

Guidance on Gender Mainstreaming in Transition

a working document

Nepal Earthquake, 2015



Prepared by Gender Working Group¹, August 27, 2015

Five months into the earthquake, gender issues continue to impact safe and equal access to resources. Single women, widows, unmarried women, young girls and boys, elderly and women with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted by the disaster. Access to services, programmes and information has varied between different population groups including along lines of gender, ethnicity, physical ability, age and sexual orientation – women, for example, have been starkly challenged due to non-availability of documentation to access relief, less access to or benefits from livelihood interventions, risks of sexual exploitation, increased work hours, less time to rest as well higher levels of domestic violence

Increased use of drugs, alcohol, self-harm and separation of families are some of the negative coping mechanisms adopted by men and families. At the same time, the disaster has also challenged traditional gender roles with women needing to take decisions and negotiate in the public space, opening up opportunities to addressing long standing discrimination and power structures.

With September 30, 2015 marking the closure of the Flash Appeal, it is important that these issues, concerns and opportunities are not overlooked in the transition process and reconstruction planning. The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)² guidance committed to by the Government of Nepal offers the framework for such an inclusive approach.

The following are key considerations to ensure gender equality and women empowerment principles inform the transition process. This guidance is informed by IASC commitments to mainstream gender in humanitarian action, Government of Nepal relevant policy and guidelines such as GESI and the National Disaster Response Framework, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (United Nations); as well builds on recommendations on gender equality and social inclusion made in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (2015)³.

- 1. Develop gender analysis tools and guidance across clusters/sectors at the district levels to inform recovery and reconstruction programming.** Displacements due to the earthquake have a gendered impact with different patterns of movement. e.g. a recent assessment of families' displacement from Golche and Gulamb to the Selang VDC (northern Sindhupalchowk) is comprised mostly of male members who have migrated down the slope, while women of the household remain back to look after household and cattle⁴. One of the key challenges in the current response has been an absence of sex and age disaggregated data and gendered analysis to enable evidence based programming decisions. Such analysis is critical in identifying specific needs and risks based on gender and age, as well the capacities and coping mechanisms the different members adopt.

¹ Gender Working Group, co-chaired by OCHA and UN Women, is an inter-cluster coordination mechanism comprising of cluster specific gender focal points. It was established on April 30, 2015 to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the Nepal earthquake humanitarian response.

² Gender Equality and Social Inclusion guidelines adopted by Government of Nepal as an overarching commitment, with specific ministries developing their own strategies/operational guidelines.

³ IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian in Action, Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs, Equal Opportunities (2006); National Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Nepal, National Disaster Response Framework(2013); Government of Nepal, Post Disaster Needs Assessment, Nepal Earthquake, Vol A, Key Findings, Kathmandu (2015)

⁴ Field Visit Report prepared by Nepal Red Cross Society, August 20, 2015

Questions to guide gender analysis may include: *Demographics based gender and age; Roles and responsibilities of women and men; Who takes decisions regarding what issues at the household and community level? How has it changed from prior to the earthquake? What are the current coping mechanisms of different household members? Are there specific protection risks and concerns faced by women, girls and other vulnerable groups? Do livelihood opportunities consider existing capacities of women and men? Are there any inequalities that may be unintentionally promoted by the services provides e.g. is cash for work programming definitions of skilled/unskilled informed by women's capacities? Are there specific groups not visible e.g. people with disability, Dalits? What are their specific barriers? Where are such specific groups located?*

- 2. Establish a harmonised targeting criteria to support prioritisation based on specific vulnerabilities and risks.** While the intent of humanitarian action through blanket support has been to reach all persons affected by the earthquake, evidence shows that gender, age, class and caste based inequalities have made certain groups invisible or be excluded for the recovery and reconstruction benefits. Developing a targeting criteria will ensure prioritised programming to address specific barriers faced by vulnerable groups⁵ e.g. support in facilitating distribution to people with disabilities or senior citizens; reaching households headed by women headed households to income generation activities by addressing their barriers for participation such as child-care. Given the localised nature of vulnerabilities and needs, develop this criteria at the district level, by harmonising the existing criteria of different clusters/programmes, in line with the GESI guidance.
- 3. Develop sex and age disaggregated monitoring indicators to ensure the differential outcomes are tracked and can inform programming.** Having sex and age disaggregated indicators in monitoring and reporting tools will help measure the impact of the programming on gender equality commitments and inform revisions i.e. do women, girls, boys and men across different castes, ethnicity, physical ability, language and religion have equal access to opportunities in reconstruction projects?
- 4. Ensure meaningful participation of women through equal representation in decision making structures, formal and informal, at district levels.** Strengthen meaningful representation of women and men from excluded groups in district structures, the District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC), according to Disaster Management Guidelines, as well as ensure at least 33% women representation in all state mechanisms including local committees and project selection processes⁶. Conduct mapping of formal and informal women networks/groups operational in the village levels to enable linkages across GESI mainstreaming mechanisms and gender focal points at the local levels- including Women Development Officers(WDOs), Village Development Committees (VDCs), DDRCs, informal groups (e.g. mothers groups) and protection response structures (e.g. human rights mobile clinics).
- 5. Develop cluster specific gender guidance/checklist and capacity strengthening:** Invest in capacity strengthening of national actors, including local authorities, gender focal points at district levels to lead and support gender responsive recovery and reconstruction approaches. Towards reaching this longer term goal, in the immediate period, the gender working group (GWG) will develop cluster specific guidance and contribute with capacity strengthening at district levels.

Mechanism of Support: The GWG will be the primary mechanism of support till September 30, 2015. Based on the different district level coordination structures that are established, and the varying levels of capacity across districts, relevant mechanism and/or focal points will be identified to support gender mainstreaming in reconstruction, going forward. Further guidance on this will be provide in early October, 2015.

⁵ National Strategy for Disaster Risk Preparedness In Nepal, March 2008

⁶ Refer Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007; GESI guidance

Annex

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