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# OCHA TOOL KIT

Tools to support implementation  
of OCHA's policy on gender equality

# Gender Equality

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

August 2005



# Foreword

Understanding how conflicts and disasters affect women and men, girls and boys is critical to the overall effectiveness of our humanitarian response. Women, men, girls and boys experience war, floods, earthquakes and displacement differently: they can have different priorities, responsibilities, and protection needs. They can also play different but important roles in responding to and making decisions to resolve conflict and build peace. While women and girls are disproportionately affected during crises, they are not only victims. Pervasive gender inequalities undermine the ability of women and girls to exercise their rights and be active partners in emergency response, rehabilitation and development. We must empower women and strive to overcome these inequalities.

This tool kit contains practical guidance for OCHA staff on how to implement OCHA's policy on gender equality. It can also be used by partners to ensure gender issues are integrated in design, implementation and evaluation of humanitarian response. The tools can assist in mainstreaming gender issues in the area of information management and analysis, humanitarian response and coordination, humanitarian policy and evaluation and humanitarian advocacy. More such tools will be created to guide field actors in gender mainstreaming.

Let me once again reiterate the importance I place on the issue of gender mainstreaming and assure you of my personal commitment in this regard and request the same from you. The goal of gender equality and advancement of women must remain a critical part of our response to humanitarian crises world-wide. Progress will be assessed on a regular basis and I count on your fullest support and cooperation to move forward in this important and shared responsibility.

**Jan Egeland**  
*Emergency Relief Coordinator*

August 2005



## Tools to support implementation of OCHA's policy on gender equality

### General tools for all OCHA staff

1- Definitions related to gender equality .....	1
2- International mandates related to gender equality .....	3
3- Frequently asked questions on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian assistance .....	5
4- Case studies on how gender mainstreaming improves humanitarian assistance .....	9

### Tools for humanitarian response and coordination

5- Responsibilities of gender mainstreaming in the Humanitarian Coordinator's terms of reference ...	11
6- Responsibilities and potential initiatives for OCHA field offices relating to gender equality .....	13
7- Terms of reference for field/branch gender focal points .....	15

### Tools for information management and analysis

8- Engendering a situation report .....	17
9- Checklist for strengthening gender mainstreaming in the CAP .....	21
10- Gender issues to be included in the Humanitarian Information Centres (HICs) .....	23

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



# Definitions related to gender equality

# 1

**Gender:** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through the socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age. ([www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm))

**Equality between women and men (gender equality):** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a "women's issue" but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development. (Ibid)

**Gender Mainstreaming:** The strategy of mainstreaming is defined in the ECOSOC agreed conclusions, 1997/2, as "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, 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 ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

**Note on gender as a cross-cutting theme in humanitarian assistance:** The equal rights of women and men are explicit in the human rights documents that form the basis of the Humanitarian Charter. Women and men, and girls and boys, have the same entitlement to humanitarian assistance: to respect for their human dignity; to acknowledgement of their equal human capacities, including the capacity to make choices; to the same opportunities to act on those choices; and to the same level of power to shape the outcome of their actions. (From the revised SPHERE handbook - [www.sphereproject.org/handbook](http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook))



United Nations



## International mandates related to gender equality

# 2

*A sample of the resolutions on the inclusion of gender perspective in general and in humanitarian assistance in particular includes:*

- **Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security - October 2000** – Among other steps, this resolution calls for the recognition of the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. Available at: [http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf)
- **ECOSOC Agreed Conclusion on Gender Mainstreaming** – The strategy of mainstreaming is defined in the ECOSOC agreed conclusions, 1997/2, as “...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, 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 ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”
- **ECOSOC 2003 Resolution on “strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations” (E/2003/L.28)**: “... stressed the continued need and relevance of integrating, through implementation of existing policies, commitments and guidelines on gender mainstreaming, a gender perspective in the planning, programming and implementation of humanitarian assistance activities...”
- **Outcomes Document – Beijing +5 (New York, 2000) - Actions to be taken at the international level...** by the United Nations system and international and regional organisations: Para 86 (a) assist Governments, upon request, in developing gender-sensitive strategies for the delivery of assistance and, where appropriate, responses to humanitarian crises resulting from armed conflict and natural disasters. Full text available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/as2310rev1.pdf>
- **Commission on the Status of Women (48th Session, March 2004)**: “The Commission calls for the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls at all times, including during conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace building. It further calls for the protection and security for women and girls under threat of violence and their freedom of movement and participation in social, political and economic activities.” (Para. 3 – unedited version) See: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/)
- **IASC Policy Mainstreaming Gender in the Humanitarian Response to Emergencies. IASC Meeting April 1999**: “...the IASC commits itself to ensuring that its member organisations take the following actions:
  - a. Formulate specific strategies for ensuring that gender issues are brought into the mainstream of activities within the IASC areas of responsibility. Priority areas are: assessment and strategic planning



United Nations

- for humanitarian crisis; the consolidated appeals process; principled approach to emergencies; and participation of women in the planning, designing and monitoring of all aspects of emergency programs;
- b. Ensure data disaggregated by sex and age and include a gender perspective in analysis of information. Produce gender-sensitive operational studies, best practices, guidelines and checklists for programming, as well as the establishment of instruments and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, such as gender-impact methodologies, in order to incorporate gender analysis techniques in institutional tools and procedures;
  - c. Develop capacity for systematic gender mainstreaming in programmes, policies, actions, and training;
  - d. Ensure reporting and accountability mechanisms for activities and results in gender mainstreaming within the UN and partners, such as incentives, performance evaluations, Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), budget allocation analysis and actions for redressing staff imbalance.
- The agreed conclusions of ECOSOC's 1998 humanitarian affairs segment requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to "ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated into humanitarian activities and policies" (E/1998/L.15 of 16 July 1998).



## Why does OCHA need a gender policy?

There are several reasons. First, there is growing evidence that understanding gender relations, identities and inequalities can help improve humanitarian assistance. Not all people are vulnerable in the same way; nor do they have the same capacities. Although specifics varying from place to place, women tend to have greater responsibilities for children and the home while men have greater exposure to actors outside of the home. There can also be significant differences between women and men regarding access to education or in confidence when addressing political authorities. Understanding these differences and inequalities can help identify needs, target assistance and ensure that the needs of the vulnerable are met.

Second, there are commitments to using a gender perspective and working towards greater equality between women and men within the UN system including in the Security Council with resolution 1325 (2000), in ECOSOC resolution on gender mainstreaming, by the IASC, by governments and by international organisations engaged in humanitarian assistance. OCHA's policy is also related to fulfilling these commitments.

Third, evaluations have pointed out that gender mainstreaming has been a neglected area of humanitarian assistance. Many development agencies have a history of working on gender issues but progress has been slower in the humanitarian assistance community. Thus, there is a need to invest resources and make progress on this issue.

## What does OCHA mean by 'gender mainstreaming'?

OCHA follows the definition of 'gender mainstreaming' agreed to and used by the United Nations.

Two aspects of this definition are important. The first relates to how vulnerabilities and capacities can be different for women and men. Humanitarian assistance can have different impacts on women and men. This involves analysis, information and consultations with communities.

The second aspect of this definition of gender mainstreaming that is important for OCHA is the focus on not perpetuating inequalities. While humanitarian assistance is very different from long-term development assistance, it is often possible to ask whether or not a specific intervention widens or narrows inequalities between women and men. There is also a responsibility for humanitarians to look at issues relating to the protection of women and girls, strengthening women as decision-makers and the human rights of all.

"The strategy of mainstreaming is defined in the ECOSOC agreed conclusions, 1997/2, as "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, 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 ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality".



It is true that there is often significant misunderstanding of what is meant when we say that OCHA is working to 'mainstream a gender perspective'. Common misunderstandings include that this means that OCHA is trying to make women and men the same, that women will be privileged over men, that this perspective is inconsistent with the principles of humanitarian neutrality or that this involves massive interference in local cultures or structures. These are all false.

### **The policy says 'gender mainstreaming', so why is there a focus on women and girls? I thought that gender was about women and men?**

Yes, using a gender analysis does mean looking at women and men (as well as boys and girls) and understanding their relationships, vulnerabilities and capacities. However, the focus is often on women given that there tend to be inequalities – in resources, past attention, understanding of priorities, respect of rights, etc. Therefore, it is often important to make special efforts to consult with women and girls, investigate their protection needs, and document their priorities, as these have not always been understood to date.

### **But OCHA isn't operational, so what does this policy have to do with us?**

Eventhough OCHA is not operational, much of OCHA's work can benefit from better attention to gender issues. OCHA's leadership on sexual abuse and exploitation issues is one good example of how OCHA's coordination mandate is relevant on these issues.

In terms of the Policy – OCHA's policy work can ensure that all new policies look at differential impacts on women and men. OCHA's information management function (establishing frameworks for data collection, highlighting data gaps, and providing news services) can disaggregate data by sex and provide information on crucial issues (such as women's rights, sexual and gender-based violence, women's priorities that might have been overlooked to that point, etc.). OCHA's advocacy work can also be used to bring attention to issues that are relevant when a gender perspective is used.

### **If we work on gender issues, aren't we interfering in local cultures?**

The stress in OCHA's gender policy and action plan is first and foremost on using a gender analysis to understand what is going on in a humanitarian crisis and how to best shape the response. This is not interfering in local cultures, but understanding this dimension of local cultures.

### **Gender? Women? Isn't that UNIFEM's responsibility?**

UNIFEM does have a specific mandate to work on women's issues. In addition, it has been agreed (in ECOSOC, in the General Assembly, in directives from the Secretary-General, etc.) that all UN agencies, offices, and departments have a responsibility to work with a gender perspective and understand how and where gender issues are relevant to their work. This flows from the insight that all interventions, policies and programmes can affect women and men differently, and it is important for all initiatives to understand that impact.

### **Looking at gender roles, responsibilities, inequalities, etc is very complicated? Where is OCHA staff going to get the required expertise?**

Yes, this can get complicated but there are a few basic steps that staff can take that do not require specialist expertise. First, do not make assumptions about who does what work or has a specific priority. Do not assume that all people will benefit equally from an intervention. Check out the realities of each situation. Second, encourage participatory approaches and consultations with target populations that ensure that women's voices will be heard.

If it is necessary to seek out more specialist information, there is support. Within OCHA, there is a senior gender adviser in PDSB. This person will be a resource and refer you to appropriate resources, as necessary.

Other agencies and NGOs may have gender expertise, documentation and information. Given that almost all agencies have a similar gender policy to OCHA's, they too are trying to find the best way to work on these

issues. UNIFEM runs a web portal <http://www.womenwarpeace.org> that can provide a starting point for information. There are two different UN networks that can also be approached: the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and the Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Task Force of the IASC.

In many countries there is a growing network of academics, gender equality advocates, and women's organisations that can be important sources of information. Consult the Peacewomen website <http://www.peacewomen.org> for listings of organisations. OCHA field offices should know which agencies and actors have gender expertise and call on it as appropriate for technical assistance...

### **Does gender mainstreaming include efforts to have greater balance of women and men working in OCHA?**

OCHA – like many other organizations – has decided to treat these two issues separately. Gender mainstreaming refers to how OCHA works on gender issues in its substantive work. Gender balance is the term given to issues relating to staffing. Gender balance is seen as a human resources issue and is dealt with under those structures. Gender mainstreaming is seen as a policy issue.

### **Can you give me some examples of where gender issues have been important in humanitarian settings or how OCHA or other humanitarian organisations have worked on gender issues?**

- On April 28th, 2004 OCHA's report on the situation in the DRC called on support and health care for victims of systemic sexual violence. "OCHA calls for an increase in the capacity of health partners already working on the ground and the financing of new partners with expertise in sexual violence and the prevention and transmission of HIV/AIDS," the agency said in a report on the initial conclusions of a 23 April inter-agency monitoring mission to Kahungula, in the southwestern province of Bandundu. Source: [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=40794&SelectRegion=Great\\_Lakes&SelectCountry=DRC](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=40794&SelectRegion=Great_Lakes&SelectCountry=DRC)
- In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), OCHA coordinated the collection and publication of the gender policies and priorities of humanitarian organisations active in the country. OCHA produced a booklet that was "designed to provide a clearer overview for all interested parties of the policies of international organisations, donors and NGOs on gender issues." This was a concrete step to act on the priority of gender mainstreaming into the programmes and projects of the various organisations working in DPRK, which had been consistently identified as a key initiative, by the humanitarian organisations in DPRK. See: UN- OCHA (2003). *Gender Policies of Humanitarian and Development Organisations working in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*.
- Examples from ICRC: Example 1: "In a post-conflict setting, the most vulnerable amongst the civilian population were found to be widows and female heads-of-households, often responsible for many children. These women found themselves in an extremely precarious position, with neither land nor the tools to cultivate it. Coping mechanisms were limited: begging, picking wild fruit, and, in some cases, resorting to prostitution. Lacking financial means, political support, and needing to devote their time primarily to securing means of survival, these women were generally unable to claim financial aid from the appropriate authorities. Many NGOs and development programmes did not take these women into account as investments required the payment of a warranty, which these women could not afford, in order to secure the grant of a loan.
- Example 2: "The situation of wives and girls related to men deprived of their freedom was exacerbated by the need to provide them with food and financial support. Women lost precious time for work and production due to travelling long distances to the prisons, and thus became trapped in a spiral of poverty. They sold their shelters, their animals and their belongings in order to be able to respond to the needs of those detained. It was frequently the case that one woman would be responsible for supporting several members of her family in detention.

“The ICRC granted support to women’s associations permitting them to participate in agro-pastoral programmes and to thereby restore their traditional economic activities. Their situation improved and they once again became eligible to receive credit from other institutional actors... Women also participated and were consulted in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the programme.” Source: ICRC Women and War team (2004). *Addressing the Needs of Women Affected by Armed Conflict*. Geneva: ICRC.

- There were reports from western Ethiopia that young Sudanese men fleeing conscription continued to starve in refugee camps despite receiving prompt shipment of food aid. The food they were given needed to be cooked before it could be eaten, and as men, they had never learned to cook. Source: WHO (2002). *Gender and Disasters*. [http://www.who.int/gender/other\\_health/en/genderdisasters.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/other_health/en/genderdisasters.pdf)
- “From December 2000 to January 2001, UNHCR deployed Emergency Response Teams (ERT) to both Guinea and Sierra Leone. To enhance the gender-sensitivity of the teams, the Office of the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women and Gender Equality and the Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit of UNHCR deployed a Gender Adviser to serve as part of the ERT. The deployment was a first in UNHCR’s history... In Guinea, the Gender Adviser’s work focused on UNHCR’s ongoing operations to relocate refugees from Languette to safer sites inside the country. The Gender Adviser and ERT ...[worked] to ensure that services and facilities... [responded] to the needs and priorities of both women and men. Emphasis...[was] placed both on influencing the establishment and management of camp level structures and on protection activities. Source: UNHCR (2001). *Good Practices. A Practical Guide to Empowerment. Refugee Women/Gender Equality Unit*. <http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home?page=PROTECT&tid=3b83a48d4>
- “Studies in Bangladesh show that women suffered most following the 1991 cyclone and flood. Among women aged 20-44, the death rate was 71 per 1000, compared to 15 per 1000 for men. Since emergency warnings were given mainly by loudspeaker and word of mouth, women’s lower literacy does not explain these findings. Other factors lay behind women’s higher mortality. In a highly sex-segregated society, warning information was transmitted by males to males in public spaces where males congregated on the assumption that this would be communicated to the rest of the family - which by and large did not occur. Those who heard the warning ignored it because cyclones occurring after the 1970 disaster had not caused much devastation. In the ensuing procrastination, women who had comparatively less knowledge about cyclones and were dependent on male decision-making, perished, many with their children, waiting for their husbands to return home and take them to safety. Those reaching shelters found them ill designed and insensitive to gender and culture specific needs. Not only were large numbers of men and women huddled together - a rarity in a culture of seclusion - but the shelters lacked separate toilets, water, toiletries like sanitary pads, thus reducing privacy levels. This especially enhanced the discomfort of menstruating, pregnant and lactating women. Women’s saris restricted their mobility. Women were malnourished compared to men and physically weaker.” *Challenging Boundaries: A Gender Perspective on Early Warning in Disaster and Environmental Management*. EGM/NATDIS/2001/EP.5. [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/env\\_manage/documents/EP5-2001Oct26.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/env_manage/documents/EP5-2001Oct26.pdf)



This tool provides information and case studies on how using mainstreaming a gender perspective makes humanitarian assistance more effective.

## Women and men can be vulnerable in different ways

### Case 1 – Vulnerability during floods

*“A sociological study on gender dimensions of floods in Northern Bangladesh shows that while women’s lives were primarily restricted to homesteads, they were engaged in economic activities such as tending home, gardens and livestock. During floods, many animals drowned and home gardens washed away. Women, unlike men could not seek outside work. They also had to meet their responsibilities for acquiring fuel wood and water, which became nearly impossible for them. Cultural restrictions also prevented women from participating in distribution of relief supplies or economic assistance...”*

## Understanding gender norms and differences can help uncover cause/effect linkages

### Case 2 – Soap and girls attendance at school

“In July 2000, UNHCR ran out of money to purchase soap for the approximately half a million refugees in Tanzania. No one realized how far-reaching the impact of lack of soap would be on the Congolese and Burundian refugee populations, especially on girls and women. A year later, after the first soap delivery, the ramifications are becoming clearer.

*Aside from being necessary to maintain personal hygiene, important in the prevention of infections and health problems, soap is also used for washing clothes, hair, and keeping children - who love to play in the red dirt of the camp-clean. For young women especially, having soap is crucial for maintaining hygiene, which is necessary to attend school.*

*One community service organisation stated that around the time soap delivery stopped; adolescent girls began dropping out of school. The combination of lack of soap, sanitary materials and clothing made girls feel ashamed of going to school, especially during their menstrual periods. In some camps, between fourth and fifth grade, two thirds of girls drop out of school.”*

## Women can be particularly hard-hit by the social impacts of environmental disasters (and these impacts are not always taken into consideration by humanitarian workers).

### Case 3 – Gender impact of natural disasters

“While natural disasters often impact human communities very broadly, residents are not equally at risk of loss and harm nor equally able to recover. Poor households are well-known to be especially vulnerable but gender-specific effects are also suggested, for example by such indicators as:

- Post disaster mortality, injury, and illness rates which are often (but not universally) higher for girls and women;
- Economic losses which disproportionately impact economically insecure women (e.g. agricultural losses of women farmers, the destruction of women’s home-based businesses, limited access to post disaster economic aid);



- Work load changes which suggest that disasters increase women's responsibilities in the domestic sphere, paid workplace, and community through the disaster cycle of preparation, relief, reconstruction, and mitigation;
- Post disaster stress symptoms which are often (but not universally) reported more frequently by women;
- Increased rates of sexual and domestic violence against girls and women in disaster contexts."

### Family roles and responsibilities change during crisis

#### Case 4 – Changing roles post-crisis: volcano in the Philippines

*"In the Philippines, following the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1994, women's workloads increased considerably. Women are normally responsible for ensuring there is food on the table. However, when families lost their harvest and women lost their kitchen gardens as a result of the volcanic eruption, women needed money to buy food.*

*"Male migration increased substantially following the eruption as men had to go elsewhere to look for jobs. Women were obligated to make money by taking in laundry (in addition to washing their own family's clothes) and cooking enough at family mealtimes to sell on the side. Women also tried to find domestic work. All this placed an extra burden on women who had even fewer resources and facilities than before."*

### Consulting with women and involving them in the planning can help 'get initiatives right' the first time.

#### Case 5 – Who makes decisions about resources?

*"Women and girls in a country in West Africa walked long distances, through conflict-stricken areas, to collect water but seldom had enough for their domestic needs. To improve the health of the family and the protection of women and girls, a water source closer to the village was proposed. However, as custom dictated, discussions were held with the men of the village to determine the construction and location of the water source.*

*"After its construction was complete, it became apparent that the means of accessing the water had to be adapted for the women who were actually using it. For example, the short-handled hand pump had to be replaced with a long-handled pump to enable women and girls of less physical strength to use the water source. In addition, the involvement of women proved invaluable, as it was ultimately the women using the water facility who were most conscientious about maintaining it and keeping it in a good state of repair."*

### Humanitarian assistance can also affect social relationships

#### Case 6 – Impact of gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance on women

While witnessing a very vocal meeting of rural women in Srirampur, Orissa, about a year and a half after the cyclone of 1999, I was informed by NGO there that before the cyclone, women would rarely come out and interact on social issues, let alone interact with outsiders. This changed after the cyclone, because relief packages of most NGOs, and even the government, were targeted at, or through, women. That phase really empowered them, made them amenable to interacting on social issues and also increased their self-esteem and their status within their families and society.

What are the factors which lead to women's empowerment that is sustainable and gender equitable? The one that clearly stands out is control over resources. The Orissa example is one where the fact that women received the family relief kits, house building grants, loans and memberships, and passed on the benefits to the families, made all the difference.



## The HC's responsibility with regard to gender mainstreaming is outlined in their Terms of Reference as follows:

Para. 24: The Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible for promoting and monitoring the implementation of relevant policies and guidelines adopted by the IASC, including the IASC's Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance (1999).

Para. 25: The Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming and women's rights at the policy, planning and implementation levels as part of their strategic coordination and humanitarian accountability functions.

## Fulfilling these elements in the TORs means:

- Ensuring that multi-sectoral needs assessments and the identification of humanitarian priorities are based on sex-disaggregated data, as well as solid analysis of gender relations and inequalities.
- Facilitating inter-agency coordination on gender issues through support for a robust inter-agency working group on gender issues in humanitarian response.<sup>6</sup>
- Appointing and supporting a 'gender focal point' within the OCHA office and informing the NY-based gender adviser of this appointment.
- Ensuring that gender issues are taken into account throughout the CAP.
- Actively supporting the implementation of the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation and the implementation of the IASC Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation.
- Highlighting international mandates and agency policies and commitments to analyze humanitarian crises from a gender perspective, respect for women's rights, the protection of women and girls and urging agencies to make use of existing guidelines and tools.
- Carrying out effective advocacy on women's rights
- Promoting consultation with local women's organisations and the active involvement of women in the definition of priorities for humanitarian assistance and the design and delivery of assistance programs.

## Support for these initiatives includes:

- OCHA's gender adviser in PDSB and the PDSB Gender Task Force;
- Tools, background information and documents on Relief Web;
- IASC Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance;
- UNIFEM's web portal on women, war and peace: [www.womenwarpeace.org](http://www.womenwarpeace.org)





This tool on the responsibility for gender mainstreaming in the Humanitarian Coordinator's terms of reference provides a starting point for OCHA offices.

At the field level, the OCHA's gender policy can be supported through the following types of initiatives.

**1. Incorporating gender dimensions in information and analysis:** OCHA will support the humanitarian community's analysis of the gender dimensions of capacities and vulnerabilities thus contributing to an improved understanding of emergencies. Specific actions at the field level include:

- Encourage agencies to use sex-disaggregated data;
- Encourage the use of multiple sources of information and identify good sources of information on gender-related and/or women's issues;
- Promote awareness of possible biases in information collected (for example, if women were not consulted, do these priorities really reflect the needs and priorities of this community);
- Promote the greater use of women and women's organisations as sources of information (during missions, for example);
- Ensure that situation reports include relevant information and analysis;
- Ensure that missions have the mandate to both talk to women and to investigate women's specific protection needs;
- Ensure that major information 'products' (such as contingency reports, affected population reports, etc.) include sex-disaggregated data, look at women's rights, and highlight any important issues that come to light through a gender analysis;
- Distribute and use sector-specific tools that assist in understanding gender dimensions in each sector (i.e. water, education, etc.).

**2. Gender mainstreaming in humanitarian coordination:** OCHA will work to ensuring that humanitarian assistance recognizes and responds to the protection and assistance needs of women and girls, as well as men and boys. Specific actions at the field level include:

- Ensure that the CAP includes a gender analysis and that the proposed initiatives respond to this analysis;
- As part of the CAP:
  - encourage agencies to come to the table with sex-disaggregated statistics and a complete analysis of gender dimensions (in the country and within their specific programming proposals),
  - ensure that there is sufficient time in the training and writing process to incorporate gender dimensions, and
  - provide supporting expertise to assist with this aspect of the analysis/CAP;
- Encourage the formation of an inter-agency theme group on gender issues.
- Identify gaps in the response of the humanitarian community (relating to access to women and girls, understanding of intra-household dynamics, protection needs and priorities for women and girls, etc.), and point them out to partners;
- Request support from New York and Geneva (including tools, guidelines, checklists, etc.) and ensure their distribution in-country;
- Ensure that contingency planning exercises incorporate gender dimensions;



- Encourage accountability between beneficiaries and international actors;
- Promote standards of conduct of UN humanitarian personnel (consistent with the Secretary-General's Bulletin);
- In coordination forums – encourage participation of agencies and NGOs with expertise on gender issues and provide an item on the agenda for discussion of these issues.

**3. Gender mainstreaming in humanitarian policy and evaluation. Although policy tends to be developed centrally, there is a role for OCHA field representatives:**

- Ensure gender perspectives are part of terms of reference for local evaluations and studies;
- Highlight the gender dimensions of protection within Protection of Civilian initiatives (this could include the specific protection needs of women or the vulnerabilities of young men);

**4. Gender mainstreaming in humanitarian advocacy. OCHA representatives can advocate for the rights of women and girls, including their equitable participation in emergency and reconstruction initiatives. Potential initiatives at the field level include:**

- With humanitarian actors: remind them of international commitments to work on gender issues and promote women's rights;
- With governments: remind them of international commitments (that they are often party to) on women's rights (such as CEDAW) and on the importance of recognizing how humanitarian assistance can affect women/girls differently than men/boys. Specific issues can include the education of girls and women's participation in decision-making;
- With all: Promote the Road Map and Aide Memoire on Protection of Civilians (with specific emphasis on the steps promoting women's rights);
- With donors: Urge donors to be consistent and provide adequate support (financial and political) to ensure the implementation of international commitments (including SC Resolution 1325, CEDAW, IASC Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Assistance, etc.);
- With donors: Urge donors to fully fund agencies and initiatives which consistently use a gender analysis in the design of their initiatives, support women as actors in humanitarian crises, and promote women's rights;
- With all: Urge respect for international law regarding sexual and gender-based violence;
- With women's organisations: Undertake ongoing dialogue with women's organisations to learn from their experiences, understand their priorities and lend political support to their initiatives;
- Promote an inter-agency approach to mark specific events, such as International Women's Day (March 8th), the anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325, international days to end violence against women.

**5. Field Office Action Plan. Each field office should develop a short, manageable action plan to support gender mainstreaming.**

These action plans should:

- Be short and concise.
- Contain concrete and realizable actions. (Rather than develop an 'ideal' plan which will remain in a drawer, the idea is to focus on several concrete actions that can realistically be achieved).
- Recognize the CAP as a principle OCHA tool and support efforts to ensure a gender perspective in the analysis and in the recommended initiatives of partners.
- Be shared among country offices in order to generate positive examples of what can be done
- Be supported by PDSB and the new gender mainstreaming adviser (field offices should not be expected to develop these plans without support).
- Involve consultation with local women's organisations, government institutions responsible for women's rights/gender equality and humanitarian partners. (There will be other actors interested in strengthening the work of the humanitarian community on this theme.)
- Aim to see how attention to gender issues in humanitarian assistance can be part of the ongoing work of the field office that has clear value added (rather than 'one more isolated tasks that is only required for bureaucratic reasons).
- Be incorporated into the Office's regular work plan and strategic planning process.



## Branch and field-based gender focal points will:

- Act as the point of contact on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian assistance for the branch/field office;
- Be a catalyst within the branch/field office on gender issues (i.e. raise awareness, advocate for resources, etc. rather than assume total responsibility for all gender-related actions).
- Circulate documents within the branch/field office (tools developed internally or by other organisations, new studies, policy documents, etc.)
- Maintain regular contact with other branch/field office gender focal points to facilitate exchange of information.
- Potentially note important dates (such as the anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325).
- Organize capacity building for branch/field office staff.
- Potentially refer colleagues to appropriate tools or resources.
- Provide inputs into OCHA-wide reporting on gender mainstreaming advances and challenges.
- If there is interest, form an informal branch/field office working group on gender and humanitarian assistance.
- Report advances, challenges and good practices to the OCHA gender adviser.

## It is important to note that the branch/field office gender focal points will not be expected to:

- Provide technical support or expertise.
- Act as the only staff person responsible for gender mainstreaming.

Branch/field office gender focal points require official time to carry out these duties, with an initial estimate of 2 hours per week or 1 day per month.



## Gender and Humanitarian Assistance: What to look for in a situation report?

In the discussions during the development of the gender policy and action plan, staff requested a short list of issues/items to look for when reviewing a situation report. Here are questions to ask:

- Does the report disaggregate data on the basis of sex? (Is there a men/women and/or boy/girl breakdown? Does the report overly rely on collective terms such as families; IDPs etc? (These aggregate terms can mask important differences in protection and assistance needs between women and men.)
- Is there recognition of the differing priorities, needs, protection issues for women/girls and men/boys?
- Is there any evidence of women being seen and promoted as actors in the political, humanitarian, economic developments or are women primarily seen as vulnerable or victims?
- Are women's organisations, equality advocates, and experts on gender equality issues used as sources of information?
- Are there any 'good practices' from humanitarian partners related to gender issues (good analysis, programs that have incorporated a gender perspective, specific programs successfully targeting women or girls, specific programs targeting men and boys on gender equality issues, etc.)?
- For sector-specific questions, see the CIDA publication *Gender Equality and Humanitarian Assistance: A Guide to the Issues* (November 2003), pp. 14-16.  
[http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Africa/\\$file/Guide-Gender.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Africa/$file/Guide-Gender.pdf)
- Is it appropriate for the report to consider any of these 'hot issues' (have there been any important changes or trends that should be noted)?
  - Gender/HIV linkages;
  - Recognition of gender dimensions of DDR;
  - Gender issues in food security and distribution (including intra-household dynamics);
  - Sexual and gender-based violence;
  - Sexual abuse and exploitation in humanitarian crises (abuses committed by humanitarian workers);
  - Reproductive health needs and issues;
  - Specific priorities and interests of internally displaced women and girls;
  - Vulnerability of teenage boys (for forced conscription, etc.);
  - Education of girls;
  - Reduced/increased mobility of women and girls.
  - Changes in social norms and expectations for women/girls or men/boys.
  - Political participation of women – in peace negotiations and other political initiatives.

Note: Ideally the Situation Report will incorporate attention to gender inequalities and differences throughout the report, rather than dedicate a specific section to 'gender issues'. However, there may be times when a specific section is warranted to highlight gaps or issues that are not part of other sections.



## Example of an OCHA Situation Report:

The answers to the questions posed would improve the situation report and make it more gender-responsive.

### Update on the deployment of the Multi National Interim Force (MIF)

- By late April, the Multinational Interim Force (MIF) intends to deploy further to the Center, South and Southeast departments.
- Support to the Haitian National Police (HNP) remains one of the priorities of the MIF and often, joint patrols are carried out.
- OCHA continues its liaison function regarding not only Civil Military Cooperation - Civil Affairs but also the future deployment in the country, disarmament projects and security issues. This arrangement enables MIF to report regularly to the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator.
- In view of the Secretary-General's Report as of 16 April 04 on Haiti, MIF has begun to focus on the transfer of authority in Haiti to the United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH).

■ Question: What lines of communication has MINUSTAH opened with women's organisations?

#### Security

The situation is still volatile and the crime rate is on the increase. MIF contacts with armed groups show that stability has not yet been reached, as these groups do not want to disarm and are waiting for compensation or official recognition.

■ Question: What type of crime? Are there patterns along gender lines – perpetrators, victims, types of crime, etc.?

After weeks of negotiations with rebel groups in Cap-Haïtien, the national police and the French Contingent of MIF are controlling the entire city, including the port. However, the rebel group - Armée du Nord - is still present in the city, with its headquarters located in a former prison.

■ Question: Is the rebel force predominantly male? Are there any females in leadership positions? In the ranks? Are there un-armed women accompanying the rebels (cooks, porters, wives, etc.)

The presence of MIF has improved the security situation, but the low number of 3,700 MIF soldiers deployed makes it difficult to have a greater impact. (cf. the deployment of 20,000 US soldiers to Haiti in 1994). MINUSTAH will include up to 6,700 troops and 1,620 policemen.

■ Question: Have these troops received gender training (as per Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)? If not, is there a provision for this being provided?

■ Question: Is there a projection of the gender balance of the troops and police officers deployed? Is this an issue?

Police forces throughout the country are gradually returning, but they are still understaffed. There is still no presence of police in the police stations of Jean-Rabel, Môle Saint-Nicolas, Bombardopolis and Baie-de-Henne in the North West Department.

Currently the Haitian National Police (HNP) force is composed of 2,300 servicemen in the country. Recruitment efforts will be undertaken to achieve a total number of 5,000. The first attempts from the national police in Haïti to recruit additional policemen on 20 April 2004 gathered a crowd of some 15,000 applicants, which unfortunately led to the death of one person and injured 23.

■ Question: Are there plans to recruit women for the police? What types of structures are in place to accommodate this?

Curfew is still in force from midnight to 5:00 a.m. UN Security Phase III is still in force in the capital and in the northern and central parts of the country with the exception of the city of Gonaïves in Phase IV. The South remains in Phase II.

- Question: Have there been new reports of sexual violence? Is this an issue to be monitored?

### Governance

The Provisional Electoral Council is being constituted. The Prime Minister has publicly declared an inclusive policy to have the Fanmi Lavalas party on the Council. An agreement with this party has not yet been reached. A deadline has been set for end April.

- Question: Are there prominent women's organisations involved in politics that should be consulted, involved, supported?

Vulnerable Groups (Source: UNICEF, UNFPA and UNAIDS)

On 19 April 2004 UNICEF published the results of an assessment of the impact that the conflict has had on children within 31 zones in Haiti. The assessment shows a severe impact:

- Question: does the assessment look at differences between girls and boys?

Armed gangs in 10 of 31 zones have recruited children.

- Question: were only boys recruited?

19 of 31 zones have indicated street children in their communities.

Considering the fact that most violent acts take place in the streets, these children are often obliged to participate in armed conflicts and witness criminal acts.

The price increase of basic products has created misery never seen before in most of the families.

Some 380,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and their families constitute an extremely vulnerable group on the medical and socio-economic level. UNFPA and UNAIDS are supporting a solidarity network for this vulnerable group and their families.

- Question: are there sex-disaggregated statistics on people living with HIV/AIDS? What is the impact on family structure? Are there vulnerable women-headed households?

### Water Supply

The Haiti drinking water sector has been suffering for several years the disturbing effects of a long political crisis. One of the consequences has been the freezing of external funding. CAMEP (Centrale Autonome Métropolitaine d'Eau Potable) and SNEP (Service National d'Eau Potable) resources are insufficient, and the national budget seems to be unable to deal with the funding of new projects.

As a direct consequence of these problems, water supply has fallen to 75% of what it was before the latest crisis and the expansion and enhancement of the distribution networks is now at a halt. Serious added problems are extreme difficulties in controlling the quality of water and conducting maintenance operations.

A rapid assessment of the situation carried out by WHO in partnership with the aforementioned institutions identified some critical needs: the provision of fuel to operate the pumps, purchase of generators, rehabilitation of the offices and analysis centres, replacement of damaged parts and the provision of means of transportation and communication to these institutions. The estimated minimum cost of the needed resources is about of USD 2.5 million.

- Question: what have been the impacts of the water situation on workloads of women and girls?



## 1. Purpose

This tool highlights the importance of ensuring a gender perspective in a humanitarian context, and provides questions and examples that should be considered in the course of the CAP. It is essential to keep these issues in mind both at the individual programming level in project design, and in the overall analysis and development of the CHAP. The overarching objective is not simply to add some gender-sensitive words in a document, but to strengthen programming and analysis, based on the different needs, concerns, capacities and contributions of women, men, girls & boys - in other words, to ensure appropriate design and targeting of our humanitarian response.

Gender analysis helps us meet the objectives of humanitarian action efficiently and effectively because it tells us:

- Who is affected (women, men, boys, girls, elderly women, elderly men)
- How they are affected
- Who needs protection and how
- Who has access to what and if there are barriers to accessing services
- How different groups cope
- What skills/capacities each group has
- If women & men participate equally in decision-making

## 2. Overall CAP considerations

*Below are question of how to incorporate gender into your analysis and programming for different groups of the population, in all areas and at all levels.*

- **Impact of the conflict:** How have men & women, girls & boys, elderly men & women been affected differently by the conflict/ disaster and by specific events (e.g. targeted violence, rape, abduction, and destruction of schools, roads, sanitation facilities, markets, homes, etc)? What are the specific risks that have arisen as a result of the conflict?
- **Sex- and age-disaggregated data:** Give data on the breakdown of the target population: e.g. total displaced, % male/female, % children, single headed households, armed elements, are there women and children in the armed groups, or women and child ex-combatants?
- **Vulnerabilities:** Who is vulnerable? What are they vulnerable to? How are they vulnerable? Make sure you mention who the vulnerable are (e.g. vulnerable women, men, boys, girls, elderly women and men)
- **Capacities/coping mechanisms:** Ensure women's capacities are taken into account in assessments and project development. What are different coping mechanisms currently used by women, men, boys, girls? What resources/support are they using to survive? Are these sustainable? Why or why not?
- **Change of gender roles due to conflict:** Has the crisis produced a shift in gender roles? Who holds what responsibilities? Who does what work and who controls resources?
- **Access:** Do women, men, girls & boys have adequate access to resources for humanitarian assistance, return and reconstruction (human, technical, financial)? What would help increase their access?
- **Participation/consultation process:** Who has been consulted and how? Have men & women contributed to/participated in the assessment, assistance, and reconstruction?
- **Targeting:** What group(s), both direct and indirect, is/are the target of the programme? Is the targeted population homogenous? IDPs, survivors of landmines, child soldiers etc. are composed of women, men, boys, girls, elderly women & men - there are gender differences within these groups.



### 3. Sector Specific Considerations

*What are the basic needs of displaced and host populations and how are these different for women, men, girls & boys? Are there specific and heightened risks for particular groups?*

**Protection** - Consider specific protection needs of women, men, boys, and girls? E.g. have safety and potential sexual violence of specific groups been taken into account in camp design or food distribution.

- Identify continued risks for each group. E.g. who is vulnerable to conscription? Consider men's & women's, girls' & boys' roles in combat functions and in non-combat functions: camp followers, messengers, spies, soldier's wives (forced marriage), sex slaves etc. and bear in mind men & women, boys & girls can have combat and non-combat functions.
- What factors can increase tensions and heighten civilian casualties and how do they impact on women, men, boys, girls? How does the proliferation of small arms/light weapons impact on women, men, boys, and girls? Arms proliferation can result in increased risk of sexual & domestic violence.
- Are prevention, reporting and redress mechanisms in place for cases of sexual exploitation & abuse by peacekeepers & humanitarian workers?

**Food Security & Nutrition** - Can child- and women-headed households be registered in their own right to receive humanitarian assistance? Are boys & girls equally nourished? Are nutritional requirements met for pregnant & lactating women, and women living with AIDS?

**Water & Sanitation** - Are there differences and constraints in access to water & sanitation for women, men, boys & girls? Are women & men consulted in the management of water & sanitation structures? Is there access to water & sanitation facilities within camp premises so that women & girls do not have to search for it and compromise their security?

**Shelter and Non-Food items** - What measures are in place to ensure female-headed households have access to housing and shelter? Are there measures to ensure safety? Are women's "sanitary materials" needs met? Have cooking fuel needs been met so women & girls do not have to search for it, compromising their security?

**Health** - Do women & men, girls & boys have adequate access to health care? Is there gender sensitive (reproductive) health care available?

- What is the incidence of HIV/AIDS? Are education programs on HIV/AIDS prevention and condoms continuously available for women & men, male & female youth?
- Is there sexual & gender based violence? If so, what are the medical and psychological implications of it for men & women, boys & girls? What program is in place to combat it? - How does burden of care impact on women's/girl's time? Are both male and female health providers available?

**Education** - What actions are in place to accommodate the specific needs of unaccompanied girls, boys? Can they travel to school safely? Are there male & female teachers available?

**DDR**- Who is demobilized? Is it a requirement to have a gun to be included in DDR? Are security needs of women, girls & boys considered in choosing sites for resettlement programs? Are there separate structures/areas for women/men/girls/boys? Are females associated with fighting forces recognized as head of households?

**Human rights violations** - How do human rights & humanitarian law violations vary between men, women, boys, and girls? How has the presence of military and other combatants placed, women, men, girls, and boys at risk for GBV? Are there safe and accountable mechanisms to report and ensure redress for violations? What are the current laws or practices, including customary/tribal/religious practices on abductions, trafficking in humans, sex-work, and slave-like practices, GBV, early/forced marriages and property rights? How does this affect men, women, boys, and girls differently?

### 4. Definitions (see Gender Tool #1)

*Special Note: This tool was developed in response to the gender action plan and produced by the IASC Taskforce on Gender Issues in Humanitarian Assistance.*



Although the Humanitarian Information Centres (HICs) reflect the sectors set by the HC, there are steps that could be taken.

## Data Collection

- Request organisations to provide data disaggregated on by sex and age.

## Data Sources/Information Links

- Ensure links to key documents and studies, including gender profiles (often available from World Bank or other donors).
- Ensure links to current web resources (country specific) including UNIFEM's portal: <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/> and Peacewomen's NGO portal: <http://www.peacewomen.org>
- List national and regional women's organisations in the Contacts Database
- If appropriate, list potential experts on specific issues of interest (women's political participation, socio-cultural dynamics, health of women and girls, gender and economics, etc.)
- Link to international data sources that include sex-disaggregated data (i.e. UNDP's Human Development Report, World Bank data, etc.). It may not be totally up-to-date but is a basic source.
- Encourage humanitarian partners to submit data disaggregated by sex.
- Encourage humanitarian partners to submit specific studies and reports that focus on gender issues.
- Encourage the submission of sector-specific studies/information that includes analysis of gender differences and inequalities and how the humanitarian community has responded to meet these varying vulnerabilities and capacities.

## Potential Issues to Follow/Track (priority will depend on the specific situation)

- Legal status of women and girls (regarding rights, property ownership, etc.).
- Socio-cultural norms regarding mobility.
- Access to education/enrolment broken down by sex.
- Availability of reproductive health services.
- Incidence of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Rate of women's involvement in decision-making (in political structures and in civil society organisations).
- Child mortality, nutrition data, etc. disaggregated by sex.
- Percentage of households headed by women, by girls, by boys. Data on household composition.
- Numbers on unaccompanied minors, disaggregated by sex.
- Data on HIV status disaggregated on the basis of sex and age.
- Availability of individual documentation (rather than family documentation).



