender parity in leadership structures or education. Working toward gender parity (equal representation) is a key part of achieving gender equality, and one of the twin strategies, alongside gender mainstreaming.¹⁴

Gender-responsive

Refers to interventions that consider gender norms, roles, responsibilities and inequality with specific measures taken to actively address these and reduce their harmful effects.¹⁵

Gender roles

Refers to social and behavioural norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. These often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to men, women, boys and girls. Gender-specific roles are often conditioned by

household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, occurrence of conflict or disaster, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions. Like gender itself, gender roles can evolve over time, in particular through the empowerment of women and transformation of masculinities.¹⁶

Gender-sensitive

Refers to interventions that address gender norms, roles and access to resources in so far as needed to reach intervention goals. Gender-sensitive interventions attempt to address existing gender inequalities.¹⁷

Gender-transformative

Refers to interventions that seek to target the structural causes, as well as the symptoms of gender inequality, leading to lasting changes in the power and choices women and men have over their own lives, rather than just a temporary increase in opportunities.¹⁸

Gender with Age Marker (GAM)

An easy-to-use technical tool for checking whether projects, programmes, responses and processes have meaningfully considered gender and age. The GAM codes use a 0 to 4 scale based on answers to questions for 12 essential Gender Equality Measures (GEMs). During the design phase the GAM applies four key GEMs to assess whether gender and age have been meaningfully integrated in the design of the intervention. During implementation eight GEMs are used to monitor and reflect on which areas are working well and what needs to change to address gender and age gaps.¹⁹

Intersectionality

Tool for analysis, advocacy and policy development that addresses multiple discriminations and helps understand how different sets of identities have impact on access to rights and opportunities. Intersectionality is an analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which gender intersects with other identities (class, race, age, nationality, etc.) and how these overlap and contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege. It aims to address the way racism,

patriarchy, class oppression and other systems of discrimination create inequalities that structure the relative positions of women. Intersectional analysis posits that we should not understand the combining of identities as additively increasing one's burden but instead as producing substantively distinct experiences. It is therefore an indispensable methodology for development and human rights work. This feminist sociological theory was first highlighted by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989.²⁰

LGBTI

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons that is also used as shorthand for "persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identity." Sometimes intersex is not included, and the acronym is LGBT. Sometimes "queer" or "questioning" is included, and the acronym is LGBTQ or LGBTIQ. Sometimes "aromantic" or "asexual" is included, and the acronym is "LGBTIQ+", "LGBTQA" or "LGBTIQA."²¹

Meaningful participation

Implies that women and men have the potential to articulate their needs and interests and take responsibility for actions. Women's meaningful participation refers to their full and equal involvement in all decision-making processes and activities in the public and private spheres that affect their lives and the life of their communities. It also includes working with community members including men to facilitate and open spaces for them to participate in a substantive and meaningful manner. Here it is valuable to look at the different levels of participation, as these can range from passive (non-participation); to participation by way of information sharing; consultation; collaboration; and ultimately meaningful participation. For more on the Ladder of Participation, see the Gender Equality Tool 3: Increasing Participation of Women and Girls.²²

Patriarchy

This term refers to a traditional form of organizing society, which often lies at the root of gender inequality. According to this kind of social system, men – or what is considered masculine – are accorded more importance than women, or what is considered feminine. Traditionally, societies have been organized in such a way that property, residence and descent, as well as decision-making regarding most areas of

life, have been the domain of men. This is often based on appeals to biological reasoning (the idea that women are more naturally suited to be caregivers, for example) and continues to underlie many kinds of gender discrimination.²³

Persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identity

Umbrella term for all people whose sex characteristics, sexual orientation or gender identity place them outside the mainstream, and people whose gender identity does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth.²⁴

Practical gender needs

These are needs women (or men) identify in their socially accepted roles. These do not challenge the gender division of labour and women's subordinate position in society. They refer to what women or men perceive as necessities (e.g. water, shelter, food, etc).

Sex

The classification of a person as having female, male and/or intersex characteristics. Infants are usually assigned the sex of male or female at birth based on the appearance of their external anatomy. A person's sex is a combination of bodily characteristics, including chromosomes (typically XY chromosome = male, XX chromosome = female), reproductive organs and secondary sex characteristics.²⁵

Sex-Disaggregated Data

Data which is collected and presented separately on males and females.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

Refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It refers to physical, sexual, emotional and psychological harm that reinforces female subordination and perpetuates male power and control. SGBV encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can also take the form of denying resources or access to services or assistance. Often, sexual and gender-based violence and violence against women are terms that are used interchangeably. These acknowledge that while

gender-based violence has a devastating impact on the lives of women and girls who are the majority of victims/survivors, it also inflicts harm and hinders the development of men and boys. Eliminating gender-based violence is crucial for achieving gender equality.²⁶

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

These can be understood as the right for all, whether young or old, women, men or transgender, straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual, HIV-positive or negative, to make choices regarding their own sexuality and reproduction, providing they respect the rights of others to bodily integrity. This definition also includes the right to access information and services needed to support these choices and optimize health.²⁷

Sexual exploitation and abuse

Refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. "Sexual abuse" means an actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.²⁸

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.

Sexual orientation

Refers to each person's enduring capacity for profound romantic, emotional and/or physical feelings for, or attraction to, person(s) of a particular sex and/or gender. Encompasses hetero-, homo- and bisexuality and a wide range of other expressions of sexual orientation.²⁹

Strategic gender interests

Interventions addressing strategic gender interests focus on fundamental issues related to women's (or, less often, men's) subordination and gender inequities. Strategic gender interests are long-term, usually not material, and are often related to structural changes in society regarding women's status and equality. They include legislation for equal rights, reproductive choice and increased participation in decision-making. The notion of "strategic gender needs", first coined in 1985 by Maxine Molyneux, helped develop gender planning and policy development tools, such as the Moser Framework, which are currently being used by development institutions around the world.³⁰

Targeted actions (gender equality)

Refers to specific interventions that respond to the disadvantage, discrimination or particular needs of women, girls, boys or men. All targeted actions should be based on gender and age analysis.³¹

Women's empowerment

The empowerment of women and girls concerns their gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources, and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. This implies that to be empowered they must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the agency to use these rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as is provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions). As highlighted in the Istanbul Convention (2011), women's empowerment as an obligation is a reflection of the greater aim of achieving gender equality by facilitating women's agency and opportunities in all aspects of life, including political and economic empowerment, and reducing their vulnerability to violence.³²

ENDNOTES

- 1 Source: UN Women, Glossary of Gender-related Terms and Concepts.
- 2 Source: UNHCR, [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#) (2018).
- 3 Source: UNHCR, [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#) (2018).
- 4 Source: [UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You](#).
- 5 Source: ILO (2008), [ILO Participatory Gender Audit: A tool for organizational change](#).
- 6 Source: [UN Women Training Centre Gender Equality Glossary](#).
- 7 Source: UNHCR, [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#) (2018).
- 8 Source: [IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#) and UNHCR Gender Equality Learning Programme, Module 1.
- 9 Source: Hausmann, Ricardo, Laura D. Tyson, Saadia Zahidi, Editors (2012). "[The Global Gender Gap Report 2012](#)". World Economic Forum.
- 10 Source: UNHCR and IOM, LGBTI Terminology Guidance within the Participant Workbook, Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons in Forced Displacement and the Humanitarian Context, 2017.
- 11 Source: UNHCR and IOM, LGBTI Terminology Guidance within the Participant Workbook, Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons in Forced Displacement and the Humanitarian Context, 2017.
- 12 Source: [Report of the UN Economic and Social Council 1997 \(A/52/3, 18 September 1997\)](#).
- 13 Source: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. "[Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You](#)".
- 14 Source: [UN Women Training Centre Gender Equality Glossary](#).
- 15 Source: [WHO Glossary of Terms and Tools](#).
- 16 Source: [UN Women Training Centre Gender Equality Glossary](#).
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