

Five Ways to Strengthen Gender Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Action

An inter-agency proposal for action

Executive Summary

For more than a decade, the international community has recognized that an effective humanitarian response must address the needs and concerns of women, girls, boys and men **equally**, right from the very first phase while taking into account their different positions and access to power and resources. The Security Council, ECOSOC, and the Interagency Standing Committee have all called on humanitarian actors to mainstream a gender perspective into all humanitarian programmes. There have been a number of initiatives, including development of policies, ad hoc training programmes, establishment of gender focal points systems, and development of a variety of tools to strengthen the humanitarian community's ability to recognize that women, girls, boys and men have different needs and capacities, and that responses need to be tailored to address these equally. The impact of these initiatives seems to have made little difference. Recent humanitarian evaluations (Tsunami, Pakistan Earthquake and Darfur) have determined that gender equality issues were neglected, to the detriment of the recovery effort.

Since 1999, the IASC's Taskforce on Gender in Humanitarian Assistance has worked to strengthen gender mainstreaming in emergencies. While individual humanitarian actors have made major strides on policy development and operational strategies, the impact of the inter-agency forum has however been limited. This Proposal for Action represents a coordinated and cohesive strategic plan to strengthen gender mainstreaming in emergencies by key humanitarian actors under the auspice of the IASC Gender Taskforce.

The proposal is a result of comprehensive review of what exists and the gaps that remain. Five interwoven and complementary initiatives are proposed for action. These are:

1. Developing gender equality standards in a field-friendly handbook.
2. Ensuring gender expertise in emergencies.
3. Building capacity of humanitarian actors on gender issues.
4. Getting the right data – using sex and age disaggregated data for decision-making.
5. Building partnerships for increased and more predictable gender equality programming in crises.

This proposal describes the reason why these five initiatives were chosen, how they build one upon the other and should be implemented at the same time. It also lays out the objectives, expected outputs, timelines, partnerships and budgets for each initiative.

This funding appeal is meant to complement the IASC *CAP Appeal for Improving Humanitarian Response Capacity* for approximately \$40 million launched in March 2006 requesting support for cluster strengthening. Support for gender as a cross-cutting issue to be mainstreamed in all clusters was left out of the March appeal. In future appeals for strengthening the cluster approach efforts will be made to include requests for support for actors mainstreaming gender issues.

This funding appeal seeks \$2.87 million for one-year for six implementing agencies.

Why is gender mainstreaming so inadequate in emergencies – The Gaps

First and foremost the reason why “gender equality” is not mainstreamed in humanitarian crises is because the concept of “gender mainstreaming” is not well understood in the humanitarian arena. The vast majority of humanitarian actors do not know what it means to “do gender mainstreaming” and what the benefits are if it is done or the negative consequences if it is not. Humanitarian actors may not be aware of the differential effect their assistance may have on women and men. This is why the first initiative in this 5 Ways Strategic Plan is to develop **gender standards** in a field friendly handbook. How are humanitarian actors at the field level expected to mainstream gender if there is no clear set of information and instructions on what gender is, or how to ensure gender equality in humanitarian response. The handbook provides guidance on how to conduct simple analysis of gender differentiated-needs, specific actions to mainstream gender equality into sectors/clusters and most importantly indicators to use for measuring progress in gender mainstreaming.

In the Tsunami response, gender issues were forgotten in the initial needs assessments in all affected countries. Far more women than men died in the Tsunami. There was no analysis of the implication this demographic change had on surviving communities. These omissions led to failures to meet protection needs and served to reinforce discriminatory structures undermining women’s opportunities for recovery. (TEC Report 2006)

While clear standards for mainstreaming gender are needed, equally essential are competent specialists on the ground that can facilitate analysis of the needs of women, men, boys and girls and support humanitarian actors to do their work more effectively. For too long gender issues have been relegated to the most junior person on the team – almost always a woman – with little or no training on gender issues. Timely deployment of senior experienced gender advisors in emergencies to assist sector specialists and to support the Humanitarian Coordinator to mainstream gender concerns into their work – as well as find and support women friendly spaces and other targeted programmes for women and girls – is required. Operational humanitarian organisations also need to deploy staff with gender expertise. Creating a **gender experts** roster pool is the 2nd component of the 5 Ways strategy.

In its 2005 Annual Evaluation Report, WFP recommends the early deployment of gender experts to work with other sectors to conduct gender analysis and put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure gender concerns are part and parcel of our humanitarian action.

But before the humanitarian worker even gets to the field there needs to be a concerted effort to build knowledge and skills on gender equality and how to effectively incorporate this in the daily work. Thus **capacity building** is the 3rd piece of the 5 Ways strategy. To date individual agencies have undertaken some gender training but this is not routine. Some humanitarian training courses have incorporated some gender content but their effectiveness has not been measured. Additionally, since many humanitarian workers receive sporadic or no training at all, getting the message out on what gender is, why gender equality needs to be promoted and how you do it needs creative approaches. With the gender handbook as the basis, an interactive learning package on gender is proposed as well as a more dedicated support to including quality gender training into existing humanitarian training events. Capacity building will also be one of the main functions of the deployed gender experts who will be able to do on-the-spot gender training and demonstrate in “real-time” how gender mainstreaming is done.

Continued lack of analysis of **sex and age disaggregated data** stands in the way of understanding the true impact of the crisis on different people in the community and blurs the understanding of who is receiving assistance and if that assistance is meeting the specific needs of women, girls, boys and men in a gender responsive manner. The 4th component of the 5 Ways strategy aims to build a stronger understanding of the importance of such data for decision-making and provide concrete methods to ensure that sex and age disaggregated data is collected and analysed.

Finally, the fifth component of the 5 Ways strategy is **partnership building**. For too long the work to support gender mainstreaming and targeted programmes for women has relied upon too few actors. Many humanitarian actors rush to provide emergency care and support for children or do their work in a gender-blind fashion. Formal commitments to attend to gender differences may not be supported by accountability mechanism and simple tools for ensuring that attention is paid to gender in programme design and funding strategies is missing. The UN actors working on gender issues are not always active in humanitarian response or do so from a specific sector focus. The NGO community is active in supporting women’s programming and to some degree gender mainstreaming but the linkages between the IASC’s efforts and the wide range of NGOs operational in humanitarian response has not been forged. By building partnerships between and among UN agencies, NGOs, governments and other actors with agreed upon goals and concrete outputs much can be achieved for the populations we are called upon to serve.

“[T]he cluster approach does not seem to have helped to foster gender discussion and to better address gender concerns in planning and implementation of the response (...). Currently there is no forum or mechanism to promote gender sensitiveness in the emergency response in Pakistan.”
(Pakistani Earthquake IASC Real-Time Evaluation, 2006)

A Joint Initiative

This 5 Ways Inter-agency Proposal for Action is the work of the IASC Taskforce on Gender in Humanitarian Action. All members of the IASC will be involved, as well as other active partners such as UNIFEM. Different agencies will take a lead role in each of the 5 Ways. Steering committees or specific working groups of IASC actors including a UN and NGOs will be formed to ensure that the products or outcomes of the 5 Ways strategy are fully endorsed by all members and ultimately will be used by all humanitarian/IASC actors.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the 5 Ways Strategy

The IASC Gender Taskforce will provide oversight to the implementation of these five initiatives to ensure there are inter-agency efforts and that they compliment each other. Each individual agency will be responsible for designing a detailed monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that the specific initiative meets its stated objectives in a timely manner.

Key indicators to measure overall success of the 5 Ways Strategy are:

- Future humanitarian evaluations report progress in implementing gender equality standards..
- Sex and age disaggregated data is increasingly used to analyse the humanitarian situation.
- Clusters/sectors effectively address and integrate gender equality in their policies, tools and reporting.

Accountability and Senior Management Commitment

Mainstreaming gender issues can not be achieved unless all humanitarian actors take this issue seriously and senior managers are held responsible for the planning, implementing and evaluating programmes using a gender perspective. Humanitarian Coordinators are key in this regard as is the IASC Working Group and the IASC Principals. This 5 Ways Strategic Plan is part of the Gender Taskforce workplan and thus endorsed by the IASC. In 2007 further efforts on advocacy with key senior managers will be undertaken especially in the context of the humanitarian reform agenda.

Summary of Funding Needs

Initiatives	Funds for	Partners	Budget
1. Gender Handbook	OCHA	IASC	\$125,000
2. Gender Experts	NRC and UNFPA	UNFPA, OCHA	\$1,485,000
3. Building capacity	Interaction	IASC	\$870,000
4. Sex & age disaggregated data	Columbia University	UNFPA, WHO	\$150,000
5. Building partnerships	UNIFEM	NGO Consortia	\$240,000
5 Initiatives Total			\$2,870,000

1st Way

Developing Gender Standards in a Field-Friendly Handbook and Rolling it Out.

Introduction

The first inter-agency normative guidelines on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action, *Women, Girls, Boys and Men, Different Needs – Equal Opportunities IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action*, has been drafted to aid field actors to mainstream gender into sectors/clusters work. The Gender Handbook includes information on gender analysis, key actions to ensure gender mainstreaming, and indicators in easy-to-use checklist formats. Additional resources are provided at the end of each chapter.

The IASC Gender Handbook is a sector by sector (cluster by cluster) practical guide on how to mainstream gender issues and targeted actions for women in the response to emergencies, including the importance of coordination of gender issues in humanitarian response. The Gender Handbook starts off with the basics on what gender mainstreaming is and why it is essential for immediate humanitarian response. This is followed by three chapters on cross-cutting issues; namely coordination, participation and the international legal framework for protection. The 11 areas of work or sector/cluster chapters are: camp coordination and camp management, education, food Issues (including food security, food distribution and nutrition), health, livelihoods, non-food items, registration, shelter, and water, sanitation and hygiene.

The Gender Handbook is a collaborative effort of more than 25 NGOs and UN agencies. It will be sent to the IASC Working Group for endorsement in November 2006 and subsequently needs to be translated, printed in adequate quantities and widely disseminated so that it will be available in all field locations.

Overall Objective: Inter-agency agreed upon standards on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action is developed and widely disseminated and used.

Expected output: Finalised, translated in 4 languages, printed and widely disseminated IASC Gender Handbook.

Indicators

- Gender Handbook is translated into Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish.
- Handbook is printed in a large numbers (12,000 in English and French, 5000 each in Arabic, Russian and Spanish)
- CD rom produced including gender resources (20,000 copies) and placed on internet sites.

Key activities

1. Editing, desk-top publishing and printing of the Handbook
2. Translations in Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish
3. Dissemination plan developed and implemented using inter-agency routes and trainings events.

Timeline: November 2006 – October 2007

Partners: OCHA will oversee the finalisation of the Gender Handbook in all languages. Agencies will assist in translation services and dissemination to field operations.

Budget: \$ 125,000

The Gender Handbook is the main tool to be used for all the other initiatives in this 5 Ways Strategy. The Gender Experts will use it and it forms the basis for the capacity building and partnership building efforts.

2nd Way

Ensuring Gender Expertise in Emergency Response

Introduction

For too long, the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming of gender issues have been left to junior staff, to over-burdened “gender focal points” or not done at all. In the rush to respond to emergencies sector specialists are going all out to get basic needs met. In the early days of a new crisis someone needs to be on hand – senior enough and with the authority and technical skills - to ensure more effective emergency relief through gender mainstreaming in data collection, needs assessment and programming. Experience from development settings has shown that having a gender expert in a sector working group is essential to ensuring gender-sensitive programming. One of the recommendations that came out of the evaluation of the tsunami response was to deploy a gender officer to the Humanitarian Coordinator’s (HC) office at an early stage in a large-scale emergency to support the humanitarian community on mainstreaming gender in all program activities (TEC, 2005). The real-time evaluation of the response to the Pakistani earthquake gave a similar recommendation (IASC, 2006).

The establishment of a roster of gender experts at a senior level to serve as advisors to the HC, the humanitarian country teams and support gender networks in the initial stages of humanitarian emergencies is long overdue. The role of the gender experts will be to facilitate the establishment of mechanisms to ensure that services put in place meet the needs of women, girls, boys and men equally.

Overall objective: Humanitarian response is more effective and meets all people’s needs equally as actors know how to address the existing gender inequalities and mainstream gender issues at field-level. Support provided by a gender expert is proven to make a substantial input to sector programming and inter-agency coordination efforts.

Expected output: To have a ready pool of 15-20 gender experts who could be deployed to a humanitarian crisis on short notice. These experts will be deployed as “inter-agency” gender advisors working under the Humanitarian Coordinators to facilitate gender mainstreaming, including contributing to coordination on gender-based violence programmes. Additionally, individual agencies could also deploy a gender advisor to work on their agency programmes.

Indicators:

- Trained gender experts deployed to at least five humanitarian emergencies in 2006/07
- 80% of gender mainstreaming indicators in the IASC gender handbook are monitored in the pilot situations and progress reported on changes over time.

Key activities:

1. Establish gender pool/rosters of gender advisors.
2. Conduct a 7 day training/orientation on gender issues in humanitarian emergencies for the pool. (UNFPA to steer this in coordination with the IASC Gender Taskforce)
3. Develop and implement an evaluation framework for the gender experts’ pilot.
4. Implementation of gender experts’ pilot and deployment of gender experts.

Timeline: 2 years

Monitoring and evaluation: A well structured evaluation framework will accompany this pilot to ensure that the impact of gender programming on populations of concern is documented and lessons learned captured for sharing in future emergencies.

Partners: The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) will establish the gender experts’ roster. OCHA, UNFPA and UNIFEM will be key facilitators in the training/orientation of the gender pool. All UN agencies with MOUs with NRC will be possible recipients of these gender experts.

Budget: \$1,485,000

We understand that Norway has already indicated its willingness to support a substantial part of this part of the proposal, and are grateful for their support.

3rd Way

Building capacity of humanitarian actors on gender issues

Introduction

Attempts at building the capacity of humanitarian actors to incorporate gender issues in emergency response over the last years have been somewhat *ad hoc*. Some IASC partners incorporate gender issues into their training efforts – others fail to do so. A more concerted inter-agency effort is needed to build capacity of all humanitarian actors to know how to mainstream gender issues and be able to ensure that the protection and assistance they provide in a crisis meets the needs of women, men, girls and boys taking into account their different needs, situations and opportunities, and ensures active participation of all in aspects of the emergency response.

All components of this 5 Ways Strategy has a capacity building function. This particular component has a two-pronged approach. First is to identify key existing humanitarian training efforts and working with the organisers, integrate gender concerns into those important training events. Secondly this component aims to create an inter-active CD rom/internet-based learning that will cover the basic information on what gender mainstreaming is, why it is important, and provide simple approaches to sector-specific actors on gender equality programming. The Gender Handbook will form the foundation for this creative training approach.

Since a large majority of humanitarian actors never receive training or are deployed to an emergency with short start-up times, a CD rom or internet-based learning course on gender would enable staff to learn the basics of what gender is and how they can operationalise gender concerns in emergencies. With the development of this being done with full IASC participation – the Gender Learning Programme could be used by all partners as a basic entry-level training.

Overall objective: To strengthen the understanding and capacity of humanitarian actors from the NGO and UN communities on the importance of gender mainstreaming and how it can be implemented in practical ways in the delivery of humanitarian protection and assistance programmes.

Expected output: Humanitarian response effectively meets the needs of women, men, boys and girls as gender mainstreaming knowledge and skills of humanitarian actors is improved.

Indicators

- 80% of IASC and key NGO partners endorse the use of the interactive training tool and incorporate it into their orientation/training efforts.
- 10 key humanitarian training courses integrate gender standards routinely.
- 75% improvement from baseline on KAP survey of users of inter-active training.

Key Activities: There are two main activities in this initiative.

1. Incorporate gender equality elements into 10 key training initiatives for humanitarian actors. This will be based on a full review of the various training activities undertaken for humanitarian workers. Actors undertaking humanitarian training will be supported to strengthen the coverage of gender issues in their respective courses.
2. Develop an interactive training course on Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action and ensure that it is agreed upon by all IASC so that it will be used by all.

Timeline: 2 years

Partners: InterAction will lead this project and provide technical inputs to the development of the training tools. Members of the IASC Gender Taskforce and other key NGOs and gender experts will form a Steering Committee to provide oversight to InterAction based on an agreed upon terms of reference.

Budget: \$800,000

4th Way

Using sex and age disaggregated data for decision-making.

Introduction

The problems of collecting accurate data in today's complex emergencies should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, without accurate information regarding the status of the population and its needs, and without the ability to follow the progress, or lack of progress, of any relief effort, humanitarian groups, including those UN agencies responsible for the overall coordination of the response, are consigned to working in the dark.

Population-based data – as important as it is – can mask the true needs of people in serious difficulty. Until the disaggregated data by sex and age is collected in all sectors of relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction efforts becomes routine practice, many humanitarian interventions will miss their intended mark – to provide relief to those in greatest need. Numerous UN resolutions have called for routine use of sex disaggregated data.

This initiative will get to the bottom of why humanitarian actors do not collect, analyse and/or report their data on the work they do broken down by sex and age. It will also find out what information decision-makers, such as Humanitarian Coordinators, want and use to inform their decision-making and determine what role the HC can/should play in ensuring sex/age disaggregated data is used in the situation. It will provide concrete methods and entry points for collecting sex and age disaggregated data in emergencies. This is a start-up activity recognising that other initiatives on improved information management under the IASC are underway as is the support by UNFPA in ensuring sex and age disaggregated data is routinely used to inform humanitarian programming especially in early recovery.

Overall objective: Increase commitment to and ability for routine collection and analysis of humanitarian data disaggregated by age and sex.

Expected output

- Summary report on the “state of sex and age disaggregated data (SADA)” and best practices to date.
- Expert meeting provides recommendations on key entry points for SADA and determines methods and indicators.
- Training of Humanitarian Coordinators on their role to ensure SADA is used routinely.

Key activities

1. Conduct a review of recent emergency operations to determine the level to which SADA from different sectors was used to make decisions.
2. Prepare a comprehensive review of available documents on SADA including methodological issues.
3. Conduct key informants interviews with senior decision makers and visit to two current relief operations, one in Africa and one in Asia, to determine barriers to collecting and reporting on SADA.
4. Host an expert conference to review the finding of the project, which will culminate in the drafting of a series of recommendations for the humanitarian community as a whole, and for UN Humanitarian Coordinators specifically.
5. Provide advice to the HCs in their training meeting in early 2007 on findings, and seek their inputs on moving forward so that data disaggregated by sex and by age becomes routinely analysed and used.

Timeline: 1 year

Partners: Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health will lead this project and bring together experts from UNFPA and WHO to contribute to the expert meeting and development of recommendations and methods.

Budget: \$150,000

5th Way

Building partnerships for increased predictability of gender equality programming in crises.

Introduction

When humanitarian response is planned and executed gender issues are rarely addressed. More concerted effort is needed to build an agreed programmatic approach to incorporate gender concerns and actions that benefit women and girls. There is an absence of robust partnerships for gender equality between agencies of the UN system and NGOs. Formal commitments to gender mainstreaming have not percolated to management, information and reporting systems, accountability systems, performance measures and incentive systems.

To build partnerships for increased predictability of gender equality programming in crises a wide range of actions are needed, some requiring high-level commitment and accountability responses, some requiring practical modifications to the “templates” used by humanitarian actors when designing funding proposals. This initiative would begin with an examination of reasons for the lack of adequate partnerships and funding responses. This part of the work will build on a UNIFEM initiative to explore a similar concern in UN development programming responses, in which a large number of CCA/UNDAFs were examined to see how far each one incorporated gender analysis and matched the identification of gender equality issues to actual programming and budget allocation. In the case of humanitarian response, the challenge will be to provide concrete guidance to actors on how to incorporate gender programming as a cross-cutting issue into appeal processes. This will be based on an analysis of past Flash Appeals, CAPs, or CERFs.

Linked to the above processes, this initiative will assess the effectiveness of existing internal and inter agency institutional processes and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming, with a specific focus upon the adequacy of accountability systems, positive incentives, performance measures and reporting systems, and the like. The processes for developing funding proposals, including the templates currently used for preparing proposals, will be examined, and simple and accessible templates will be designed for a range of sectoral funding proposals that would include gender concerns as well as targeted programmes for women and girls.

Overall objective: Stronger partnerships ensure that gender equality responses and programming are predictable and routine parts of any humanitarian intervention.

Expected outputs

- Report on the effectiveness of current humanitarian response operations in mainstreaming gender equality into programming response, including gender issues in Caps, CERFs and Flash Appeals;
- Consultations with UN, NGO stakeholders at all levels, including at least two consultations in current humanitarian crisis contexts;
- Recommendations for reforms to incentive and accountability systems;
- Draft templates for programming and funding proposals.

Indicators

- Templates applicable to a range of humanitarian sectors produced
- Increase in number of gender-related proposals in forthcoming funding appeals
- Increase in the budget envelope assigned to address gender issues in humanitarian responses.

Key Activities: Consultations with NGO, UN and government partners, preparation of project “templates” and agreement on standards on incorporation of gender activates in funding appeals.

Timeline: 1 year

Partners: UNIFEM will oversee the work in this area in partnership with the members of the IASC.

Budget: \$240,000

Detailed Budgets

1. Gender Handbook

Activity	Cost
Editing, desk-top publishing	\$ 10,000
Translations (\$5000 each x4)	\$ 20,000
Printing of 5 languages with large print volumes (based on IASC GBV guidelines)	\$ 75,000
CD-Rom production	\$ 10,000
Mailing costs	\$ 10,000
Total	\$125,000

2. Gender Experts

Activity	Cost
Setting up and maintenance of roster (NRC administration costs)	\$ 143,000
7 day training/orientation (funds for UNFPA or an agency/institute for the training)	\$ 120,000
Develop an evaluation framework and process for the gender experts' pilot	\$ 100,000
Two P5 level advisors will be employed full-time and serve in a surge capacity. Cost for one year including travel expenses for trainings and debriefings	\$ 474,000
P4 level experts in a stand-by arrangement. Cost including travel for trainings and debriefings (cost based on 3 all year positions)	\$ 648,500
Total	\$1,485,500

3. Capacity Building

Activity	Cost
Project Manager at InterAction for 2 years	\$ 200,000
Travel, workshop costs, meetings	\$ 70,000
Production of the CD/rom interactive learning in English and French	\$ 400,000
Technical support	\$ 100,000
Materials production and outreach for inclusion of gender issues in existing trainings	\$ 100,000
Total	\$ 870,000

4. Sex and age disaggregated data

Activity	Cost
Principle Investigator	\$ 60,000
Research assistant	\$ 25,000
Expert Group Meeting	\$ 40,000
Travel and Misc.	\$ 25,000
Total	\$ 150,000

5. Building Partnerships

Activity	Cost
Project Manager	\$ 160,000
Consultations (field-based and HQ)	\$ 60,000
Materials	\$ 10,000
Travel and Misc.	\$ 10,000
Total	\$ 240,000