

“This timely report from Plan International focuses on the particular needs of adolescent girls who in the insecurity of a disaster can be especially at risk...Too often we follow a “one-size-fits-all” pattern of humanitarian response, instead of collecting the data needed to put in place programmes that address issues specific to women and girls. Understanding the differing needs of women, girls, boys and men needs to be the responsibility of all humanitarian workers.”

Valerie Amos

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
and Emergency Relief Coordinator

“I want someone who I can go to if there are problems. We should be able to tell our government that we need help, that we need shelter, food, jobs, school, places to wash privately. I want a way that I can be heard.”

Sheila, 16, Philippines

The report series

This is the seventh in the annual 'Because I am a Girl' report series, published by Plan, which assesses the current state of the world's girls. While women and children are recognised in policy and planning, girls' needs and rights are often ignored. The reports provide evidence, including the voices of girls themselves, as to why they need to be treated differently from boys and adult women. They also use information from primary research, in particular a small study set up in 2006 following 142 girls from nine countries. Past reports have covered education, conflict, economic empowerment, cities and technology, and how boys and young men can support gender equality. Plan is an international development agency and has been working with children and their communities in 50 countries worldwide for over 75 years.

plan-international.org/girls

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BECAUSE I am a Girl

*An adolescent girl making her way through
a windswept refugee camp in Burkina Faso.*

PLAN/PETTERIK WIGGERS



Because I am a Girl THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S GIRLS 2013

Because I am a Girl

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S GIRLS 2013

In Double Jeopardy: Adolescent Girls and Disasters



Because I am a Girl

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S GIRLS 2013

In Double Jeopardy:
Adolescent Girls and Disasters



WILLIAM DANIELS/PANOS PICTURES

Haiti, 2010.

A photograph of a slum with makeshift shacks and children in the foreground. The scene is hazy, possibly due to smoke or dust. In the foreground, a young girl in a floral shirt and dark skirt stands with her back to the camera, looking towards the left. To her right, a young boy is partially visible. In the background, several shacks with corrugated metal roofs are visible. A person is seen walking through a narrow alleyway between the shacks. The overall atmosphere is one of poverty and hardship.

Because I am a Girl

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S GIRLS 2013

In Double Jeopardy: Adolescent Girls and Disasters

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Syrian refugees in Iraq.

JODI HILTON/IRIN

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Foreword

Valerie Amos

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

For too long, girls have been ignored; their views unheard, their needs unmet. But research over the past two decades has shown that girls hold the key to solving some of the most intractable and complex problems faced by developing societies, particularly in countries in the midst of a prolonged humanitarian crisis.

Girls are both uniquely vulnerable and uniquely powerful. They may lack the most basic skills to cope with a crisis, like the ability to swim, or even run, or to get the information they need and to express their opinions. They can be forced into making poor and ill-informed decisions that affect them for the rest of their lives, like early marriage or transactional sex.

But girls also have the power to transform not only their own lives, but also those of their families and communities. If they stay in school and understand how to protect their rights and choose what to do with their bodies, they earn more, they marry later, they have healthier children and become leaders, entrepreneurs and advocates.

Disasters and crises pose particular dangers for girls, who are at greater risk than ever of falling behind in their education and being subjected to gender-based abuse. In emergency response situations, women's needs can be ignored and girls are often invisible. Men take part in search and rescue, unload aid convoys, speak out on behalf of their families and communities and are seen as being more active. Girls are hidden from view, prevented from interacting with others and not given the opportunity to express their needs. The things that would help them most – education, protection and gender-empowerment projects – are often seen as the lowest priority by donors and humanitarian workers too. We must change this.

This timely report from Plan International focuses on the particular needs of adolescent girls who in the insecurity of a disaster can be especially at risk. The coping strategies adopted by their families may mean they are pulled out of school, married too young or forced to sell their bodies in order to

feed and protect their families. There are few places they can turn to for help. This too needs to change.

Humanitarian agencies need to listen, to learn, and to communicate better with the different groups of people we are seeking to support. To do this, we need to know more about who has been affected by a crisis, their age and gender, and what they need.

Too often, we still follow a 'one-size-fits-all' pattern of humanitarian response, instead of collecting the data needed to put in place programmes that address issues specific to women and girls. Understanding the differing needs of women, girls, boys and men needs to be the responsibility of all humanitarian workers. Without it, we will fail in our task, be ineffective and waste time and resources.

There is plenty of evidence, some of it detailed in this report, of the ways girls show resilience, resourcefulness and creativity in disaster risk reduction and in responding to a crisis. Young people, both girls and boys, need to be included in reducing risks from the start. They should help to define what the risks are and how they can be prevented or mitigated. Only then will their views be heard and their opinions valued in the chaos of crisis response.

The enemies of peace and progress understand very well the potential power of girls and young women. The attack last year on the Pakistani schoolgirl, Malala Yousufzai, shows that there is nothing they fear more than a girl with a book; a girl who can read, learn, and make her own decisions. It is up to everyone working in the humanitarian and development sectors to make sure that we are listening to girls like Malala and helping them to reach their true, transformative potential.

I welcome the 2013 State of the World's Girls Report. It sets out very clearly how girls can be powerful advocates and agents for change.





Setting the scene

1

Introduction

This 2013 'Because I am a Girl' report looks at what happens to adolescent girls in disasters, and why. Using original research, reviews of secondary material, and the voices of girls themselves, we show how adolescent girls' rights are being ignored before, during and after disasters, both in the urgency of a disaster response, and in the gaps between humanitarian and development work. We examine the tension between girls' vulnerability to violence, and the resilience that they so often show in times of crisis. We look at what needs to be done, and give examples of good practice. We make the argument that listening to what adolescent girls have to say, ensuring that both their rights and their needs are catered for, and strengthening their resilience, is a key missing piece of humanitarian work.

"It is a plain and simple truth that disasters reinforce, perpetuate and increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women."

Margareta Wahlström, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction¹

1 The plain and simple truth – why adolescent girls are invisible in disasters

When an earthquake destroys a city, a tsunami floods a coastline, or drought causes severe food insecurity, we often see a woman with a baby in her arms, weeping as she views the destruction of her home and contemplates the death of her loved ones. In contrast, men are often shown actively rescuing people, handing out food, or clearing up. Adolescents, especially adolescent girls, tend to be simply invisible.

Disasters are not experienced in a vacuum. What happens to an adolescent girl in such times is directly related to wider attitudes to women and girls and the political, economic, social and cultural context in which they live. It is also affected by the family a girl comes from, as well as her status, age, ability, material wellbeing and a range of other factors linked to the country she lives in and the social groups to which she belongs. So a 17-year-old girl in a slum in Dhaka will experience a flood or an earthquake very differently from a 12-year-old in a village in El Salvador or even a 14-year-old in Australia. But what they do have in common, as evidence in this report will show, is that as far as humanitarian

work is concerned, out of sight really does mean out of mind.

In countries and situations where gender inequality means that women and girls are already second-class citizens, the added burden of a disaster may put their safety – and even their lives – at risk. This is

Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 2010.



particularly true for adolescent girls, who are vulnerable both because they are female and because they are young.

Defining disasters

Disaster: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.²

Disasters can be caused by natural or human factors or a combination of both. They can happen suddenly (rapid onset), as in the case of the 2010 Haiti earthquake; or they can be chronic (slow onset), for example, the Sahel and Horn of Africa 2010 to 2013 food crises.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an analysis of how the different stages of a disaster can affect adolescent girls' rights in many different ways. Not all are necessarily negative. It takes as its framework the four categories of rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child – survival, protection, development and participation – and examines how they relate to adolescent girls in disasters. Although disasters are our primary focus, there are some parallels with the way girls are affected in conflict situations, which we also look at.

In the introductory chapter, we set the scene and show how adolescent girls are uniquely vulnerable in a disaster, but also how they can be extremely resilient during all its phases. We examine how the way they are treated in an emergency bears a direct relation to their lack of status and power over their own lives under 'normal' circumstances. We argue that the humanitarian community needs to be answerable to the rights and wellbeing of adolescent girls. And with this in mind we call for aid delivery to be restructured to take account of their needs.

In **Chapter 2**, on survival, we examine how gender inequality has an impact on adolescent girls in disasters that may put their lives at risk. We explain the psychological effects of disasters on adolescent girls, and show how their needs, including

sexual and reproductive health, are often not attended to. We examine the problems caused by inadequate sanitation facilities and lack of provision for menstruation. We examine family planning and maternity services and issues arising in disasters from sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. Finally, we show how adolescent girls can be involved in activities that build better health by learning about prevention and protection.

In **Chapter 3** on safety and protection, we show how the risk of violence, including sexual violence, both in and outside the home, increases during disasters, and how adolescent girls may be particularly vulnerable because of their age and sex. We look at coping strategies that actually make things worse for girls, such as child marriage or transactional sex. We explain why it is difficult for girls to speak out about abuse. We give examples of good practice and outline what can be done by governments, donors and the humanitarian community to protect adolescent girls during disasters.

Chapter 4 focuses on development and, in particular, girls' education and learning in disasters. We look at the importance of education for girls, both formal schooling, but also learning about disaster risk reduction and skills that will protect them. We examine the reasons why girls leave school in emergencies. We explore the fact that there

2 Why focus on adolescent girls?

“If humanitarian actors do not invest the time and effort to understand the dynamics of a crisis from the perspective of the people affected, aid efforts can never claim to be effective or have lasting impact.”

The Humanitarian Response Index 2011³

This report will show in detail just how and why the humanitarian system is failing adolescent girls. It is failing to count them; it is failing to take account of their particular needs; it is failing to listen to what they have to say, and it is failing to engage them in decisions that affect them. Adolescent girls have particular needs for protection, healthcare, education and participation which are often not met, or even recognised, in an emergency.

Within international human rights discourse, girls are assigned their rights by virtue of being women or children and



KATE HOLT/IRIN

hence from women's rights and child rights through the Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, three of the four main categories of rights that are most relevant to adolescent girls – rights to protection; development through education; and participation – are also among the

Queuing for food in a Somali camp.

Flooding in Malawi.



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may be a small window of opportunity, just after a disaster, to ensure that adolescent girls have access to education, training, and more choice in their lives. This window quickly closes. But it can also be used by the humanitarian community to take disaster work beyond 'do no harm' to develop new skills to adapt to a more disaster-prone future.

Chapter 5 looks at adolescent girls' participation in

disaster risk reduction (DRR) and the positive roles they can play. We look at why girls are not listened to, particularly those with a disability, or from a minority group, or with a different sexual orientation. This report also showcases stories and quotes from adolescent girls who have shown their resilience even in such difficult circumstances; for example, by being involved in monitoring work or helping to set up complaint mechanisms. In this way, they were also able to challenge humanitarian organisations to make themselves and their work more accountable to girls.

Finally, **Chapter 6** presents an action plan and specific recommendations for donors, governments and the humanitarian community that will hold them accountable for improving provision. In order to make girls in disasters visible but also to keep them safe, decision-makers must listen to what they have to say, and allow them to play a role in disaster planning and risk reduction programmes. They need to allocate funds and pay attention to girls' needs as separate from those of boys or women. And those working in the humanitarian arena need to be aware of their responsibilities towards girls and young women, to acknowledge the contribution they can make, and to recognise that if they continue to ignore them, the development targets of gender equality and quality education for all will never be reached.

Banda Aceh, after the tsunami.



TIM A. HETHERINGTON

lowest priorities and often receive the least funding in the humanitarian community. This is because these rights are not seen as immediately life-saving – like food, water and shelter. And yet the evidence gathered in this report illustrates that, for many adolescent girls in disasters, they are precisely that.

Although adolescent girls remain invisible in disasters, gender – which should mean both men and women and the relationships between them, but often just refers to women – is beginning to have more of a focus. For example, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the main mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance, introduced a 'gender marker' in 2010 to track gender allocations in humanitarian projects and thus nurture gender equality. This aligns with similar initiatives by OECD/DAC, UNDP and UNICEF. The IASC has also appointed gender advisers for particular emergencies.^{4,5,6} And the 2012 International Day for Disaster Risk

Reduction highlighted the need for women and girls "to be at the forefront of reducing risk and managing the world's response to natural hazards".⁷

But progress is slow, and many of these changes do not address the underlying causes of gender inequality. As a result, when the humanitarian world is dealing with a major disaster, women's and girls' needs – and in particular adolescent girls' needs – still tend to

Sri Lanka.



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be an afterthought, and the active role they often play before, during and after disasters unacknowledged by the humanitarian community.⁸ In practice, donor requirements to include gender in disaster work often remain a 'tick box' exercise.⁹

Even when the humanitarian community does take account of gender, it rarely uses an analysis which differentiates by age and other social indicators. Girls and boys are simply 'children' and adolescents and young women fall between the broader categories of 'children' or 'women'. So there is no possibility of looking at the different needs of older and younger adolescents, or adolescent boys and girls, separately. Unless humanitarian organisations know how many men and how many women they are helping, let alone how many boys or how many girls, it is difficult for them to know how to respond to the specific needs of these groups.¹⁰ And yet a review of monitoring and evaluation in the humanitarian sector in 2011 found that only 37 of the total sample of 1,680 indicators – about two per cent – were disaggregated by sex, making disaggregation the single biggest gap.¹¹

When national and international strategies do take into account the different groups of people reached by humanitarian interventions – girls and boys and women and men of all different ages – everyone is better off. Adolescent boys and girls both need their own tailored approach in disaster and conflict situations. This provides an opportunity to strengthen resilience and promote longer-term economic growth and stability for families. Adolescent girls are not just victims. They are resilient; they show initiative; they can lead communities and other young people, for example in disaster mitigation and planning. They just need the support they are entitled to – including greater access to relevant and life-saving information and inclusion in decision-making.

Encouraging the humanitarian community to focus on adolescent girls is a major challenge, when the focus on gender equality is still comparatively new, and the specific needs of children of all ages, including younger and middle adolescents, are so neglected. Valerie Amos, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief



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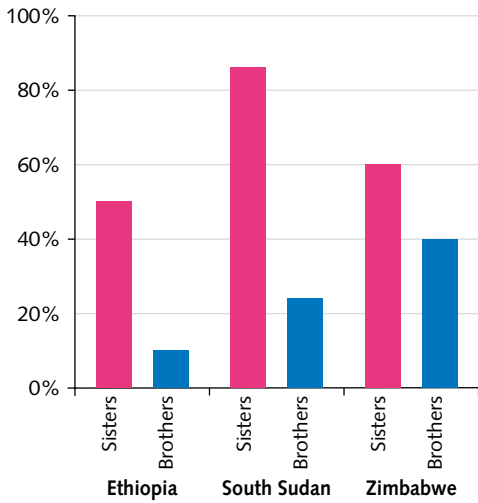
Coordinator, says: "Understanding the differing needs of women, girls, boys and men is the responsibility of all humanitarian workers. Without it, we will fail in our responsibility to the people we are seeking to help. We cannot wait any longer to get this right."¹²

A camp in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

PRIMARY RESEARCH: ADOLESCENTS THINK GIRLS ARE MORE AFFECTED BY DISASTERS THAN BOYS¹³

There is very little research on adolescent girls or boys in disasters, which is why we commissioned the primary research which will be presented throughout this report. To give one example, we asked 48 adolescent girls and 48 adolescent boys in Ethiopia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe whether brothers or sisters were most affected by disasters.¹⁴ In all three countries, the answer was sisters (see chart page 16). In Ethiopia and South Sudan, heads of households came to the same conclusion, though by a slightly

Adolescent survey: which siblings are most affected by disasters?



smaller margin than the adolescents. In Ethiopia, the reasons most frequently given were girls' greater workloads, physical 'weakness', attitudes towards girls, lack of opportunities, vulnerability to diseases and early marriage.

Adolescents: a particular case

Both female and male adolescents may be ignored in times of disaster because they do not fit into a recognised category: for example, middle and older adolescents are no longer children but not yet adults, and yet they bear a physical resemblance to adults and are frequently treated as such. In disasters, they may be forced to take on adult roles just at the point where the people and structures that are normally in place to advise and protect them are absent. They do not have the cognitive, emotional or psychological maturity to cope in the same way that adults can – although they do have energy, enthusiasm and ideas that may be crucial to helping their families and wider community recover after a disaster.

In some societies, adolescents are already categorised as adults once they reach puberty, though research has shown that while the early years are the most crucial time for brain development, even in late adolescence, young people's brains are still laying down crucial pathways that help them to learn to deal with the outside world. The society and the wider community in

which they live, and the circumstances in which they find themselves, are a major influence on the adults they are to become. Risks taken during their adolescent years – unprotected sex, addictions to drugs or alcohol, for example – have implications for the rest of their lives, and even their children's. Meanwhile, positive experiences – good role models, quality and relevant education, targeted health services, supportive families, communities and a supportive wider environment, plus effective measures to protect them – can have long-term beneficial effects.¹⁵

Who is an adolescent?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone under the age of 18. While adolescence is difficult to define, not least because individual experiences of puberty vary considerably, the general understanding is that an 'adolescent' is someone between the ages of 10 and 19, divided into 'very young adolescent' (10 to 14 years), 'middle adolescent' (15 to 16 years) and 'older adolescent' (17 to 19 years).¹⁶ For the purposes of this report, a 'girl' is a young female up to the age 18 and a 'young woman' up to 24.

Preparing rice in a refugee camp, Burkina Faso.



PLAN/MIKE GOLDWATER

3 A matter of life or death – the double discrimination of age and sex

“Disasters don’t discriminate, but people do... disasters reinforce, perpetuate and increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women.”

Making Disaster Risk Reduction gender-sensitive: policy and practical guidelines¹⁷

Disasters and crises have a negative effect on everyone involved. People die and are injured, lose their families and their livelihoods. But if you are female, and particularly if you are an adolescent, disasters and crises may put you at greater risk than if you are male; especially in those societies where girls are already less privileged than their brothers. The reason can be summed up in one simple word: power.

It is the relative powerlessness of women and children in many societies that makes them more vulnerable during disasters. Although there is often little distinction made between women and girls or between boys and girls, in general, studies have shown that women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die in a disaster.¹⁸ A study in Pakistan found that 85 per cent of those displaced by the 2010 floods were women and children.¹⁹ During the Asian tsunami in 2004, up to 45,000 more women than men died, for a variety of reasons, including the fact that many men were out in their boats while women were at home, and that many women could not swim.^{20,21}

The London School of Economics (LSE) research in 141 countries found that boys generally received preferential treatment over girls in rescue efforts.²² It quotes the poignant story of a father “who, when unable to hold on to both his son and his daughter from being swept away by a tidal surge in the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh – released his daughter, because ‘(this) son has to carry on the family line’.”

Babies who are girls are more likely than boys to die in times of economic downturn, which may often follow a major disaster.²³ A World Bank study in 59 developing countries found that a one per cent fall in per capita



PLAN/KASHIF GHANI

GDP increases average infant mortality by 7.4 deaths for girls compared with 1.5 for boys.²⁴

Although it is often women and girls who are most at risk in disasters, if men have to take up traditionally ‘masculine’ roles in a disaster this can also be life-threatening – for example in Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua in 1998 more men died than women because they were outside rescuing others.²⁵

For many adolescent girls, who have little power in society and may be valued less than their brothers, a major disaster simply adds to the disasters they have to face in everyday life – early marriage, discrimination, violence or abuse. Worldwide, more than a quarter of girls experience sexual abuse and violence;

A second wave of floods in Pakistan.

Sabita, 16, with her eight-month-old baby.



PLAN

66 million are still not in school; and in the developing world, one in every three is married before her eighteenth birthday.^{26,27,28}

The chaos of a flood or an earthquake, or the slow undermining of health and livelihood brought about by chronic food shortages, puts adolescent girls at even greater risk. They are invisible because they remain in the background, sometimes confined to their homes in societies where this is seen as a protective – as well as a controlling – measure. In a disaster, this ‘protective invisibility’ may dangerously reduce girls’ ability to reach safety and limits their access to life-saving knowledge. For example, they may not know about emergency planning or hear early warning signals, or they may not be included in disaster risk reduction (DRR) programmes. In many cultures, adolescent girls have little power to make decisions and little knowledge of their rights. These rights are habitually ignored by humanitarian organisations and communities, which assume that the needs of the general community – often meaning ‘men’ – are the needs of all.

When adolescent girls do become visible, this can improve their access to aid and enhance their leadership skills, but may also put them in greater danger of sexual exploitation and abuse. As we will show in this report, while abuse can happen at home, in an emergency setting going out on their own to fetch water or to find work, or simply finding somewhere to go to the toilet in private may put girls at risk of sexual abuse, harassment or even rape and abduction.

“During and immediately after a disaster, we are forced to engage in daily wage labour to earn some income. We have to face the lascivious looks of the landowners and other men who employ us in on- and off-farm labour work. The way they treat us is also a form of sexual abuse.”

Girls from Babiya Village, Nepal²⁹

Adolescent girls who are left without the care of their parents, because families are separated or adult members are killed, are particularly at risk. They may find themselves being looked after by strangers, or with no responsible adult, or in charge of younger

members of the family. Talia, a young woman from Sudan who was caught up in the fighting, tells of her terror when she thought she had lost her mother: *“I realised that I’d left my mother behind. It wasn’t safe to go back, but a little later I met up with her again in the forest. When I saw her I couldn’t stop crying. I was so happy. But when I looked around and saw that other people I knew had lost a mother or a father, son or daughter, I felt nothing but sadness for them.”*³⁰ In such circumstances, many girls show initiative, like this 16-year-old girl from Nagapattinam, India: *“On the day of the tsunami, I lifted the two-day-old baby and took the two small boys and ran to the terrace of my house when it started flooding.”*³¹

Nepal.





MANAGING IN THE HARDEST OF TIMES
Nikki van der Gaag reports from the villages of Pakistan on being a girl in a disaster.

When the worst floods in living memory hit Pakistan in 2010, none of the women and girls in Basti Mohana Wali were prepared. They carried on with their lives, fetching water, washing clothes, preparing dinner. Even when the radio issued specific warnings, they stayed put, believing that the embankments would keep back the water and that they would be safe. The same story was repeated in other villages.

They could not have been more wrong. When the wall of water arrived, there was a mad scramble to grab what they could – mainly their children and elderly relatives.

Farzana, 12, said: *"In the flood, everything got washed away, houses, trees, belongings, chickens..."* Safia, 16, found it hard to speak of what happened. *"This is my dog,"* she said, pointing to a shape in the drawing she had done of the flood. *"I love dogs. My dog was washed away."*

Many people drowned, too. Almost everyone lost all their possessions. In

Basti Mohana Wali, the water came over the roofs of the mud houses and took weeks to subside. Two years on, and despite government subsidies and the people's own hard work, most have only been able to afford to rebuild one room where previously there had been two or three. That one room has to house the whole family – which may include grandparents and aunts and uncles as well as children and their parents.

Girls from Basti Mohana Wali.



Safia's drawing.

More than 30 per cent of the population of Pakistan lives below the poverty line.³² In rural areas it is worse – in Balochistan it is 52 per cent of the population.^{33,34} Literacy is low – more than twice as many women and girls than men and boys are unable to read and write. Schools for girls are few and far between. Many villages have no electricity and water is a problem too. Pumps are often broken so women have to travel long distances just to get water. In addition, roads to remote areas are sometimes impassable and usually treacherous, leading to high maternal mortality rates because women cannot get to a clinic or hospital in time.

Life is hard, especially for women and girls, even in normal times. But both men and women agree that during the floods of 2010, it was hardest for the girls and young women. The men were away and the girls had to help their mothers look after the children and old people, take care of those who were ill and try to find food to cook. Many spent days living on the embankment, the highest space in the area, with no privacy even to go to the toilet. Apa Khursheed, a former teacher and community organiser who was displaced by the floods, said: “Girls and women did not have time to take sanitary pads and clothes and although their clothes were torn they had nothing to mend them with. I remember one

young woman holding her baby tightly to her breast. It was because she was fearful of being separated from him, but also because her top had a huge hole in it.”

Safia, 15, said: *“Our clothes became old and they smelt. We had no shoes to walk in the water and our feet became infected.”*

Women were particularly worried about their adolescent daughters. Zareena spoke for many when she said: “Girls cannot survive in open spaces, it is very difficult to take care of young girls in a disaster situation. Not only is there no food and no clothes, but while boys can travel to relatives to be looked after, girls need a man to look after them. They cannot travel alone.”

In a culture where men decide what women and girls can and cannot do, and where few in rural areas go to school, or even listen to the radio, girls are also denied basic life-saving skills that might be useful in disasters, like swimming or even running.

In fact, for some girls, living in a camp provided opportunities that they might not otherwise have had. They got to meet other girls the same age, to hear different perspectives on life. They had some training in disaster preparedness and even in health and hygiene. Some even learned to read and write. The girls of Basti Mohana Wali are proud that they helped to rebuild their homes. Tahira, 13, said: *“Everything was destroyed, even the trees. I helped to rebuild our house. I cooked for the masons.”* Rabia, 10, said proudly that she carried the mud for rebuilding her family’s house.

But many girls who benefited from extra classes and new opportunities are now once again confined in their homes, likely to be married young and to repeat the lives of their mothers and grandmothers before them.

Hajani Hawa, one of the village elders in Haji Sattar Dino Taandio in Thatta district, Sindh, said: “What is harder [now] is the lack of education, especially for the girls, and the fact that we have no electricity or transport. Give us these things, and we will manage even in the hardest of times.”



Apa
Khursheed.



Children stamp out a bushfire in Australia.

The impact of traditional roles is not just true in the developing world, as Briony Towers, a research fellow at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology points out: “Typically, it is men and boys who join the local volunteer fire brigade, so they have more opportunities to acquire practical knowledge and skills. Then when a bushfire occurs, they are the ones who actively engage in the fire-fighting effort, while women and girls often remain in the home, where they may be exposed to dangerous conditions without the knowledge or skills to protect themselves. While this culture is slowly changing, it’s going to be a long time before gender inequalities completely disappear from the bushfire management landscape.”³⁵ The authors of an article on gender and bushfires say: “Gender issues are likely to remain invisible within Australian bushfire safety policy and practice unless conventional patriarchal structures and mindsets on bushfire management are challenged at home, within communities, in the media, as well as in emergency service systems.”³⁶

WHEN IT RAINED FLAME: AN ADOLESCENT GIRL’S EXPERIENCE OF AN AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRE³⁷

Tess Pollock tells her story of the day of the bushfire in Kinglake, Victoria, in 2010.

When we saw our mountain catch fire, we knew it was actually happening – and it was coming straight towards us. We put old jeans and jumpers on over our bathers and placed buckets of water around the outside of the house. We tried to call our

neighbours to tell them what was going on and that we were staying to protect the house. After a few calls there was still no answer. We thought they must have already left. After that, the phone line cut out.

What happened next was like a silent movie. The only sound I can remember was when I yelled to Mum that I’d spotted the first ember. I was terrified. I didn’t want to move. I was just standing on the back veranda, watching Mum rushing back and forth from the pool with the watering can. I had a bucket and mop beside me and knew I had to follow her instructions. Embers were coming down slowly in front of me. As they landed I put them out.

I was completely hysterical. I thought that we had seen the worst. But the sky quickly darkened and flaming bark and branches came shooting down. Mum screamed to get in the house. We ran inside and shut the doors. Outside, the black sky rained flame. It was like meteors crashing from space. Hell had unleashed its fury on Kinglake. From inside we watched and waited for the ball of flame to surround and pass over us. For 10 minutes pure fear shuddered through our bodies. As hard as I try, I cannot seem to remember many noises from those moments. I was told it sounded like thunder roaring down. But Mum and I remember silence.

When the danger seemed to have passed, I felt exhausted. Mum and I lay in the middle of the lounge room. As far as we knew, Kinglake had been destroyed. But we had survived.

4 'Being normal again' – the international context of disasters for adolescent girls

"After a typhoon people need help being normal again. They need help recovering, finding food, shelter and water, but people need help getting back their lives. School and jobs help us to make new lives."

Sheila, 17³⁸

"Mainstreaming gender, ensuring aid is focused on youth, and investing in prevention and preparedness are all cost-effective measures."

Hansjoerg Strohmeyer, Chief of the Policy Development Studies Branch, OCHA³⁹

So why is it important to re-examine how the humanitarian community addresses the needs of adolescent girls in disasters?

First, because the number of disasters is increasing – there were 90 a year in the 1970s and almost 450 a year in the last decade.⁴⁰ Experts differ but reasons for this include climate change, rapid urbanisation, poverty and environmental degradation.⁴¹

As the number of disasters increases, focusing on prevention is even more important. There are no specific statistics on girls, let alone adolescent girls but, for example, in Bangladesh, the creation of early warning systems, cyclone shelters and other risk reduction measures has saved tens of thousands of lives. Investment makes a huge difference – Japan has spent around one per cent of its annual budget since the 1950s on measures to reduce the effects of disasters, with the result that the 1995 Great Hanshin earthquake killed 6,434 people, compared with the Kashmir earthquake in 2005 which killed 75,000.⁴² And yet spending on disaster risk reduction amounted to only one per cent of the \$150 billion spent in the 20 countries that received the most humanitarian aid over the past five years – what one report calls a "disastrously low" amount.⁴³ Even less of this money is being targeted at empowering the most vulnerable groups such as adolescent girls to tackle growing disaster risks.

Second, we know that disasters overwhelmingly affect the countries and the people that can least afford to deal with them – nine out of ten disasters and



95 per cent of deaths caused by disasters take place in the developing world.^{44,45} Poor people suffer most, whether the disaster is acute, like the 2004 Asian tsunami; or chronic, for example, the Sahel and Horn of Africa 2010-12 crop failures and food shortages. This has always been the case but is becoming increasingly critical as populations, particularly youthful populations, increase. People under 25 now account for 44 per cent of the world's population. In developing countries, the proportion of children and young people is at an all-time high – 1.6 billion and 1 billion, respectively. One in five of all females of reproductive age are adolescent girls aged 10 to 19.⁴⁶

For these children and young people, the negative effects of disasters can last for the rest of their lives, as the United Nations Human Development Report notes: "Malnutrition is not an affliction that is shaken off when the rains return or the flood waters recede. It creates cycles of disadvantage that children will carry with them throughout their lives."⁴⁷ Long-term

Refugee camp, Burkina Faso.

effects of disasters on children are that they drop out from school; that they never regain the weight they lost when food was short, that their longer-term health is affected, and there is an impact on their cognitive abilities. One study looking at children who had suffered from food shortages when they were 12 found that this was linked to poorer health and wellbeing at 15.⁴⁸

Which brings us to the third point: that what is happening to adolescent girls in disasters is both predictable and preventable, and as such is a violation of their rights in law. As we will show in this report, guidelines may exist, but they are often not being followed. "Gender equality is not a luxury or a privilege," says a 2012 inter-agency paper on gender and security. It is grounded in international legal frameworks that include: international human rights law, women's human rights and children's rights.⁴⁹

Fourth, in practice, the humanitarian and development communities often work in separate silos. This has a negative effect on groups such as adolescent girls that

may be invisible in both contexts. The divide between humanitarian work and development is essentially an artificial one but it continues to influence the reach and effectiveness of working with affected communities. "[We need more] innovations related to linking humanitarian response with resilience building, like disaster risk reduction programmes," says one report.⁵⁰ The Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) and resilience debates provide a key opportunity to prioritise adolescent girls and to invest in their resilience for sustainable development.⁵¹

Now is the time to focus on adolescent girls and redress a major gap in humanitarian and development programming. In 2015, both the Millennium Development Goals and the Hyogo Framework to reduce the impact and minimise the risk of natural hazards are set to be reformulated. In the run-up to this, there is a growing global discussion about challenging 'business as usual' by restructuring development and what is known as disaster risk management (DRM).

The UN, with other actors in the



Queuing at a Red Cross feeding centre.

humanitarian system, is looking to strengthen the response to disasters, through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Transformative Agenda. This would be done by strengthening leadership, improving strategic planning at the country level, streamlining coordination mechanisms, and enhancing accountability. These new mechanisms need to ensure that the new global development roadmap integrates risk management as a core development component and contributes to building resilience by tackling the root causes of vulnerability – such as exclusion on the grounds of sex and age.

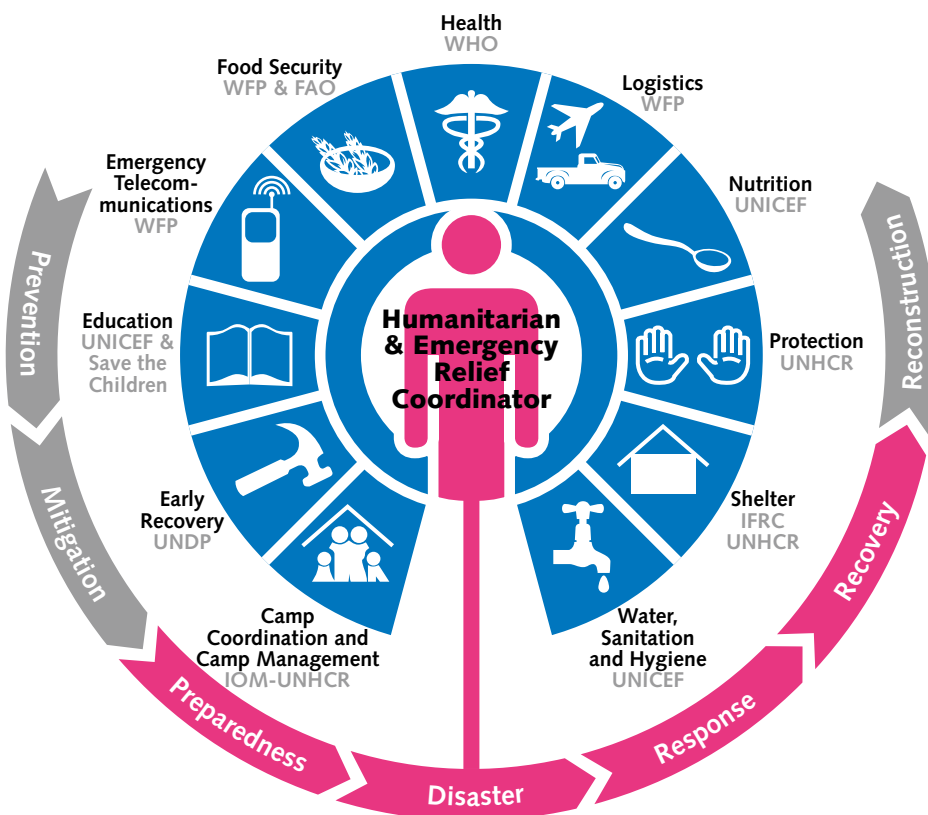
At present, the humanitarian response is organised around 11 'clusters' including, for example, 'emergency shelter', 'water, sanitation and hygiene', 'nutrition', 'protection' and 'education', all of which relate to the different phases of a disaster – prevention, mitigation, preparedness,

response, recovery and reconstruction.⁵²

This report argues that the current cluster system, the silos through which humanitarian aid is delivered, does not deliver for adolescent girls. In order for this to happen, cluster coordination needs to be improved and the clusters also need to look at adolescent girls as a group that has particular needs.

Ensuring that girls' needs are featured in the debates about the new structures for more resilient development and for humanitarian aid is therefore crucial as it will affect the way disasters are handled – and how adolescent girls fit into this – for at least the next 10 years. It is the humanitarian community's legal and moral obligation to ensure that all 1.2 billion adolescents in the world today, girls as well as boys, grow up in safer communities and are granted the skills knowledge and resources to prosper in an increasingly hazardous future.⁵³

IASC Cluster Coordination Model⁵⁴





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5 'Changing the world in astonishing ways' – girls' rights, risk and resilience

"[During disasters], girls can play many roles even though people say they can't. Anything that a boy can do, a girl can do too."

Xiomara, 17, Zapotal, El Salvador⁵⁵

"With their creativity, energy and enthusiasm, young people can change the world in astonishing ways, making it a better place not only for themselves, but for everyone."

UNICEF 2002⁵⁶

Despite the inherent vulnerability of adolescent girls in disasters, there is also a very different story to be told. As we will see in this report, although their stories are rarely told, time and time again in disasters, adolescent girls and young women have shown themselves to be resourceful and resilient, caring for younger siblings, elderly and sick members of their household in the absence of adults, carrying out practical

household tasks and contributing to strategic activities that require skills and knowledge that would normally be beyond their years.

This is not about particular heroes, but about recognising the undervalued role of adolescent girls, about listening to their voices and acknowledging that they have greater potential than they are given credit for to help their communities to prevent, prepare for, and survive a disaster. It is also important to acknowledge the needs of adolescent girls at the different stages of a disaster – before, during, and in the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction stages, where there is the possibility of transforming gender roles and relationships and further strengthening efforts in support of gender equality.

And yet, many national, international and organisational strategies in post-disaster and post-conflict environments do not reflect the reality on the ground. The community's own knowledge is a vital resource, and yet they are not often consulted, and adolescent voices in particular are ignored.

Young girl looking after her cousin in the Philippines.

The current debates within the humanitarian community about the need for greater quality and accountability to affected populations provide a unique opportunity to prioritise adolescent girls, to understand their vulnerabilities, and to build on their resilience: a term that has become something of a buzz word. In the context of disaster, it means the ability of individuals, households, communities and societies to withstand, adapt to and recover from stresses and shocks, and deal with future ones. Actions taken to anticipate, mitigate, prepare for and recover from disasters can contribute to strengthening resilience at all levels – be it individual, household, community, national.

In the humanitarian world, the ‘resilience’ agenda involves agreement between the main agencies and organisations involved – the United Nations, donors, international NGOs and certain governments – that building resilience means integrating short-term emergency responses with longer-term, comprehensive and integrated strategies. This is also cost-effective, as one report makes clear: “On average, countries can save seven dollars in recovery costs for every dollar spent on risk reduction measures.”⁵⁷

Adolescent girls’ rights to survival, protection, education and development and participation need to be recognised in all the stages of humanitarian work. This

The building blocks for gender equality and resilience for adolescent girls in disasters



LEFT TO RIGHT: PLAN; PABLO BLACK FOR THE YOUNG HEALTH PROGRAMME; PLAN/PETTERIK WIGGERS; PLAN/MARK PENGELLY

means: from before a disaster, through preparedness, prevention, mitigation, and risk reduction; during the emergency phase itself; and during the transitional phase of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. It offers the opportunity to address the inequalities of both gender and age within strategies for building back in a way that is better, safer and fairer.

This report makes the case for adolescent girls to be included in disaster preparedness and mitigation activities. We provide evidence of why it is important for the humanitarian sector to recognise and better address the rights and needs of girls before, during and after disasters, including the voices of girls themselves. We know that adolescence is a crucial time in a young person’s life: one that shapes the adult they are to become. If girls who are already threatened by poverty and inequality lose these years of their lives to the consequences of disaster, their futures as fulfilled and productive citizens are not likely to be realised. And this will be a tragedy not just for those individual girls and their families, but for us all.



Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

PLAN/BEN DEPPP

EMPOWERING GIRLS FOR A SAFER FUTURE, INDONESIA⁵⁸

In 2008 Plan International, in partnership with the Institute of Development Studies and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), conducted a study in Indonesia's Sikka and Rembang provinces to look at how gender influences children's and adults' perception of disaster risk.

The research found that there was a widely held belief that the views of girls and women are subordinate to those of boys and men. Adult men commented: "girls can't escape from disaster"; "girls just scream, frightened, asking for help"; girls can only "help to remove light things and materials". Adult women also thought girls had less capacity than boys to minimise the risks of disasters.

The researchers partly attributed these views to the dominantly patriarchal cultural and religious background of

the communities. Many of the children interviewed at the time felt that their capacity to reduce risks was limited: "We are too young," said girls in Wolodhesa, Sikka.

But after girls engaged in disaster risk reduction programming, remarkable changes were observed in terms of how they perceived risk and their capacity to tackle it. Girls mapped out the local risks facing their community and had an acute perception of why some members of their community were particularly vulnerable. They discussed what resources and support systems were currently available and developed ideas about how to improve their resilience. *"Through video, we are able to explain the real situation in our village. This is one of the best ways to influence people. We are not only talking about our problems but also showing something real that we can do together to help solve them,"* said 15-year-old Marlis.

Disaster risk reduction work in Indonesia.



KEY HUMANITARIAN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Siobhán Foran examines how they relate – or not – to adolescent girls

The purpose of this review is to examine a selection of existing humanitarian guidelines and standards and to consider if and how they identify and respond to the needs and rights of adolescent girls. I have selected five documents which I believe are broadly representative of the array of material available to humanitarian actors:

- the Sphere Handbook – probably one of the most widely used tools by the humanitarian sector, the handbook covers a number of areas of work, namely water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) promotion, food security and nutrition, shelter, settlements, non-food items and health.⁵⁹
- three key guidelines that relate to topics that are particularly relevant to adolescent girls – education, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV).^{60,61,62}
- the IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Gender Handbook, which is the key tool for addressing gender as a crosscutting issue in humanitarian action and adolescent girls represent an intersection of both gender and age.⁶³

A key 'bigger picture' challenge that must be addressed before we can focus on existing humanitarian guidelines and standards is: where do the needs and rights of adolescent girls fit into the architecture of humanitarian assistance and protection and, more specifically, when and how does the humanitarian community consider adolescent girls, or indeed any sub-group of an affected population? This issue is, I would suggest, the very crux of the challenge of accounting for adolescent girls in humanitarian action.

The architecture of humanitarian assistance

The 2006 Humanitarian Reform established the 'cluster approach' by which the clusters – or sectors of work – were established to strengthen capacity in 11 areas, namely camp coordination/camp management (CCCM), emergency shelter, education, food security, health, nutrition, early recovery, protection, WASH, emergency telecommunications and logistics. Under the Humanitarian Reform, four issues – age, gender,

Refugees in
Burkina Faso.



HIV/AIDS and environment – were identified as issues of concern for all clusters or sectors and became known as ‘crosscutting issues’. Over the years since the Humanitarian Reform, a number of new subjects and approaches have been added to the list of crosscutting issues, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), disability, disaster risk reduction, early recovery, resilience and human rights.

The Humanitarian Reform, in particular the establishment of the clusters and, more recently, the IASC Transformative Agenda, were seen by many as opportunities to better integrate crosscutting issues into humanitarian action. However, this did not occur. While each of the clusters has an institutional platform – for example, WHO for Health, UNICEF for Nutrition – several of the crosscutting issues, such as gender, age and disability, do not.

Since the dissolution in 2006 of the informal Cross-Cutting Issues Network there has been no common platform for these issues and each has been required to go it alone. As a result, the ability to raise funds for technical advice to the various clusters and coordination efforts has been limited. In this latter regard, gender, through the IASC Gender sub-working group and the GenCap (Gender Standby Capacity) Project, has perhaps fared better than others. However, this relative success has not necessarily benefited adolescent girls. It has proved challenging enough to keep gender on the agenda without the additional challenge of nuancing the intersection between gender and age to look explicitly at, say, adolescent girls and older women.

Where are the adolescent girls?

Attention to the needs and rights of adolescent girls has – it might be said – fallen between two stools: gender and age. With the exception of UNFPA’s targeted focus on the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescent girls and UNICEF, Save the Children and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies’ (INEE) targeted action on the specific education needs of adolescent girls, the issue of adolescent girls’ distinct needs and rights continues to be completely overlooked in nearly all humanitarian assessments and programming.

In the 2011 version of the Sphere Handbook, eight ‘crosscutting themes’ are included – children, disaster risk reduction, environment, gender, HIV and AIDS, older people, persons with disabilities and psychosocial support. There are a total of

six references to adolescence/adolescents in the Handbook.

One reference is included under the WASH promotion section and refers to the need to consult with “women, adolescent girls and persons with disabilities” in relation to the number, location, design, safety, appropriateness and convenience of communal washing and bathing facilities.

There are four references to adolescent girls under the section on food security and nutrition, where it notes that “low maternal body weight at conception is strongly associated with infant low body weight and is a feature of adolescent pregnancy”; the need to have programmes to prevent adolescent pregnancy; the need to include adolescents (as well as infants, pregnant and breastfeeding women, older children, adults and older people) in nutrition assessments or programmes; and in a reference to the use of MUACⁱ.

The chapter on health contains one reference to adolescents under the Guidance Note on the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), where it notes that “The MISP defines those services that are most important for preventing reproductive health-related morbidity and mortality among women, men and adolescents in disaster settings”.

So, with a small number of pretty broad references to adolescence and adolescents, the distinct needs and interests of adolescent girls are missing from the Handbook. While the Sphere Handbook does provide for the collection of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD), the problem seems to lie with a humanitarian enterprise that is “largely anecdote rather than evidence-driven” and that “shows significant weaknesses in SADD data collection, analysis and response in all stages of a crisis or emergency”.⁶⁴

Some key issues for adolescent girls

Education: The key document for humanitarian action, the INEE *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery* (2010), includes only five references to adolescents throughout. This is surprising, given that the INEE has a Task Team on Adolescents and Youth whose objective is to “work collaboratively on technical tasks to ensure a coordinated, accelerated and expanded evidence-based response to the educational rights, needs and aspirations of adolescents and youth affected by crisis”.⁶⁵

ⁱ Mid –Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) used as an indicator of early detection and referral of children with malnutrition.

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH): There are two chapters in the Inter-agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises' *Inter-agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings: 2010 Revision for Field Review* that are relevant to this review: Chapter 2 on the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) and Chapter 4 on Adolescent Reproductive Health. In Chapter 2 on the MISP, adolescents are mentioned in passing (e.g. "including adolescents") three times, in terms of their specific treatment for STIs; as a good reference to understand where their peers congregate (for consultations about condoms); in terms of the need for the collection of SADD mortality data and included in the definition of "comprehensive RH services". Chapter 4, however, does focus on adolescent reproductive health and explicitly on the rights, needs and humanitarian programming considerations for adolescent girls and boys.

Gender-based violence (GBV): Again, there are only a handful of references to adolescent girls in the IASC GBV Guidelines. This is all the more surprising given that, in a section on 'Children and Youth' in the introduction, it provides that "adolescent girls and young women may be specifically targeted for sexual violence during armed conflict or severe economic hardship". The Guidelines do not elaborate on why this may be, what special measures may be

required to be put in place to respond to adolescent girl survivors of sexual violence or what specific measures may be required to prevent such violence.

Gender: The IASC Gender Handbook has an explicit focus throughout on the distinct needs of women, girls, boys and men. Interestingly, of the nine sectors that are covered in the Handbook, six make specific reference to adolescents.⁶⁶ In the majority of cases, the reference is to the participation of and targeted actions for adolescent girls and boys. The only actions specific to adolescent girls are included in the education (sanitation facilities) and shelter (participation in shelter construction work) chapters. What is missing from the Handbook's opening chapters on 'The Basics of Equality', 'The International Legal Framework for Protection', 'Coordination on Gender Equality in Emergencies' and 'Gender and Participation in Humanitarian Action' is a definition of adolescence – or indeed any age group – and an explanation of the distinct needs and rights of adolescent girls.

Conclusion

We can see that the picture is not a pretty one and that scant attention is paid to the needs and rights of adolescent girls in some of the main humanitarian guidelines and standards. Adolescent girls (and/or boys) are rarely identified as a distinct group with very specific needs, priorities and capacities. Where



Young mother in Burkina Faso.



Escaping to higher ground in Cambodia.

PLAN

they are considered at all, their needs are often 'reduced' to education, SRH and GBV and the focus on rights is largely ignored. Even within education, SRH and GBV, attention is minimal with several unilluminating references to "especially adolescents", or "particular attention to adolescent girls".

I would suggest that there are two main issues here. The first is the overall lack of integration of crosscutting issues in humanitarian action; and the other is the continued failure by humanitarians to understand the importance of collecting and analysing SADD that then informs humanitarian response.

On the first issue, a recent report commissioned by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) titled 'Coordination and Funding of Cross-Cutting Issues in Humanitarian Action' talks about the "marginalisation of crosscutting issues" and the conclusions include that "the multiplication of issues competing for attention... is commonly seen as both unsustainable and counterproductive."⁶⁷ Literally bombarded with a variety of themes, subjects and approaches, global policy makers and field practitioners react with an overall rejection of whatever is perceived not to be essential, making any integration all the more difficult." Adding to this mix, as adolescent girls is not a crosscutting issue in itself but rather an intersection of gender and age concerns, detailed attention to their needs and rights is even more difficult.

On the issue of continued failure by humanitarians to collect SADD, the Feinstein Center/Tufts University report referenced above makes a compelling argument for investing in the collection, analysis and use of such data. As Valerie Amos, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and Robert Glasser, Secretary-General, CARE International conclude in their Foreword to the 'Sex and Age Matter' report, "there is no sufficient intellectual, logistical or financial justification for not collecting and using SADD to inform and improve humanitarian response".⁶⁸

So, given this rather difficult environment, we might well ask what a solution would look like. Changing humanitarians' perspective on the delivery of aid from a delivery-based operation to a people-centred approach represents a considerable shift. But the shift *must* and *can* be made. The current attention to 'Accountability to Affected Populations' and the debate that has opened up on crosscutting issues, for example, give us reason to be optimistic that we can look forward to the day when we are not doing word searches and counts for 'adolescent girls' but looking at the meaningful identification and response to their distinct needs and the recognition of their rights.

Siobhán Foran is Gender and Humanitarian Action advisor for UN Women.



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HAITI

A question of survival: adolescent girls' health and wellbeing in disasters **2**

Summary

This chapter will show how the discriminatory practices and attitudes that adolescent girls face in everyday life also affect them in disasters – sometimes at the cost of their lives. Their health problems are rarely taken into account by health service providers and this means that their lives continue to be at risk beyond the immediately obvious requirements of food, water and shelter. For example, we look at how their needs for sexual and reproductive health, hygiene and sanitation, or menstruation may not be provided for. We examine the fact that young mothers and their babies may lack family planning and adequate maternity services. Finally, adolescent girls are rarely consulted about what they need. Listening to what they have to say, and involving them in activities that build better health by learning about prevention and protection and acknowledging their specific survival needs is not just about supporting adolescent girls, though that is important: it may make the difference between life and death.

- A study by the London School of Economics (LSE) of disasters in 141 countries found that boys generally received preferential treatment over girls in rescue efforts.¹
- After the earthquake in 2010, pregnancy rates in Haitian camps were three times higher than the average urban rate previously. Two-thirds of these pregnancies were unplanned and unwanted.²

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD³

Article 6

Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality healthcare, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy.

Article 27

Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, social and mental needs.



PLAN/PETTERIK WIGGERS

1 No rights for the poor – girls, food and nutrition in disasters

“In times of famine, everybody’s rights are violated. What is important is not respect for rights but food. We are poor; that is why we are not entitled to any rights.”

Adolescent girl, Niger⁴

“Focusing on adolescent girls as a specific population and enabling them to make decisions which can guide their recovery process... saves lives. To meet the core principle of ‘do no harm’, the humanitarian community must reframe the approach to identifying, reaching and meeting the needs of adolescent girls.”

Coalition for Adolescent Girls⁵

Primary research for this report in Ethiopia found that adolescents of both sexes reported going to school on an empty stomach.⁶ Some said they “had never eaten until they were fully satisfied”. Adults also confirmed that the whole family often forfeits one meal of the day to cope with food shortages. The research found that girls are more vulnerable during food shortages, particularly “in households where land-holdings are small, water is scarce and human resources are limited”.⁷

The right to food, including the right to non-discrimination in accessing food, is guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 11). But the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

said: “Women may face constraints in accessing humanitarian services, including food, as a result of insecurity, cultural discrimination and limited mobility”, and that “in crisis situations where food is in short supply, women and girls are more likely to reduce their food intake as a coping strategy in favour of other household members. This can contribute to under-nutrition among women and girls.”⁸

This is related to the different expectations of boys and girls in many cultures – for example, in the provinces of Oromia and SNNPR in Ethiopia, research for this report found that: “Boys are encouraged to eat more because it is assumed they use more energy to be active while girls are expected to be moderate/reserved reflecting a ‘womanly etiquette’.” Even when boys and girls eat together – usually after their fathers – “the ‘playing field’ is not level since boys are encouraged from childhood to eat with no reserve; they tend to eat more of the served portion”.

In a report on the impact of climate change on children in Bangladesh, children told researchers that in a crisis, they struggle to have two meals a day.⁹ Parents often went without food to feed the younger children, and adolescents and older children said they were hungry all the time. Boys said that they ate and drank less so they wouldn’t have to go to the toilet so much. But the report pointed out that overall, girls suffered most, as cultural



PLAN/ALF BERG

Family meal.



Afroza, 17,
feeds her
twin boys.

prohibitions meant they couldn't go outside to collect food or shop and so often did not have enough to eat. Girls between 12 and 17 who were pregnant or breastfeeding – child marriage is common in Bangladesh – suffered because there was not enough nutritious food available.

**THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME:
SCHOOL FEEDING AND TAKE-HOME
FOOD RATIONS IN EMERGENCIES¹⁰**

School feeding, especially the provision of take-home food, is effective on two fronts: helping to make sure that children are fed, and attracting them to school and ensuring they stay. The retention of children in school gives them a sense of normalcy and protects them (especially girls) from the potential risks of early marriage, trafficking, child labour and violence. The World Food Programme (WFP) has found this particularly important in the education and protection of girls in emergency and post-emergency situations. It means that girls have less of a struggle to get enough to eat and children learn more effectively. It also gives parents an added incentive to keep their girls in school.

One of the reasons girls and boys from poor families go hungry is that food prices often escalate after a crisis. Most poor people already spend a large proportion of their income on food, and price rises make it almost impossible to adequately feed themselves and their children. Marcel Ouattara, of UNICEF Chad, said: "Women and children are the most vulnerable layer of society. A situation like this, where food shortages lead to prices rising between 100

*Waiting for
lunch at a
school in
Kenya.*



2 'Girls are different from boys' – adolescent girls' health in disasters

"Although adolescents make up a large proportion of the population in the developing world, where most humanitarian emergencies occur, their sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs are largely unmet."

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)¹⁴

"We need help knowing where we can get help. Girls are different from boys, we have different health problems."

Sheila, 16, the Philippines¹⁵

"Reem is a 15-year-old displaced Syrian, holding her underweight, two-month-old baby. Her husband was killed in crossfire when Reem was seven months pregnant. She went into premature labour, without her mother, mother-in-law or any female relative at her side. She is now living in a camp with her uncle and some cousins. Reem senses her baby is sick and remembers her mother's advice, 'breast-milk is the best food and medicine for your baby'. But she does not know how to breastfeed. Also, no one told her that she would be bleeding after she gave birth and she has no more clean underwear or sanitary napkins. She thinks it is because of her bleeding that she cannot breastfeed and she fears that she and her baby will die."¹⁶

Young women like Reem have to negotiate the adult role of becoming a mother at a time when they are still children, and in the context where they face multiple risks and possible death. Not surprising, then, that they struggle, with little information and lack of

Syrian women and children wait near the Turkish border.



PLAN/ALF BERG

and 200 per cent, has devastating effects... on the weakest."¹¹

Poor nutrition during and after a disaster may affect girls going through puberty for the rest of their lives.¹² The effects are both physical and in terms of future opportunities. As this girl in Niger said: *"We lose all our dignity because of hunger. It is not the hard work that hurts me during the periods of hunger, it is the fact that I know there are children of my age who are at school studying and preparing for their future while I am here eating the leftovers of their food. That hurts me more and I cannot do anything about it."*¹³



JODI HILTON/IRIN

appropriate support from those who should be helping them. The uncertain situations they find themselves in before, during and after an emergency, and the ways that they have to cope with their circumstances while going through puberty and even motherhood during these stressful times, can affect them for the rest of their lives.

Adolescents have the right to reproductive health under both international and national laws in many countries, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹⁷ The Minimum Initial Service Package, or MISP, is a Sphere standard that outlines the necessary equipment and the actions that trained staff should undertake during the early days of a crisis, but does not provide specific adolescent criteria. The Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Toolkit produced by UNFPA and Save the Children includes specific criteria for adolescents and sexual violence; adolescents and maternal and newborn health; adolescents and STI/HIV prevention and treatment; and adolescents and family planning.¹⁸ Family planning and access to anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) for pregnant women and girls were introduced as a minimum standard for humanitarian response in 2011.¹⁹

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) points to three sub-groups of adolescents that are particularly at risk in disasters and emergencies. Two out of the three categories are girls:²⁰

- Very young adolescents (10-14 years), especially girls, are at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse because of their dependence, lack of power, and their lack of participation in decision-making processes.
- Pregnant adolescent girls, particularly those under 16, are at increased risk of obstructed labour, a life-threatening obstetric emergency that can develop when the immature pelvis is too small to allow the passage of a baby through the birth canal. Emergency obstetric care services are often unavailable in crisis settings, increasing the risk of morbidity and mortality among adolescent mothers and their babies.
- Marginalised adolescents, including



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those who are HIV-positive, those with disabilities, non-heterosexual adolescents, indigenous groups and migrants, may face difficulties accessing services because of stigma, prejudice, culture, language and physical or mental limitations. They are also at risk of increased poverty and sexual exploitation and abuse because of their lack of power and participation.

Nutrition centre in Burkina Faso.

In a disaster, the disruption of families and of health services may leave adolescents without access to the information and services they need about sexual and reproductive health. For girls and young women, this is precisely the time when their situation and their age and sex puts them most at risk of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV. Adolescence for many young people is a time of experimentation, sexual and otherwise. They may be lucky enough to have understanding and supportive parents and good sexual and reproductive health services, including advice and contraception if they need it. But often this is not the case and they struggle with their own emerging sexuality and the constraints of the societies in which they live.

But it doesn't have to be this way. A strong public health system is a good shock absorber and reduces the negative health impacts of disasters on adolescent girls. And if the right support and services are in place, and if girls are listened to about what they need and want, as we will see later in this report, then sometimes a disaster can become an opportunity to turn their lives around.

ONLINE SURVEY – ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN EMERGENCIES

INTRODUCTION

Before preparing this report on girls in disasters the 'Because I am a Girl' team conducted an online survey of humanitarian staff, to provide an indication of what is actually happening in response settings with specific reference to adolescent girls. The respondents were asked to provide practical information about the work they are involved in and to express their opinions on what is actually taking place and how practice might be improved. The numbers of respondents replying to individual questions vary and not all sections of the survey generated statistically significant findings. Despite this, the survey provides an illuminating insight into both what is happening on the ground and what many humanitarian staff think should be.

The survey was divided into three sections.

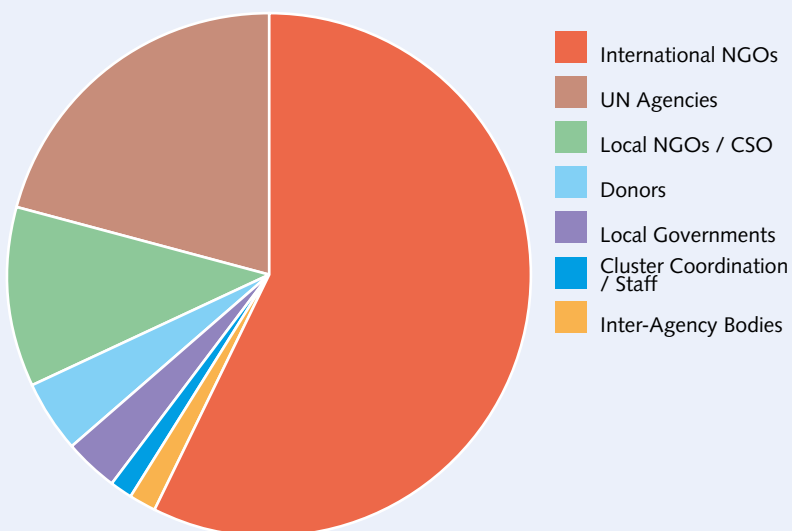
1 The first is cluster specific.

Respondents from the individual clusters were asked to indicate how many of the best practice actions listed they had incorporated in a recent response. The options provided were based on The Sphere Project minimum standards and a set of best practice actions devised by a small internal working group on adolescent girls in emergency response settings.²¹

2 All respondents were asked to answer a question on Early and Forced Marriage (EFM) and Camp Management, again considering which best practice actions were employed in a recent response.

3 All respondents were asked to look forward and outline strategic and practical recommendations to provide better services for adolescent girls in emergencies.

Which type of organisation do you work for?



The survey had a total number of 318 respondents, 71% female and 29% male. Of the 54% of the total respondents who had undergone gender training, two-thirds were women. Survey respondents were asked to identify their areas of operation. Geographical coverage was worldwide with many respondents specialising in more than one region.

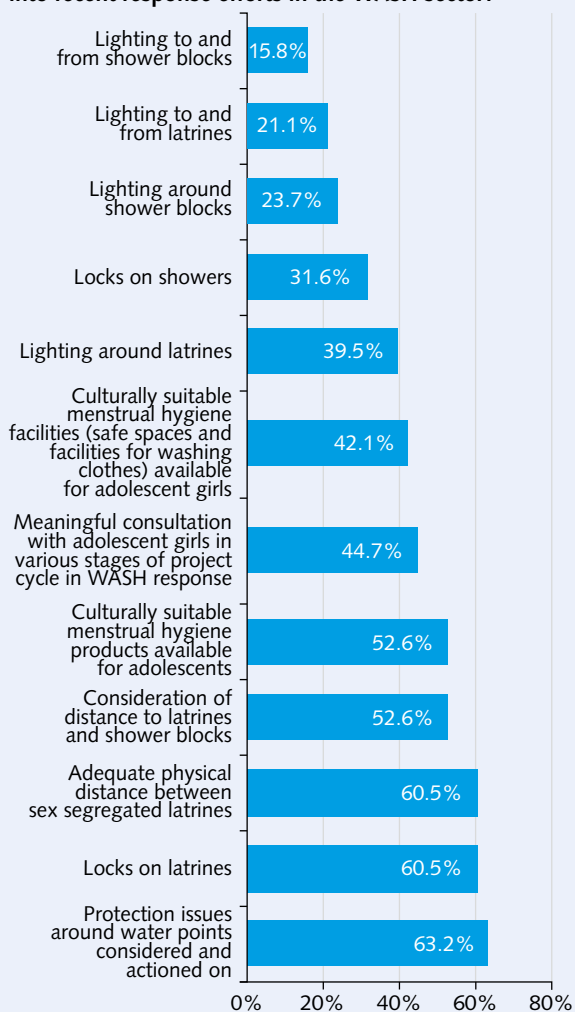
1 Central and South East Asia	122
2 East and South East Africa	108
3 Global	93
4 West Africa	77
5 Central and South Americas	35

The majority of the respondents, 61.2%, came from INGOs and 21.8% from UN Agencies. Survey results are incorporated into the body of the report and the following section summarises some of the central findings.

WASH Cluster responses

The results show that just over a third of the respondents are not addressing some of the key risks that can lead to increased exposure to protection threats such as gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual violence in internally displaced person (IDP) camps and shelters. For example, adequate physical distance between sex-segregated latrines, locks on latrines and protection around water points are all risks which affect vulnerable groups' safety when trying to access WASH services. The minimum standards outline a clear need for these risks to be considered, particularly for vulnerable groups; however, in practice these important safety measures remain ad hoc.

Which of the following actions have been integrated into recent response efforts in the WASH sector?



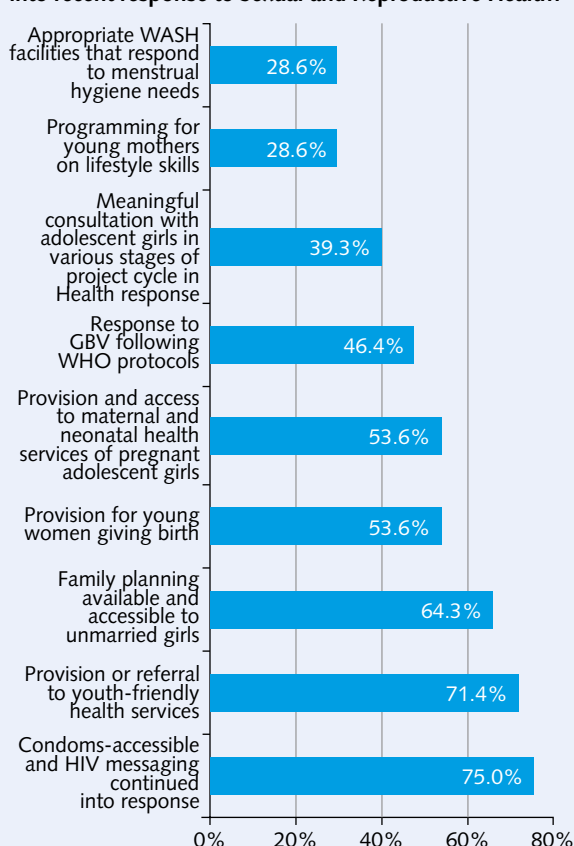
Sexual and Reproductive Health Cluster responses

Less than half of the respondents reported that they are following GBV protocols in their programming for SHRH. This indicates that adolescent girls in IDP camps and shelters are not being adequately protected against violence. Less than a third reported having early programming for young mothers' skills in place and WASH facilities for menstrual hygiene was the lowest priority. We know from research with girls and young women that menstrual hygiene is of key concern to them in emergency situations.²²

"Stigma and discrimination have remained something that we must give priority attention to at all times of programming. Health professionals working in the area of adolescent girls need refresher training to update them with the new skills for tackling emerging issues involved, because methods change always and what worked yesterday may not be appropriate for today."

Male. West Africa. Local NGO / CSO

Which of the following actions have been integrated into recent response to Sexual and Reproductive Health?



Protection – Gender-Based Violence Cluster responses

The most significant finding in this sector is the low incidence of female staff members on needs assessment teams. In more than a third of assessment teams, there are no female staff members to evaluate women’s and girls’ specific needs – potentially leading to gender-blind programming and increasing the risk of GBV. Only roughly a third of the respondents claimed that their emergency contraception and post-service protection response meets the standard of the WHO protocols. Although this figure was higher among those who had undergone gender training (40.5% of respondents), considering the high incidence of sexual assault, violation and rape of adolescent girls in camp settings, this finding is alarming.²³ The risk of GBV is further compounded by the lack of safe spaces for adolescent girls and by the fact that half the humanitarian GBV interventions are not engaging or targeting men.

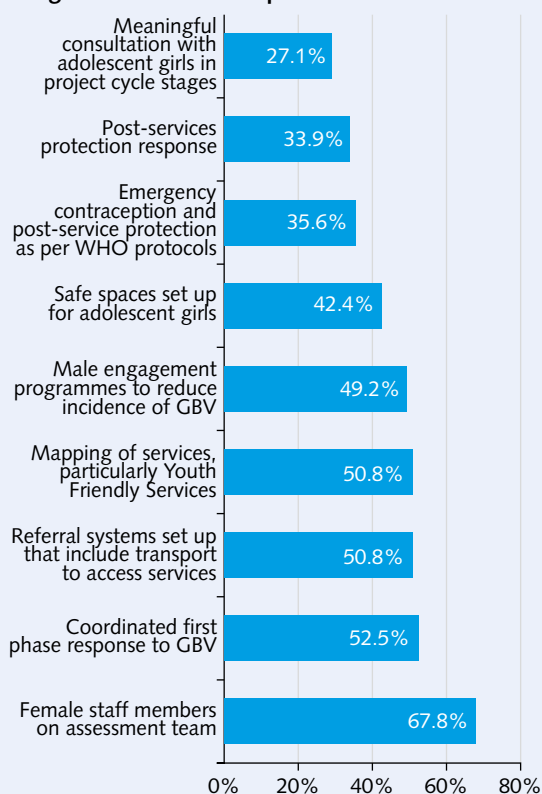
“Often adolescent girls exchange sex for shoes, sugar, diversified food, etc... It is a neglected problem although very frequent. Rapidly, girls do not even consider any more that it is an issue. It becomes a normal way to cope with the situation.”

Nadine Cornier, Senior Reproductive Health Officer, UNHCR

“Protecting unaccompanied or separated adolescent girls is a major challenge, given the risks of sexual exploitation, HIV/AIDs and unplanned pregnancies. Furthermore, age assessment is still in its infancy and recently pubescent girls are too often assumed to be adults and not in need of protection in the early stages of humanitarian response. In many instances girls in this situation would seek the ‘protection’ of a ‘strong man’ in the community/camp, with disastrous consequences.”

Female. South East Asia. UN Agency

Which of the following actions have been integrated into recent response on GBV?



In a refugee camp in Pakistan.



REBECCA CONWAY/IRIN

Education Cluster responses

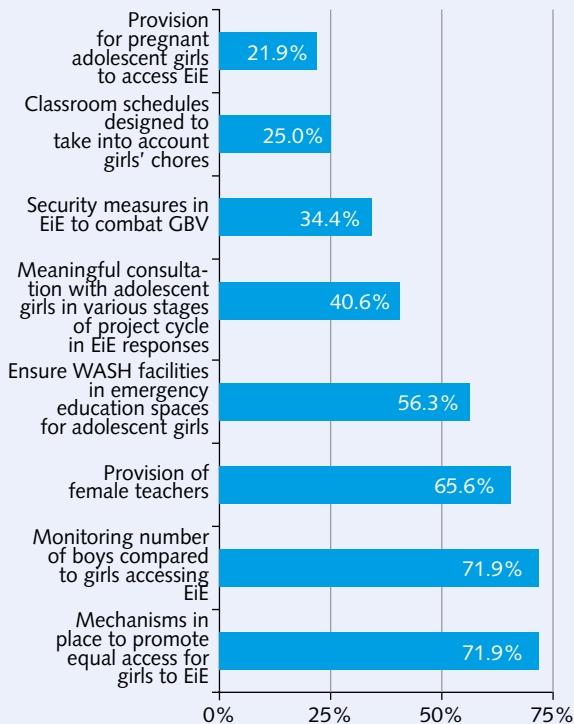
The education cluster had a total of 32 respondents and has some of the best results in terms of the integration of best practice actions. However, it is important to note that although over 70% of respondents indicated that mechanisms are in place to promote equal access for girls in Education in Emergencies (EiE), their responses also demonstrate that the provision for pregnant adolescent girls accessing EiE services, at 21.9%, was low; 25% indicated that scheduling of EiE services do not factor in girls' household chores, resulting in some of the most vulnerable girls being left out. This suggests that the current mechanisms are not adequately targeting the most vulnerable.

Respondents who had undergone gender training put a higher priority on ensuring the provision of female teachers, at 77.8% compared to the lower rate of 65% rate for those who had not.

"Our interventions show that education became an opportunity for adolescent girls."

Female. West Africa. INGO

Which of the following actions have been integrated into recent humanitarian response in girls' education?



Camp Management responses

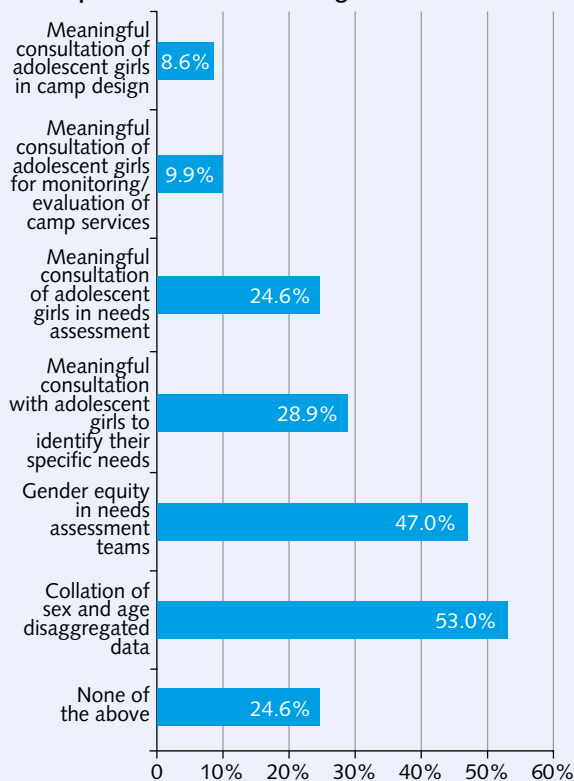
Only around half of the 232 respondents could claim they are collating sex and age disaggregated data; this despite the fact that sex and age disaggregation is outlined as a core standard in responding to the rights and capacities of vulnerable people.

Although the minimum standards also stipulate that women and girls should be consulted in separate spaces, the survey shows that less than half of the respondents reported gender equity in their needs assessment teams.

Similarly, the survey results indicate that consultation with adolescent girl groups is low despite the standards outlining the need to listen to a range of people of all ages, boy and girls and other vulnerable groups.²⁴

Overall, the answers in this section indicate that, although guidelines and minimum standards are in place, in response situations they are not being followed – to the detriment of the vulnerable groups whom they are designed to protect.

Which of the following actions have been integrated in recent response mechanisms to camp coordination and management?



Key strategies

Out of 177 responses, the following were the key strategies that emerged as most promising in delivering a successful integrated approach to responding to girls' needs in emergencies:

1 Make girls visible

Consultation with girls themselves and making space for them to participate in decision-making around humanitarian response programming and design was considered a first step in understanding, firstly, if we are addressing the needs of girls in emergency settings and, secondly, how can we improve our response to adolescent girls.

"They are one of the groups whose unique needs are always assumed to be similar to others in humanitarian response."

Male. East and Southern Africa. INGO

"LISTEN to GIRLS, to know the real needs of adolescents, then consider their resolution, as well as support their development initiatives, incorporating all aspects such as strengthening their ability to defend themselves, to take responsibility, to know their rights and freedoms, etc."

Female. West, East and Southern Africa.
UN Agency Cluster Coordination

2 Build evidence – make qualitative data count more

The findings from this survey clearly indicate that respondents are asking for greater evidence, for more research and for sex and age disaggregated data in order to influence donors to invest in getting it right. The case for adolescent girls in emergencies still remains anecdotal. Comprehensive mechanisms to document their experience of disasters need to be set up, implemented and the data gathered more widely reported to influence the sector's policy and practice.

"Building on evidence – use context-specific indicators that support strong analysis of the situation of adolescent girls and the stakeholders/duty bearers in order to design a strong protective programme. This should include disaggregated data, but also methods and tools that can support humanitarians when gathering data effectively and in a protective manner that does not skew

results or create more harm. Incorporation of girls' participation in the process should be prioritised... What do girls do for themselves that can be built upon? What is the community doing already that can be strengthened?"

Female. Global. INGO

"All aspects of humanitarian response ranging from camp establishment shelter, distribution, WASH, education, psychosocial etc. should consider the specific needs of adolescent girls. All too often their needs are an after-thought once something has already gone wrong. All humanitarian responses should have places of safety to which adolescent girls can come when in need."

Female. Global. INGO

3 Increase coordination between clusters

In terms of effective strategies it was evident from the responses that more coordination between clusters is needed. The protection and wellbeing of adolescent girls is falling between the different sectorial clusters. For example, as many respondents reported, WASH (Water supply, Sanitation and Hygiene) needs to be a prioritised action within Education. In addition, GBV and child protection clusters need much greater alignment, particularly regarding challenging issues such as EFM.

"There are very practical steps for each cluster to take, which include indicators, specific activities and questions. Unless it is very practical and can be shown by evidence for each cluster, it becomes too 'difficult' for a WASH person to include the needs of girls as it's not part of their 'normative' thinking. Awareness sessions don't work as well as practical sessions."

Female. South East Africa. UN Agency

"Solid capacity-building of humanitarian agencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes of personnel, sufficient supporting facilities) and effective inter-sector coordination mechanisms with girls' needs is seen as a priority."

Male. East and Southern Africa. UN Agency

4 Increase commitment to gender training to ensure a better focus on adolescent girls

This survey clearly identified that those respondents who had undergone gender training integrated more best practice actions in responding to girls' needs than those who had not. For example, in the sexual and reproductive health cluster youth-

Training session for disaster risk reduction in Nicaragua.



PLAN

friendly services and family planning for unmarried girls increased significantly when responses were gender sensitive.

"I appreciate the focus on adolescent girls but believe that it should be seen in the wider focus on gender – women and men of all ages, including adolescent girls and boys and older women and men. This is not to dilute this critical issue but to address crosscutting fatigue among humanitarians. Therefore, I think that the community that focuses on the critical issue of adolescent girls should join 'forces' with other gender and age advocates to make a more holistic and comprehensive integrated humanitarian response."

Female. North America. UN Agency

5 Involve the community and adolescent girls in building back better

There was a clear identification of the role of the community and adolescent girls themselves in disaster preparedness and recovery. This underlines the importance of DRR and increasing the capacities of girls to form part of and support their community's risk reduction plans. In terms

of building back better, respondents recognised that both the wider community and adolescent girls themselves should have the opportunity to act as agents to challenge the root causes of discrimination and exclusion.

"Look at the holistic aspect of programmes, look at the community-based aspect and integrate girls in school; provide the opportunity for adolescent girls to learn life skills, and increase their capability for resilience; increase community awareness about adolescent girls' and boys' needs. It's also important to work with community leaders to make them understand the importance of girls' development. In most instances culture plays a major role in girls' development. The community don't see the girls as one of the important groups in the community."

Female. West, East and Southern Africa. INGO

"Build on resilience and empowerment, but this should be balanced and address issues facing all members of the community in order not to stigmatise and create further harm."

Jessica Lenz, Senior Program Manager-Protection, InterAction



NAVA BUYANI

3 'A dry leaf that drops from a tree' – the psychological effects of disaster on adolescent girls

"Thunderstorms scare the hell out of me. I am so frightened that I can't sleep at night. The area of our bari [rain-fed sloping land] is reduced every year because of landslides triggered by heavy rain. I also fear that the fierce gales before the rain will blow away the roof of our house, like it did when I was six years old."

Aarati, 12, Nepal²⁵

"I feel sad and depressed from watching TV reporting in the aftermath of the earthquake over and over. I really want to play with friends."

Young girl in Japan living in a shelter in 2011²⁶

Mental-health consequences of disasters show themselves in different ways in different people, but they can have long-lasting effects which may be life-threatening.²⁷ Research has shown that adolescents who live through crises may find it hard to be positive about the future;

this may also contribute to behaviour which damages their health such as alcohol or drug abuse and high-risk sex.²⁸

A number of studies have found that in many countries women and girls suffer more emotional disorders or distress than men and boys as a result of disasters.²⁹ This may be partly due to their having fewer possibilities to take action and thus feeling more vulnerable, or because they have to put their family's needs before their own. In Bangladesh, a participant in a focus group of girls aged 10 to 14 said: *"The mental condition was very much worse for all of us during the flood. In my mind I felt like I became a dry leaf that drops from the tree. I felt that I had lost all my good memories and just felt speechless. I lost interest to work or eat. I did not sleep because of fear of thieves. I became very angry over little things, and I felt like my parents were not my own folks."*³⁰

A study in West Africa found that: "All the girls in our study are more unhappy than the boys. They have more trouble sleeping, they're more anxious, they report more difficulties making friends."³¹

Primary research carried out for this

report in the Philippines about the effects of Typhoon Ondoy on adolescent girls found many were still afraid long after the disaster had happened: *"I'm scared that the typhoon will happen again, because maybe it will happen at night not in the morning. If it's at night, those people sleeping may die. I pity them. I think about them and what it would mean for the typhoon to take them away. Sometimes I need to cry,"* said 11-year-old Dinna. Mirasol, 16, commented: *"We need to show sympathy and let ourselves grieve. It's hard to deal with those feelings... we feel so deep."*³²

In this context, psychosocial and other support targeted specifically at adolescents is key, both for their mental health, and to reduce negative coping strategies such as resorting to transactional or unsafe sex, drugs or alcohol; practices which once started are very hard to address and may ruin or shorten their adult lives.

NO PEACE OF MIND: GIRLS' MENTAL HEALTH AFTER THE 2010 FLOODS IN PAKISTAN

Nikki van der Gaag talks with girls in Pakistan about their fears since the disastrous floods of 2010 that left a fifth of the country underwater and displaced millions of people. How can they be better prepared if floods happen again?

"I am very afraid of snakes. When there is water everywhere they swim through the water and they bite you," says 12-year-old Zeinab. She has drawn a picture of houses with snakes swimming through them.

Qaisar Jamal, who works for the Rural Development Policy Institute (RDPI), a non-governmental organisation supporting people in times of disaster, says that once someone, particularly a child, has experienced a flood or an earthquake, the fear never really leaves them. "Even now, when it rains heavily in the monsoon season, rumours about flooding begin, and people are afraid that it will happen over again."

In Kumbhar Wali village, Salma, 12, says: *"I am still scared. I am afraid that the flood will come again. There is no peace of mind."*

The continuing consequences of what happened are vividly illustrated by the girls' drawings in the village of Basti Mohana Wali in the Punjab. The 'before the flood' scenes are colourful, full of flowers and trees and people and houses. The river is just a small blue line on the right.

The 'after the flood' drawings, in contrast, are dark and monochrome, with drowning figures and children desperately holding hands. Many girls had carefully redrawn their first picture and scribbled all over it in a dark colour. *"That is to show that everything was washed away, rubbed out,"* said Sadia, 13.³³

While agencies and government attempt to take care of the immediate need for food, water and shelter for those displaced by the floods, there is almost no psychosocial support. This is why the child-friendly spaces set up after the floods were so important. The children came together for a few hours a day to play, to learn and to talk about what had happened. These were the only times that anyone offered any psychosocial support. "The children were frightened and not able to sleep at night, so these times were very important for them," said Mohamed Umar, a village leader from Haji Sattar Dino Taandio, near the coast in Thatta, Sindh.

A 14-year-old girl from Rajanpur commented: *"Due to the floods, our toys drowned in water and our houses collapsed. We were so afraid that we wake up with nightmares. But [now] we play here and we forget all those situations."*³⁴

Zeinab with her drawing.



NAJMA BANO

REAL CHOICES, REAL LIVES

Over the past seven years Plan's 'Real Choices, Real Lives' cohort study has followed 142 girls, born in 2006, who live in nine developing countries around the world. Earlier this year, we ran a series of focus group discussions with teenage girls from the same communities as the cohort study participants in the Philippines, El Salvador and Vietnam. Plan's researchers in each of the three countries also conducted in-depth interviews with the girls.

The insight they provided reinforces the views and research outlined elsewhere in this year's report. It also underlines the importance of girls' participation in disaster risk management and in formulating strategies to encourage resilience and reduce risk.

The psychosocial impact of disasters on adolescent girls – 'It seemed too much for us to bear'

Often the psychological stress caused by a disaster can be overlooked in the urgency to respond to immediate, physical needs. Almost all of the girls we spoke to in all three countries (Vietnam, the Philippines and El Salvador) talked about a change in their behaviour as well as that of those around them



Surveying the damage in El Salvador.

following a disaster and about the impact this had on their lives.

Linda, 16, in El Salvador talked about the lasting effect the flood had on her and her family: *"Well, I still feel like crying when I remember what happened. There are a lot of things we need at home, and I haven't been able to get help from anyone. I don't have running water, I don't have electricity, I'm not safe at home, it's not the same if you don't have lights."* She told us her parents are elderly and in poor health and as such she and her sister are committed to working to provide money for their family. *"My sister is 23 years old, and she works too; we've always been very responsible for our family... I had already left school when all this [the floods] happened."*

It can be much harder for female-headed households to seek the support they need as many aspects of disaster relief are organised without taking into account the needs of different sections of the population – young and old, girls and boys, men and women – and areas such as food relief or temporary camp coordination are led by men.³⁵ When recalling the events following a previous typhoon, Monica, 14, from the Philippines, told us that as her father was "not around" it was just herself, her siblings and her mother. She paints a bleak picture of their struggle to ensure they had a safe place to sleep and food to eat: *"During the first typhoon no one helped us or donated anything... We asked for favours to sleep in just about anyone's house."* She told us how they survived on "canned sardines and rice... I don't know for how many days, but they did not give food continually. Many bananas fell, so we got the fruit and cooked them... After the typhoon we didn't get to eat rice, we ate bananas all the time." Monica told us it took her a long time to recover, and she was *"scared and worried... because I felt pity for my mother"*. The extreme stress brought on by lack of housing and food following the typhoon led Monica to worry: *"I thought then that we would die... Because of too much cold; it seemed too much for us to bear."*

Duyen, a 14-year-old from Vietnam, told us about the impact of drought upon her daily life, including her education: *"I felt tired, unpleasant and distracted and my study results are also worse."* Likewise, even if girls themselves were not directly affected, there were still emotional consequences of disasters, as Ofelia from El Salvador says: *"Emotionally I felt sad to see so many people*



Focus group discussion in El Salvador.

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affected, so many things lost and so much effort gone to waste.” Many of the girls also reported feelings of anxiety in anticipation of impending emergencies or disasters.

Tension among family members reportedly increased following a disaster. Nineteen-year-old Nguyet told us that: “In my family my parents

suffered the most. The loss of farm productivity meant having to find another way to earn a living. Their health is not good because they are thinking too much. I am trying my best to help them.” Ngoc Anh, 14, said: “My mother is grouchier; if the children make mistakes, they will be scolded harder; the losses in the crop make people surlier.”

Many of the girls explained how it would be beneficial for them to have a safe space or outlet in which to discuss their feelings. Sixteen-year-old Linda in El Salvador commented: “Today I see that there are many people who are sad or upset when they remember these things, and it could easily make anyone sad, but I think that if we had these talks and things more often it would help us to move on.”

None of the girls we spoke to told us they had received psychosocial support following a disaster. However, it is clear both from these discussions and from research undertaken for the ‘Because I am a Girl’ report this year that this support is critical for responding to the physical and mental strain placed on adolescent girls in disasters.³⁶



Focus group in Vietnam.

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4 'No one helped me but my sister' – family planning and maternity services

"He's my first child and I didn't have anyone to give me advice to go to a clinic... I gave birth in the camp because no one told me to go to the hospital. No one helped me but my sister."

Ellen, a 17-year-old in a camp in Haiti who lost both her parents in the 2010 earthquake and lives in a tent³⁷

Access to contraception and comprehensive sexual education is of vital importance for adolescent girls. In low and middle-income countries, complications from pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19 years.³⁸ And yet in many societies, discussion of family planning, sex and pregnancy is considered taboo for young people who are not married, and even for married women decisions about sex are usually made by men.

Family planning is particularly important in a crisis situation, because high-risk behaviour, including engaging in transactional sex, often increases in these times. But family planning is only a minimum standard for 'existing users', which may well not include adolescent girls, and the Sphere

guidelines say that emergency contraception should be available for incidences of sexual violence but does not go any further than this.³⁹ None of this is likely to help adolescent girls, who may have little information and less opportunity to access contraception than adults even before a crisis occurs.

A 2011 survey by UNHCR in refugee camps in five countries – Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, Jordan and Malaysia – found that there was little information and less opportunity to access contraception.⁴⁰ The report pointed out that access to family planning information and services was particularly difficult for adolescents. This was because "premarital sex is disapproved of, particularly among displaced populations of Iraqis, the Burmese and Somalis". In Uganda, adolescents living in camps did not want to go to the family planning clinic, as it took place in a maternity ward. Adolescents here also reported exchanging sex for money, but very few used protection. The condom dispensers, allowing for anonymity, were often empty.

A study of adolescent Acholi girls in the camps of northern Uganda found that 91 per cent of those interviewed found it difficult to obtain condoms.⁴¹ One girl explained:

*"When they [family planning services] are teaching about condoms, they usually restrict it to people of 18 years and above. The use of family planning is for married women... not for girls... Young girls of 12 to 14 years don't have any knowledge about condoms."*⁴²

But in some cases, disasters can provide a window of opportunity for adolescents to have better healthcare and even increased access to contraception – for example, in Pakistan after the 2010 floods, 'Lady Health Workers' provided safe delivery services for normal deliveries in camps, and referral mechanisms were in place for complications. There was also increased access to contraception for women, including young married girls.⁴³

An increase in pregnancy is common after a disaster. A Human Rights Watch report in Haiti says that it is attributed to a number of causes.⁴⁴ Women and girls who were interviewed identified the following factors for their own pregnancy: a desire to compensate for the loss of a child in the

earthquake; the hope of strengthening a relationship with a new partner; and a lack of access to information or to methods of contraception. A number of those interviewed also reported rape as the cause of their pregnancy.⁴⁵

Human Rights Watch tells the story of Rachele, who was a 17-year-old student when the earthquake hit and who became pregnant while living in a camp.⁴⁶ She said: *"I wanted to use family planning, but I wasn't able to get it... I am in a tent and I don't have anybody to help me."* Even when contraception was available, the report found that women and girls were unable to negotiate the use of condoms with their partners. According to another study in Haiti, fewer than half of women in relationships said they could make decisions about their own contraceptive use, and 26 per cent said their husband or partner made all the decisions about their health for them.⁴⁷ If women can't negotiate safe sex or contraception, it is perhaps not surprising that adolescent girls cannot.

In the first three months after the earthquake in Haiti, public health professionals began noting an increase in pregnancies. "After the earthquake, all the young girls have adult men under their



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At a health centre in Haiti.

tent, and now they are pregnant and some give birth under the tent – at 14, 15, 16 years old," said a member of the women's committee in a camp in Mais Gate.⁴⁸

Girls like Tamara, who is 17 and lives with her parents and brother in a camp in Haiti. She became pregnant while living there. *"Nobody told me about [family] planning. If I knew [about it]... I would use it,"* she said. Tamara gave birth in her tent without the help of trained medical personnel. She wanted to go to hospital, but when she went into labour it was decided there wasn't time so her mother delivered the baby in the tent. Now Tamara tries her best to look after her baby, but it is not easy. *"When I have money, I eat; when I don't, I don't. But, I still try to breastfeed the baby."*⁴⁹

Margalie, a member of a camp committee in Croix-des-Bouquets in Haiti, said 150 babies had been born in the camp and 83 women were pregnant. "Some of them are girls, because their parents don't take care of them so they look for a man to survive... but the men don't actually take care of them. As soon as they hear the girl is pregnant, they just leave her."⁵⁰

These stories show that there is an urgent need for contraception for adolescent girls, for information about where they can get it, and for prenatal, obstetric and postnatal care after a disaster. Another urgent need is to work with men and boys, both before and during crisis situations, on issues of fatherhood, gender equality and views of masculinity, so that the responsibility for contraception and childcare is not left to young mothers.⁵¹



DIETER TELEMANS/PANOS PICTURES

OFTEN IT IS TOO LATE

Nikki van der Gaag reports on family planning and maternal mortality in rural Pakistan.

Nasreen sits quietly in a corner while the other women from the Kot Adu area in the Punjab talk. She looks in her twenties, but is tired and pale, and has a small child fretting and crying until he finally falls into an exhausted sleep. Nasreen is poor, illiterate, and married very young. She says, miserably, that she has eight children. She doesn't know very much about nutrition, hygiene, family planning or safety in childbirth.

This could be putting her life at risk. Officially, the maternal mortality rate in Pakistan is estimated to be 260 deaths for each 100,000 births.⁵² But in every village I visit I am told of a woman who had died the previous day or the previous week. Talking to health workers, it seems likely that the numbers of women dying in childbirth, particularly but not only when there is a flood, is much higher than the statistics would seem to indicate.⁵³

Bilquis, a social worker in Thatta district, told me that she rarely visited a village where a woman had not died. The boys in the village take us out to show us how they construct a sling to carry pregnant women to hospital. They have to walk, or go in a donkey cart along rough and bumpy roads. Not surprising, perhaps, that many women die on the way.

There is another problem. Because the society is conservative and strictly controlled, any mention of sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and unmarried young people is impossible. For them, sexual and reproductive health services and information is simply unavailable. One report says: "There is in general a very low level of knowledge around family planning in southern Punjab. Unmarried adolescent girls have no access to information and even married adolescents and older women are largely unaware of modern

family planning methods. This also holds true for men and boys."⁵⁴ As a result, in rural Pakistan, knowledge about and access to family planning is low – only 30 per cent of married women between the ages of 15 and 49 use any form of contraception.⁵⁵

Interestingly, in the aftermath of the floods of 2010, women and girls were often together in makeshift camps or schools which meant that there was an opportunity to access health and hygiene information. This included family planning advice and information about sexual and reproductive health and maternal health.⁵⁶ For example, the

health visitor in the village of Jaday Wala outside Muzaffargarh in the Punjab provided daily sessions on family planning for up to 30 women in the government-run camps. She thought that only one in ten of the women she talked to knew about modern methods of

family planning before coming to the camp.

But if only a few women a day like Nasreen were able to start using contraception, in a two-month period this would mean that more than 400 women would have fewer babies; contributing to reducing pregnancy-related deaths and the perpetuation of cycles of mother-to-child poverty. One of the other positive things emerging from the training was that men became more relaxed with regard to their wives using family planning services. This too could have a long-term effect if the services continue to be available.

But once the floods subsided, in most villages, things have reverted to their previous state as far as women like Nasreen are concerned – no schools, no clinics, and little information on, or provision for health, and particularly sexual and reproductive health.



BARBARA SOLANGI



5 'The endangered sex is girls' – sexually transmitted diseases and HIV

"The link between vulnerability to HIV and humanitarian disaster has long been recognised; yet we have been slow as a global community in proactively involving organisations in the humanitarian world in the fight against HIV and AIDS."

Noerine Kaleeba, Founder and Patron, TASO Uganda; Chair, Action Aid International Board of Trustees⁵⁷

"Over and above the attendant health risks from cholera and malaria for everyone [in a crisis], for HIV and AIDS the endangered sex is girls."

Out-of-school youth, from primary research in Malipati, Zimbabwe for this report⁵⁸

There are 2.2 million adolescents in the world living with HIV – around 60 per cent are girls.⁵⁹ Girls' vulnerability to HIV and AIDS is linked to their low status in

society. The Special Rapporteur to the UN Commission on Human Rights notes that: "The vulnerability of women and girls to HIV and AIDS is compounded by other human rights issues including inadequate access to information, education and services necessary to ensure sexual health; sexual violence; harmful traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and children (such as early and enforced marriage); and lack of legal capacity and equality in areas such as marriage and divorce."⁶⁰ As we noted in a previous report: "The roots of the epidemic lie in the structures that cause unequal relationships and emphasise men's power over women. In many societies, these dictate that it is men who decide when to have sex, how many partners they have, and whether they use condoms."⁶¹ These vulnerabilities are compounded in a crisis setting.

There are no figures that might show whether there is a rise in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV for adolescent girls in emergencies. But we do know that during

Discussing sexual and reproductive health in South Sudan.

an emergency, work on HIV prevention is often put on hold, leading to a rise in the number of cases.⁶² Life-saving drugs may also be unavailable. Anti-retroviral regimes for those living with HIV are often disrupted during disaster.⁶³ Stocks may be destroyed, may be inaccessible.⁶⁴ Or the focus of health providers may be primarily on responding to the immediate rescue, casualties, injuries and life-saving cases.⁶⁵ All this can lead to a rapid decline in the health of people who are living with HIV.⁶⁶ And yet access to anti-retrovirals for existing users and for pregnant women and girls was introduced into minimum standards for humanitarian response in 2010.

This is a major blind-spot in humanitarian programming, because an emergency is a time when the social constraints that normally influence behaviour may break down and high-risk behaviour increase. An adolescent may understandably feel fear and uncertainty about the future – the risk of getting HIV and dying in 15 years' time may seem irrelevant compared to present survival.

While evidence is mainly anecdotal due to the sensitive nature of the subject, it would seem that adolescent girls have less knowledge about the transmission of STIs and HIV/AIDS than boys. For example, Plan's research in Bangladesh on the impact of climate change found that girls aged 12 to 17 "had heard of HIV but could not say how it was transmitted. Boys of the same age said they did know how it was transmitted and learnt about it from radio, television and the staff members of [a local NGO]."⁶⁷

Another effect of a disaster may be that traditional ways of passing on information about sex are disrupted. In Uganda's Acholi culture, the *wayo*, or father's sister, was the person who taught an adolescent girl about being a woman, including sex and menstruation. Women said that in the course of the conflict, traditional methods of support for adolescents had been eroded. The Wayo Programme, a reproductive health initiative in northern Uganda that trained women from the community to assume traditional Acholi, 'wayo-like' counselling roles for the purposes of passing on sexual education and HIV prevention information from adults to younger women, was both successful and sustainable.⁶⁸

ADOLESCENTS MAP HIV RISKS IN HAITI⁶⁹

Before an earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, the country's HIV and AIDS response focused largely on treatment, care and support – with much less attention given to prevention.

Even as Haiti struggles to recover from the earthquake, there is agreement that HIV and AIDS must be addressed through a holistic approach that includes prevention. Services for people affected by the epidemic are growing both more reliable and more widely available. But programmes responding to the special vulnerability of young people – particularly adolescents – must be scaled up.

Haiti's HIV prevalence rate is 1.9 per cent among children and adults aged 15 to 49. The population is young, with 33 per cent of Haitians between 10 and 24 years old. And young people are the most vulnerable to infection, particularly in the slums and camps of Port-au-Prince.

In partnership with two local organisations, GHESKIO and the National Office against Violence (ONAVC), UNICEF is working to identify the places where adolescents and young people are at increased risk of contracting HIV. Together, they are engaged in a mapping initiative in two Port-au-Prince communities, intended to reveal the obstacles that keep vulnerable adolescents – particularly girls – from gaining access to HIV prevention services. The project's aim is to increase adolescents' and young people's use of services related to HIV, sexual and reproductive health. By engaging these groups with mapping technology, the initiative empowers youth to effectively advocate for addressing issues in their communities.



MARTIN VERZILLI/INSTEDD



MIKKEL OSTERGAARD/PANOS PICTURES

6 'We need to be clean' – adolescent girls and sanitation

"During the monsoon, we are forced to wait in the rain to use the toilet as it is difficult to relieve ourselves outside because most of the land flooded... I have to relieve myself in a public place; I worry that one of my classmates might see me."

Sunita Kumari Urau, 15, Nepal⁷⁰

"It would be helpful to have safe and clean places to wash, defecate, and urinate. We need to feel like we have privacy. We need to feel clean."

Lilani, 15, the Philippines⁷¹

Despite the fact that the 2011 Sphere Standards call for "sufficient access to acceptable hygiene facilities and an environment uncontaminated by waste", time and again in disasters, girls and women raise the issue of public bathrooms and

toilets.⁷² All too often, these are situated in remote parts of camps, shared by both sexes and badly lit. Girls are concerned about privacy, but also feel unsafe every time they need to wash or go to the toilet. "The biggest problem for young girls at the camp is taking their showers in public and exposing their bodies to the gaze of strangers. Some boys take advantage of this situation to denigrate [girls'] bodies, assaulting them verbally with foul language," said Carine Exantus, a student of journalism at the University of Haiti before it was damaged and closed by the January 2010 earthquake.⁷³

SURVEY FINDS LIGHTING NOT A PRIORITY

The 2013 online survey of humanitarian workers for this report showed that lighting was given a low priority in IDP camps and shelters. Only 16 per cent of respondents said lighting to and from shower blocks was in place and for latrines it was 21 per cent. Given that women and girls, particularly when menstruating, often use facilities after dark for more privacy and to avoid embarrassment, the lack of lighting to and from these services are factors that contribute to the risk of gender-based violence.

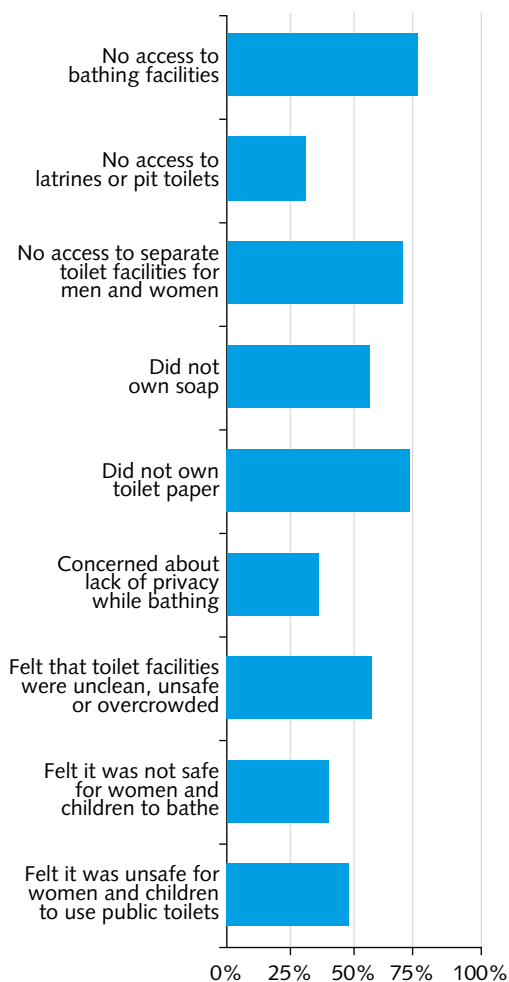
One of the problems with location and availability of latrines is that assessments are often conducted with 'the community' rather than with women and men and girls and boys separately. This usually means that older, powerful men control the responses and women's and girls' needs and wishes are simply not heard.

In India, a post-tsunami study found that temporary shelters lacked security and adequate lighting, which made women feel vulnerable, especially given the number of unemployed, unoccupied male strangers loitering on the grounds. Hence, there was an extreme lack of privacy.⁷⁴ A five-country study of violence against women and girls after the tsunami noted that: "Lack of privacy, particularly in regard to toilet and bathing facilities, and inadequate lighting at night consistently made women vulnerable to violence."⁷⁵

A study of 90 families in six different camps eight months after the earthquake in Haiti⁷⁶ found that bathing and toilet facilities were still poor and considered dangerous for young women and girls. One family in Croix-des-Bouquets stated: "Sometimes young men try to keep women locked in the toilet."

Proper consultation would make a big difference. The same study also revealed that a third of the latrines built were not being used. Poor security meant that women and girls who had not been consulted about where they were placed, were too frightened to use them.⁷⁷

Eight months on in Haiti: bathrooms and toilets are still dangerous for girls in camps⁷⁸



'WHEN YOU CAN'T BATHE YOUR CONFIDENCE IS LOW' – ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN THE PHILIPPINES⁷⁹

Primary research for this report in the Philippines on the effects of Typhoon Ondoy, which hit the Rizal province of the Philippines on 26 September 2009, found that: "The cleanliness of latrines is often a major problem for people living in a displacement and/or resettlement camp."⁸⁰ Girls said that they used alternative measures for urination and defecation if a latrine is dirty, has a strong smell, lacks privacy due to peep holes or problems with the locks on the door, and if it is too dark. Mirasol, 16, said: *"When I entered the bathroom, I saw it was disgusting, and surrounded by faeces. I was about to go inside but I didn't continue."*

Alternatives included holding urination or defecation until they could reach a friend's house or school toilet, or using tall grassy areas or areas hidden by a building. The girls said they went to the toilet in pairs for added security. *"We need privacy in the places where we wash. I always worry someone will see me so it's hard to bathe. The facilities are so few that there is always a long line and the boys try to peek,"* said 15-year-old Amy.

They also said that holding urination and defecation often leads to urinary tract infections (UTIs). *"If there's someone using the bathroom, you really have to hold it. We get UTIs,"* said Lilani, 15.

"Both my friend and I have UTIs, we have so much pain in our bladder during urinations. We were told not to hold our urination and defecation, but sometimes we have to because the line is long or the toilet is too disgusting," said Michelle, 15.

The girls said they all knew about washing their hands, but said sometimes a single water source was shared by 100 families and soap was scarce or unavailable. Thinking they smelled bad led them to withdraw socially. *"Because when you can't bathe... your confidence is low,"* said Mirasol.

7 An issue of dignity – adolescent girls and menstruation in emergencies

“Menstrual hygiene is still very low on the list of priorities. In emergencies it is water and latrines that make the list and sometimes even shower stalls. Gender issues are usually considered after the initial emergency needs for water and latrines have been met or after it turns out that latrines and showers are not used by women because they are not appropriate for women.”

Emergency water and sanitation
NGO staff member (2011)⁸¹

“During menstruation, I failed to maintain hygiene and stayed wet and dirty. Please untie me from the sufferings of the flood; please untie all the girls of the char from the sufferings of the flood.”

Shiuly, 16, Dhaka, Bangladesh⁸²

In some countries, adolescent girls may know very little about menstruation before their first period. If this happens during an emergency, there is often little provision, and this can be a source of shame as well as a health issue.

The 2011 Sphere handbook has a number of guidelines on safe and appropriate menstrual hygiene in emergencies that also relate to girls.⁸³ For example, it says: “Women and girls of menstruating age, including schoolgirls, should have access to suitable materials for the absorption and disposal of menstrual blood. Women and girls should be consulted on what is culturally appropriate. Latrines should include provision for appropriate disposal of menstrual material or private washing facilities.”

But it is clear that these guidelines are often not adhered to. All too often, there are no women on assessment teams, which means that sanitary protection may not be provided or there may be very few women managing emergency provisions such as underwear and sanitary protection in camps or shelters. Girls may not want to take such products from men, or ask male family members to collect them.

The problem was emphasised in the online survey of humanitarian workers carried out



HANNAH MCNEESH/IRIN

for this report where it was evident that less than half the needs assessment teams for the camp management sector had equal numbers of women and men, despite the fact that the IASC protection standards say that teams should have equal numbers of both.⁸⁴

The lack of sanitary materials may have negative effects on girls' health – for example, during the 1998 floods in Bangladesh, one report says, “Adolescent girls reported perineal rashes and urinary tract infections because they were not able to wash out menstrual rags properly in private, often had no place to hang the rags to dry, or access to clean water. They reported wearing the still damp cloths, as they did not have a place to dry them.”⁸⁵ In Bangladesh, older girls talked about the problems of not being able to wash themselves or the cloths they use when menstruating and how this leads to vaginal infections.⁸⁶ In other cases, where girls do have access to sanitary pads, there is no place to dispose of them.

Sometimes what is provided is not culturally appropriate – for example, in Dadaab camp in Kenya, girls were given cloths, but they were so unlike the ones they normally used that they used them for cleaning instead or even threw them away. One young woman said: *“We thought the packets contained something to eat, and when we open and find another thing we do not understand, we throw it away.”*⁸⁷

Queuing for salt and soap at a refugee camp in South Sudan.

In Pakistan, an Oxfam Project Manager reported how “during post-distribution monitoring visits women informed us that the white colour and thin fabric [of the cloth provided] is not appropriate for sanitary purposes and they were using this cloth for covering water pots or dusting. Thick, coloured fabric was suggested and the women then received this.”⁸⁸

Then there is the issue of privacy, particularly important for adolescent girls who may be ashamed about people knowing when they have their periods. Changing and bathing in private are difficult when access to water, toilets and bathing areas are minimal and shared by the community. In India, this adolescent girl from Nagapattinam reflected that after the tsunami: *“There is no privacy for girls [for sanitation purposes]. It is very difficult during periods. We wash our menstrual cloths at night and wake up early to collect them after they have dried.”*⁸⁹

Shame was a common theme for adolescent girls in research for this report in the Philippines: *“I had mine in the camp and all my brothers and sisters were around me when I needed to change. They told their friends and everyone made fun of me, but I couldn’t go to the bathroom because it was full. I was ashamed,”* said 15-year-old Rizza. *“I was shamed because after the*



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disaster I couldn’t wash and I had leaks that everyone could see, I already felt sad because our life was gone, but I didn’t know what to do when I was also leaking and couldn’t stop it,” said Mirasol, 16.⁹⁰

Receiving sanitary towels at school in Uganda.

SURVEY FINDS MENSTRUAL HYGIENE NOT A PRIORITY

In our survey of humanitarian workers for this report fewer than half the respondents (42.1 per cent) reported that actions were in place to ensure that suitable menstrual hygiene products and facilities are available and accessible for adolescent girls.⁹¹ This indicates that menstrual hygiene is not a priority action in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) responses. However, it is clear from our primary research (with girls themselves) that for them, menstrual hygiene facilities and products are a high priority, particularly for those living in camps.⁹² The lack of these facilities and services affects their dignity and health and also acts as a barrier to accessing education and this and the associated shame often keeps them confined to the home during menstruation.



PLAN/PURWANTA

8 Conclusion: knowing what girls need

“This has been very hard for my family and myself. We lost loved ones, our hearts ache, we have difficulty trying to find food and a place to live... My mother tells us that we have to believe in tomorrow, believe in a future. I do, but sometimes it’s hard when everything feels like it is falling apart.”

Sheila, 16, Rizal province, the Philippines, after Typhoon Ondoy⁹³

“There is an overwhelming tendency to report numbers in bulk – latrines built, tons of food distributed, schools rehabilitated – without knowing who used those latrines, who ate the food and who went to school.”

Valerie Amos, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator⁹⁴

We have seen how the double discrimination of age and sex affects adolescent girls in disasters. They may already have very little choice in their lives, and a crisis simply makes their situation more difficult. Their survival and development post-disaster are undermined by a lack of food and a shortage of skills and knowledge, by the domestic jobs that confine them to the home, and by the fact that they are undervalued for who they are and what they can do. This chapter has looked at the fact that adolescent girls face specific health problems during a disaster or emergency, and yet these are often ignored by those in charge of humanitarian assistance. Access to food and water, the priorities of

humanitarian assistance, are key to girls’ survival, but so too is access to information about health, including sexual and reproductive health; provision of appropriate health services and supplies targeted at girls, as well as the means to access those services; privacy and safe spaces; and a sense that their specific health needs are recognised and acted upon by those in power.

Simply surviving an earthquake, flood, or drought is not the sole aim of humanitarian work. It must also be a priority for the humanitarian and development communities to ensure that those who survive, particularly the most vulnerable, have the support they need to come to terms with their loss and trauma, and have the resources they need to rebuild their lives as well as to prepare for future crises.

As far as adolescent girls are concerned, this is not happening. Evidence from the primary research demonstrates that the humanitarian and development communities are failing to address the needs of adolescent girls.⁹⁵ They are failing to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and resources to be able to survive the impact of a potential flood, drought, or earthquake. They are failing to provide for their needs when they are exposed to greater risks in the aftermath of a disaster. Girls who are healthy can go on to be leaders for response and recovery within their communities. But girls who become ill, who cannot get access to contraception when they need it, who fall pregnant too young, or are forced to sell their bodies to survive, face potentially disastrous consequences that will affect them not just in the disaster period, but for the rest of their lives.





YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION – ANZAIRA ROXAS AND THE Y-PEER NETWORK IN THE PHILIPPINES⁹⁶

When tropical storm Washi struck the Mindanao region of the Philippines in December 2011, thousands of homes were suddenly destroyed and over 500,000 people were displaced. By mid-January, over 1,200 people were reported to have lost their lives.

Through its youth-to-youth initiative called Y-Peer Network, UNFPA quickly mobilised youth volunteers in various evacuation centres to help identify pregnant women in need of assistance and to organise information sessions with young people. When a crisis strikes, family and social structures are disrupted: adolescents may be separated from their families or communities, while formal and informal educational programmes are discontinued.

Anzaira Roxas spent two months in Northern Mindanao region where 30,000 people had been displaced. As the Y-Peer Network's focal point in the Philippines, the 26-year-old worked relentlessly at mobilising youth who assisted in medical missions and helped distribute dignity kits. These kits included basic hygienic items such as soap, underwear and sanitary napkins.

"I also trained internally displaced youth in camps and organised stress relief activities," Anzaira explains. "Some of them now believe that despite being victims, they can rise above the situation and help others who are more in need."

By the time she was 12, Anzaira had told

her family she wanted to be a community doctor. Today, Anzaira already holds two degrees – she is a nurse and a midwife. "Despite having two degrees, it is difficult to earn money in the Philippines," explains Anzaira, "but I realise that my country needs me to help improve the lives of women and young people."

After completing her studies, she worked in providing services to women and young people involved in sex work. Today, while she leads her country's Y-Peer Network, Anzaira also works with UNFPA's implementing partner, the Family Planning Organisation of the Philippines.

Discussion of sexual and reproductive health in a religious country like the Philippines remains taboo. While Anzaira is active with the Catholic Church, she has also managed to gain respect from her peers and continues to advocate for the rights of women and young people to access life-saving information on sexual and reproductive health.

On 30 July 2012, another tropical storm, named Saola, turned into a typhoon which caused several days of heavy rains and flooding. By 6 August, 51 people had been killed and over 16,000 people had taken shelter in evacuation centres. Again, Anzaira and her peers were ready to help communities in need. "In everything I do, I keep on emphasising what I have learned thanks to UNFPA," she says. "Young people are not the problem of our society, but rather, they are part of the solution."

Anzaira talking to young women about hygiene.

THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT DIVIDE

Dr Sarah Bradshaw⁹⁷, author of 'Gender, Development and Disasters'⁹⁸, looks at how it can be bridged

In 1999 UNICEF and other agencies suggested that given global instability, economic crisis, the proliferation of conflict and rise of natural disasters, the distinction between emergency and development strategies had become 'outdated'.⁹⁹ So why, over 10 years later, do we find ourselves still talking about the need to bridge the humanitarian-development divide?

In part, the answer to why the divide continues to exist lies with understanding what the divide actually is. Humanitarian and development actors differ in terms of their goals, target groups, cooperation partners, and principles.¹⁰⁰ Unlike development actions, humanitarian actions traditionally had a narrow remit to save lives and alleviate suffering in times of crisis. They sought to provide a rapid response to fulfil clear needs, and interventions were assumed to last weeks and months rather than years. In contrast to development agencies, the organisational culture of many humanitarian agencies is therefore oriented toward speedy delivery of externally based service packages delivered in a top-down mode.¹⁰¹ Development aid is as much politically driven as needs based, and accessing funds is often a lengthy process. But the need for rapid disbursement of funds, based on immediate need, means donors have created separate institutional mechanisms for handling humanitarian assistance. The divide, therefore, is temporal, organisational and financial.

In recent years many agencies have sought to close the humanitarian relief-development 'gap' in terms of funding at least.¹⁰² Various policies have been adopted to fill the perceived financial gap, including increasing the flexibility of funding through pooling funds or adapting the criteria for funding, designating a specific share of humanitarian or development funds for recovery, and creating specialised funds or budget lines focused specifically on the 'gap' period and activities.¹⁰³ Each policy solves some problems but raises others. None ensure a coherent strategy that follows those affected by a disaster from crisis through recovery to 'development'. Closing the gap may also not necessarily help bridge the divide. For example, while transition funding is useful, it may not be clear who should be doing this 'transitioning' and it may fuel a humanitarian versus development competition for funds, leaving them as adversaries rather than

collaborators.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, it may introduce yet another layer of actors, following a new and niche funding opportunity. There are other problems too.

The 'transition' period of reconstruction is usually considered to take several years.¹⁰⁵ Thus a 13-year-old girl who survives an event such as a tsunami effectively 'grows up' in 'transition'. Her needs may or may not be met during the relief period, but will not be a priority during reconstruction as she is, or is assumed to be, neither mother nor worker – but instead will be conceptualised as a 'daughter' or 'orphan'. The international focus is on supporting those who care for her, or finding someone to care for her. Adolescent girls are not, therefore, a focus in their own right. Effectively ignored in reconstruction, becoming a mother through early marriage or a worker through exploitative practices may be the only life options open to her. When 'development' funding returns, girls of a disaster will be young women, and the bounded choices they were able to make, or had made for them, will have determined, to a large extent, their 'development' possibilities. These bounded choices made by girls, or for girls, growing up in transition may have long-term and costly consequences for future development. Girls present the most compelling argument for why a coherent, joined-up response is needed.

As the recent Humanitarian Emergency Response Review suggested¹⁰⁶, what is needed is a 'radical change' that would place humanitarian concerns as a core part of development programming. In part this would come from a closer and more integrated relationship between the development work of agencies and the way they respond to meet rapid onset emergencies. However, while the operational and financial divides may be bridged, these divides are outcomes of a more fundamental divide, less simple to bridge given it is based on ideological differences.

Humanitarian actions are governed by humanitarian principles – political and economic independence, neutrality, impartiality and universality – and the humanitarian imperative to reach those with the greatest needs as well as the overriding principle of 'do no harm'. The aid given is not based on political or donor concerns but need; the actions of those receiving aid in situations of crisis are not questioned, but

all are treated as equally worthy of aid. These principles are not abstract notions but important practical issues since independence, neutrality and impartiality help humanitarian actors gain access to the victims – largely women and children – of conflicts and disasters when they occur in politically charged situations. Access is dependent on this reputation of neutrality and helps keep responders safe, particularly in a context of the increasing militarisation of humanitarian response.

The 'humanitarian' response to events of the 1990s, particularly Rwanda, led to the recognition that humanitarian actions could and had done quite a lot of harm. The end of the 1990s saw debate over the role of protection, politics and humanitarian response in emergencies¹⁰⁷ and the emergence of a new or 'political' humanitarianism. While some saw this as an 'assault' on the humanitarian framework¹⁰⁸, for others the fact that the political nature of relief aid – or that it was driven by 'politically sensitive' principles – was recognised¹⁰⁹ provided a more realistic understanding of humanitarian actions. There was recognition that aid can fuel conflict if given to all, including 'undeserving victims' who are perpetuating the violence, thus questioning the notion of universality. The value of neutrality was also questioned, with suggestions that humanitarian workers should respond to the acts they see, such as those that go against the Geneva Convention, by 'witnessing' or speaking out. This 'witnessing' should, of course, mean speaking out against gender-based violence as a weapon of war and against systematic violence against women post-disaster. Most importantly in this context, rather than 'do no harm', current humanitarian thinking highlights the need to do 'good' and suggests aid should help build peace, stability and 'development'.

Thus it might appear the divide has been bridged and humanitarian actors have now added longer-term 'development'-related goals, such as to reduce future vulnerability to disasters, to their traditional short-term relief goals. The problem is humanitarianism has become something of a contested notion and while 'new' humanitarian thinking perhaps provides a bridge across the development-humanitarian divide, there may also be a new divide – between humanitarian actors.

While humanitarian actions are now more 'ambitious', there is also greater ambiguity around how humanitarianism is understood, funded and practised.¹¹⁰

This more nuanced approach, coupled with its more politically sensitive nature, might also suggest a more gendered response – or at least the

possibility for this. Yet in gender terms there is still a divide that does need crossing. A basic principle of humanity is expressed by the Red Cross as "the desire to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found", responding "without discrimination" to ensure respect for "the human being". While originally referring to "the wounded on the battlefield", in today's complex contexts the focus is reaching all who are in need, regardless of their political or ethnic affiliation, or age or sex. The focus of humanitarian actions is not on the differences between people but on the 'sameness' of their plight. This focus, while seemingly useful to ensure the needs of girls are met, may not be as helpful as it appears, since at times there is a need to emphasise the difference (of girls) in order to claim their sameness (as equal human beings).¹¹¹ In other words, drawing on notions of sameness can hide differences between how boys and girls experience an event and the specific needs of girls may go unmet.¹¹² In particular, survivors of sexual violence have generally been neglected in standard models of humanitarian aid delivery.¹¹³ Moreover, the profound effects of rape on women and girls have received little attention in the longer term, as the focus tends to be on seeking to expose the identities of the perpetrators rather than ensuring the continued wellbeing of the survivors.¹¹⁴ The continued construction of humanitarian response as short term means the medium-term needs of the survivors of violence fall into the 'gap' between relief and development.

Yet the reality is that in the twenty-first century humanitarian relief is not a 'short-term' intervention. A small set of countries account for the majority of humanitarian aid spending, year after year.¹¹⁵ In the absence of the construction of a permanent welfare



PLAN/ELIAS ASHARE

system for social protection, these countries continue on in 'relief mode'.¹¹⁶ Humanitarian relief acts as a 'bandage' in the absence of a political solution in the case of conflict, or a development solution in the case of famine and drought. Humanitarians can provide short-term relief from the symptoms, but the 'cure' must lie with development. This is not to say development workers need to become humanitarian actors, but rather that they need to recognise disaster risk as a development risk.

As highlighted in the recent call from Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) to 'disaster proof' development¹¹⁷, it is not disaster response that needs to be made a development issue, it is the 'disaster' itself. Yet disasters, at present, are seen as freakish, out-of-the-ordinary 'natural' events that disrupt or 'set back' development. A natural hazard does not have to result in a disaster. A natural hazard only becomes a disaster when it impacts on a vulnerable population. As such, a disaster reveals the vulnerability of a group or nation, their lack of ability to cope, which stems from a lack of access to the necessary resources for resilience. This lack may be monetary and emotional, of health and education, of knowledge and agency – or a lack of 'development'.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is related to providing structural mitigation measures and having early warning systems in place, but it is also clearly about reducing the vulnerability of a population or increasing their resilience. It is, thus, about development. As the mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action highlights, DRR is primarily a developmental issue, yet it is largely relief and humanitarian mechanisms and instruments that are being charged with implementing the strategy.¹¹⁸ Herein lies the problem. The divide that really needs bridging is the divide between development and disasters within development. When disaster risk is understood as a development issue by development workers, and its reduction becomes a development goal for development agencies, then the divide will be bridged.

A focus on girls asks us to think again about what we mean by disaster risk. Consider, for example, what post-disaster sexual violence against girls, early marriage and trafficking, reveal. Are they new phenomena that begin with the natural hazard? If girls suffer rape and sexual violence post-event, is this because of some sudden change in men? Women and girls suffer sexual violence at 'normal' times, in their everyday lives and, like disasters themselves, post-disaster violence should not be read as freakish or out of the ordinary. It may be the case that the levels of violence increase, due



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to frustration of men who have become unable to fulfil their socially constructed and gendered roles of protector and provider. It may be the case that the nature of violence changes, with higher levels of stranger violence as social systems and structures of protection break down. If the violence and exploitation suffered by girls is due to the event then this is the 'disaster' for them; if the violence and exploitation suffered by girls is exacerbated post-disaster then this is a disaster risk for them. As such, for girls disaster risk is the heightened risk of suffering violence or of greater levels of exploitation in the home and the workplace. Post-event, humanitarian actions can respond to the practical need for protection. However, reducing the disaster risk of violence against women and girls requires a longer-term, strategic development focus.

Bridging the divide means understanding that a 'natural' disaster is not natural but a crisis of development. Humanitarian action is the short-term response to this crisis. Disaster risk reduction (or DRR) is the long-term solution. There is, therefore, a need to put DRR at the heart of development. Bridging the divide also means understanding that a disaster is not neutral but gendered and generational. Humanitarian actions can address girls' short-term practical gender needs but to avoid girls growing up vulnerable to future disasters requires DRR to promote their strategic gender interests. There is then a need to put girls at the heart of humanitarian response and DRR, and DRR at the heart of development.

Adolescent girls at present fall through the gap between the humanitarian and development response, but placed at the heart of both, they could provide a bridge that spans the divide.

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The safety and protection of adolescent girls in disasters

3

Summary

This chapter argues that violence, particularly sexual violence, one of the most serious violations of adolescent girls' rights, is exacerbated in emergencies. Because of their age and sex, disasters increase girls' vulnerability when their families and communities are least able to protect them. This puts them at increased risk of rape or sexual violence. They may be forced to resort to selling sex to meet their own or their family's needs during an emergency. Child marriage may increase as parents try to cope with crisis and protect their daughters as best they can. Governments, donors and the humanitarian community have a duty to protect adolescent girls during disasters. Research for this report and girls' own harrowing stories show only too clearly that this duty is not being fulfilled.

- In one camp in Liberia during the war, a study found that sexual abuse of children, in particular girls under 15, was widespread.¹
- In Niger after the food crisis, research for this report found that out of 135 adolescent girls, 64 per cent were already married and 39 per cent had children. The average age of marriage was 14.²

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 19

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 34

Governments must protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. The right to be free from harmful traditional practices, including female genital cutting and forced early marriage.

"Young girls don't have parents to take care of them, so if a man can help her, she'll make love and live under his tent... It's not easy when you are hungry."

Human Rights Watch, Nobody Remembers Us, Haiti 2011



GWENN DUBOURTHOUMIEU/IRIN

1 Preventing violence against girls and young women during emergencies

"Somebody touched me with bad intention during night time, offering me food. Someone wanted to take me away and tempted me, offering money and relief. I could not share all this with my parents as they were also stressed."

Shiuly, 16, Bangladesh³

"The world has done a poor job of addressing gender-based violence and/or exploitation in camps. It still occurs and even if there are mechanisms to report these abuses, many times beneficiaries aren't aware of their rights or there isn't a proper process set up for follow-up."

Jeni Klugman, Director of Gender and Development, World Bank 2013⁴

Despite the fact that it is prohibited by international and national laws, violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, is unfortunately still a frequent occurrence in many women's and girls' daily lives; the result of structural and systematic inequalities and discrimination which are exacerbated during disasters. Furthermore, additional forms of violence may present themselves. Adolescent girls caught up in conflict may experience sexual violence as rape is used as a weapon of war. There may be an increase in child marriage, which parents may see

as a way of keeping their daughters safe in troubled times. Protection mechanisms can be eroded due to factors such as the lack of parental care, the breakdown of community structures, and because camps may not be administered in such a way as to keep women and girls safe.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – interchangeable terms?

In 1993, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women offered the first official definition of the term 'gender-based violence' (GBV) as: "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Gender-based violence has become an umbrella term for any harm that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that results from power inequalities that are based on gender roles. Around the world, gender-based violence almost always affects women and girls disproportionately. For this reason the term gender-based violence is often used interchangeably with the term 'violence against women and girls' (VAWG).

For the purposes of this report we recognise that GBV can be perpetrated against women, girls, men and boys but for our focus on adolescent girls we will be referring to GBV that is specifically violence against woman and girls (VAWG) and will use the terminology interchangeably.

Even though there are limitations in terms of data, and few statistics differentiate between women and girls, the statistics that do exist tell a shocking story of gender injustice:

- Although Haiti already had high levels of gender-based violence beforehand, after the earthquake there were widespread reports of rape.^{5,6} ISOFA, a Haitian women's health organisation, documented 718 cases of gender-based violence against women and girls from January to June 2010 alone.⁷



NICK RAY

- A 2011 study found that in the Democratic Republic of Congo, out of a population of 70 million, approximately 1.8 million women and girls had been raped.⁸
- Almost nine out of ten women affected by the 2004 tsunami in India, and six out of ten in Sri Lanka, had experienced physical violence within two years of the disaster.⁹
- In Liberia, a national post-war survey in 2008 found that the largest number of rape victims were girls and young women aged 10 to 19.¹⁰
- In Liberia in 2006, Save the Children UK reported high levels of abuse of girls, some as young as eight.¹¹
- In Knembwa Camp in Tanzania, 26 per cent of Burundian women and girls between the ages of 12 and 49, who had already suffered ethnic violence that included rape, had been raped again as refugees.¹²

Sometimes, girls and women are abused by those who are meant to protect them – their families, soldiers or aid workers. In one camp in Liberia, a study by Save the Children found that sexual abuse of children, in particular girls under 15, was widespread and was perpetrated by

camp officials, humanitarian workers, peacekeepers, government employees and even teachers.¹³

Sierra Leone.

“Girls who are mainly involved [in prostitution] are young children and teenagers who the man can easily fool with small money,” said one anonymous respondent. Abuse by the humanitarian community has the additional consequence of depriving girls of essential goods and information. Chamithry, who is now 22, talks of her experience after the 2004



GWENN DUBOURTHOMIEU/IRIN

tsunami in Sri Lanka: *“In the relief centres, at food distribution points, the men who were giving the food were looking at us in an uncomfortable way, and they did that to teenage girls who went to the food distribution points alone. They made us feel uneasy. Many distributors are men, so we felt shy to ask for things.”*¹⁴

Jagonari, a women’s rights organisation in Bangladesh, said that during and after a disaster such as a flood, “girls are often harassed, they have no economic power, no voice and often these incidents are hidden by them and their families”.¹⁵

Adolescent girls, especially if separated from their families, may not know how to protect themselves. And the systems that are meant to be in place to protect girls may be disrupted during or after an emergency.

Girls whose parents have died or been injured, and who are in the care of a relative, or an unrelated adult, or an institution, are even more at risk. This situation puts them in the power of people other than their parents, which often results in abuse.

Another factor putting girls at risk is that once they are displaced, they may have to make a journey that is dangerous, unfamiliar or a long way away to fetch water or firewood or sometimes just to go to the toilet. In Bangladesh, research found that the job of fetching water is consigned to girls between the ages of 12 and 17.¹⁶ Even if they go in groups, they may be at risk of attack. In Ethiopia, according to the African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), a local NGO in Lalibela, most of the rapes and abductions occur when girls have to walk for firewood or water.¹⁷ *“I know two girls who were raped going to fetch water. When you go far and there are not many people around, it happens,”* said 16-year-old Endager from Lasta District, Ethiopia.¹⁸

In a disaster, adolescent girls may be at greater risk because the situation is often chaotic and the main priority for humanitarian agencies, and even families, is food, water, shelter and healthcare rather than protection. Humanitarian organisations need to be aware of this, and make special provision for the protection of adolescent girls, recognising that they have different needs from older women.



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‘BOYS CAN TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES’: DIFFERENT DANGERS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS IN KENYA¹⁹

In 2011, Kenya and the Horn of Africa experienced the worst drought since 1985, which affected more than 3.75 million people and led to extreme levels of malnutrition and death, as well as lost livelihoods. Research for this report found that parents, teachers and school committee members believed girls and boys faced different dangers in times of drought.

Respondents believed girls faced more risks and were more vulnerable than boys. Girls, especially older girls, who were left to take care of the family while their parents were away looking for money and food, were seen as being at risk of rape or being lured into having sex. Other dangers for girls included early pregnancy and being coerced into taking drugs.

For boys, the main issues were the risk of injury or even death as they searched for work, far away from home or while hunting. Boys could easily be lured into gangs that were involved in stealing, or get involved in alcohol and substance abuse. There was a general view, as one school committee member indicated, that: “Boys can take care of themselves when alone.” But this can also put boys at risk, since the expectation is that they can protect themselves; sexual violence against men and boys is taboo and therefore often goes unreported.

Sarah and Mary collecting water after 15 km walk, Kenya.

2 'Why are you kissing me?' – violence in the family

"When I was sleeping, I felt him kissing me. When I opened my eyes, I said: why are you kissing me? When I reported [it], nothing happened."

Michelle, 15, the Philippines²⁰

As in other situations, violence and abuse in disasters is not confined to strangers; it is equally or even more common in the home. A report on the psychosocial impact of war, HIV and other high-risk situations on girls and boys in West and Central Africa found that, on top of the other violence and distress suffered by children and young people in the study, there was a "shocking degree of violence" by family members. More than 90 per cent of girls reported that physical abuse and verbal violence – being insulted and humiliated, for example – were common and recurrent experiences at home.²¹

A report in Bangladesh found that children of both sexes and all ages reported that stress among the adult members of their family led to increased physical and sometimes sexual abuse and harassment of girls, in particular those aged 12 to 17. "Families usually stay together during times of disaster... and the children are kept an eye on. However, otherwise they stay at a neighbour's or relative's house or as a last resort in the limited shelter space. Both the older boys and girls informed that in some cases they are sexually and physically abused by their relatives."²² The children also said that those with disabilities faced the worst difficulties, not only in terms of abuse, but also because shelters were not properly equipped.

A majority of the women in a study in India, the Maldives, Puntland (Somalia), Sri Lanka and Thailand said they felt that the higher level of domestic violence was due to the pressure men were under during and after the disaster.²³ The loss of their roles as providers and helplessness and anger in the face of events outside their control may lead men to violence against those closest to them. Increases in intimate partner violence against women and girls during and after disasters are not confined to poor countries.

In Japan after the 2011 earthquake, the president of the women's organisation Soroptimist Japan, Mitsuko Takano, noted: "There are many issues that need to be addressed very carefully. In these shelters, there is no privacy and domestic violence is prevalent."²⁴ In New Zealand, one study found that domestic violence increased by 100 and even 200 per cent after a disaster: "Domestic violence reports filed by women after a disaster, both within New Zealand and overseas, show that the patterns of violence and/or abuse had changed from being verbal and emotional to physical, and that the violence had become more frequent. Immediately following the disaster event, the stress coupled with an increase in the frequency and/or the severity of violence can lead to an increase in the number of women seeking help."²⁵



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STARTING ON THE ROAD: WORKING WITH MEN AND BOYS AGAINST VIOLENCE AND FOR GENDER EQUALITY

As the 2011 'Because I am a Girl' report on boys and young men and gender equality showed clearly, preventing and ending violence against women also means working with men.²⁶ If this work is done prior to a disaster, it may help to prevent increased violence. There are global campaigns like the White Ribbon campaign of men against violence against women,²⁷ or MenCare, an international campaign to engage men as non-violent, caring fathers,²⁸ or Program H, which began in Brazil and now operates in more than 20 countries and supports young men aged 15 to 24 to help them engage and reflect on traditional norms of 'manhood'.²⁹

There are also national programmes such as the One Man Can Campaign, run by Sonke Gender Justice in South Africa, where levels of violence are one of the highest in the world. The campaign supports men and boys to take action to end domestic and sexual violence and to promote healthy, equitable relationships.³⁰ Then there is Ring the Bell

in India, where men who hear a woman being abused ring the doorbell or find another way to interrupt the violence,³¹ and ERPAT (which means 'father') in the Philippines, which aims to change social norms by engaging fathers in childcare and increasing their appreciation of women's roles and work. "Changing traditional beliefs which have been passed from one generation to another is an uphill climb because these cannot be changed overnight," said Godofredo Capara, a local ERPAT trainer and father of seven. "What is important is that we have started on that road and we have seen positive results. We are banking on that."³²

3 'It's not easy when you are hungry' – adolescent girls and sexual exploitation and abuse

"Many girls are now [since the economic crisis] engaged in prostitution, with the full knowledge of their parents, who remain silent because the money they bring home helps the household."

17-year-old girl, Mozambique³³

When disaster drives poor adolescent girls and their families further into poverty, often their only option is to sell the only asset they have left – their bodies. A study by Human Rights Watch in Haiti's camps after the earthquake found a number of women and girls who were selling sex because they had no alternative to feed themselves and their children.³⁴

"You have to eat," said Gheslaine, who lives in a camp in Croix-de-Bouquets, in Haiti. "People will try to survive the way they can. Women have relationships with men so they can feed their children. That happens a lot. My daughter is 12 and does not have friends in the camps, because it happens that even girls are pressured to have sex for things. I don't work. I don't have parents to help. Many times women get pregnant, and they don't have anyone to take care of them. So, for around a dollar, you have sex just for that. Unfortunately, women sometimes get pregnant, but if we had access to planning, we'd protect ourselves... It's not good to do

prostitution, but what can you do?"³⁵

Primary research for this report on the longer-term effects of Typhoon Ondoy in 2009 in the Philippines found adolescent girls struggling with similar problems. Anna, 13, said: ***"It's hard, others have nothing to eat, and they embrace being involved in bad acts just to have something to eat, you don't know what to do or who to talk to when that happens."***³⁶ There were similar findings in Zimbabwe in relation to recurrent food crises: a focus group of men in Malipati, Zimbabwe, agreed that once they dropped out from school, adolescent boys and girls tended to lure each other into activities such as prostitution, drug abuse and alcoholism, ruining their prospects. Their health was endangered by drug abuse and prostitution and they ran the risk of getting STIs and HIV.³⁷

In Bangladesh, the women's rights organisation Jagonari says there are around 300 women and girls in the sex trade in Barguna as a result of the floods: "Due to poverty, families are breaking up. Often there is no choice for the girls but to become sex workers."³⁸ In India after the tsunami, women told researchers that "girls from poor families had been pushed into the rising sex tourism industry in the coastal regions of India, and trafficking was found in Prakasam and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh."³⁹

This also applies to situations of conflict – a study of Acholi adolescent girls living in camps in northern Uganda found that the inability of families to meet the subsistence needs of their daughters was directly related to the decision of many girls to participate in 'survival sex', even exchanging sex for menstrual pads or biscuits.⁴⁰

One 13-year-old girl describes her experience: ***"The only alternative is for you to go to a boy/man, so that he can help you with money to cater for things like clothing, food and other necessities. If you spend a night with the army officer at the barracks, the next day you will change to another man, provided he gives you some money."***⁴¹

Research for this report in Burkina Faso found that, although selling sex is not something that is discussed, 25 per cent of parents and adolescents interviewed said they knew girls who had done this

in times of crisis. In Niger, 29 per cent of adolescents interviewed said they knew girls who had been forced to sell their bodies.⁴²

In the Dominican Republic, primary research for this report found that since the Haitian earthquake there had been an alarming rise in women involved in selling sex, including girls and adolescent girls who are sexually exploited in the streets and establishments in Jimaní, in the Dominican Republic.⁴³

According to members of the Child Protection Network: "After the earthquake, the mothers of these adolescents cannot support the family any more and they are forced to emigrate, but here [in the Dominican Republic] the situation is not good either. We have received reports that adult Haitians traffic these girls and tell them that they will take them to Santo Domingo... Once they cross the border they 'sell' them for 100 or 200 pesos [\$2.50 or \$5.00]."⁴⁴

In other places too, girls – and sometimes boys – are trafficked for sex. The South Asia Partnership in Barguna, Bangladesh, reported an increase in trafficking during times of floods, droughts and cyclones: "After Cyclones Sidr and Aila, there was a lot more trafficking due to economic problems... Indeed, most of the sex workers in Dhaka come from this part of Bangladesh."⁴⁵

Dhaka after the floods.



MARTIN ADLER/PANOS PICTURES

THE FILLES LIBRES PROJECT IN CAMEROON ⁴⁶



Hortense and her friend Pauline.

IFRC

Parts of Cameroon suffer regularly from drought that can sometimes be severe enough to drive people from the villages to seek a living in the city. Young women who find themselves homeless may resort to selling sex for a living. "Some of these women come from rural areas thinking that they will find a good job in the big city," explains Dr Viviane Nzeusseu, health coordinator for Central Africa at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. "In reality, their financial situation means that they often have no choice but to sell their bodies to help their families survive."

But it is dangerous work, as there are high levels of gender-based violence and because of their low status in society. The women and girls – known ironically as *Filles Libres* (Free Girls) – cannot even negotiate the use of condoms and so risk becoming infected with HIV. Cameroon's HIV rate is estimated at 5.3 per cent (6.4 per cent for women and 4.3 per cent for men).⁴⁷ This is lower than in many Southern African countries, but higher than many of its neighbours.⁴⁸

There is a fear of AIDS and lack of knowledge about HIV in Cameroon, despite a number of campaigns. This leads to hostility towards people living with HIV and means they are stigmatised and treated as outcasts. If they are sex workers as well their lives are doubly difficult.⁴⁹

Recognising the problem, the Cameroon Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation's Central Africa Sub-Regional Office, set up the *Filles Libres* project that provides psychosocial and medical support to about 2,000 sex workers via the Henry Dunant Health and Social Welfare Centre. The project is also supported by local associations of *filles libres*, whose members are supported to run talks, theatre shows and discuss the issue with other sex workers, putting them in the forefront of HIV prevention. The project also provides alternative training for those who want to move out of sex work, although this is not its prime aim.

Hortense, a former *fille libre* turned peer educator says: "We are virtually the only people able to talk to the young women who prostitute themselves in the 'secteur'. They know we endured the same hardships as them, that we are not judging them and that we want, above all, to help them protect their health."

Dominique, 22, who is also a *fille libre* says: "Hortense and her friends have led the same kind of life as us. But they've got the experience that we don't have. It's good to listen to their advice."⁵⁰

There is still a long way to go, but the project has already created a climate of hope which is progressively dispelling fears and eliminating discriminatory attitudes. In other towns where the project will be replicated, existing public and private medical centres will be identified to ensure medical and psychosocial support to *filles libres*. The greatest achievement of the project lies in its ownership by the *filles libres* themselves, as they are currently involved in all the activities of the project.



IFRC



Soldier in Uganda.

Food in the pot: sexual abuse by those in positions of authority

“At times, we fall into the snares of fake rescue workers and we have to go with unknown men. We don’t want to, but we have no choice as we must try and save our lives.”

Focus group of girls, aged 10 to 14, from Dhaka, Bangladesh⁵¹

Sometimes girls and young women are raped by those in positions of power in a disaster or conflict situation – these might be soldiers or peacekeepers or aid workers.⁵² In 1996 UNICEF’s study ‘The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children’ reported that: “In six out of 12 country studies, the arrival of peacekeeping troops has been associated with a rapid rise in child prostitution.”⁵³ A review eight years later found that this abuse continued.

A report by Save the Children found high levels of sexual exploitation and abuse by both aid workers and peacekeepers, though these are reported cases only and the actual levels are likely to have been much higher:⁵⁴

- In 2006, 37 new allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries (including adults and children) were reported against staff from a total of 41 agencies worldwide.
- In 2004 it was reported that in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) many girls and women traded sex for food and other items with peacekeepers as a survival tactic.
- In 2003 Italian, Danish and Slovak

peacekeepers were expelled from Eritrea in a spate of incidents for having sex with minors.

A 2010 study in displaced people’s camps in Haiti, Kenya and Thailand by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership found that most people “to a greater or lesser extent reported that they still feel at risk of exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers”.⁵⁵

Girls and young women were considered to be particularly vulnerable. “I remember a young girl [soon after the earthquake] because she lost her tent,” said a woman in Haiti. “I asked her why she didn’t get another one and she told me that the man from the organisation said she could have another tent if she had sex with him.”⁵⁶

A woman community leader in a camp in Kenya said: “Women put a pot of water on the stove to boil and then tell their daughters: ‘Go and use what you have to get something to put in this pot.’”⁵⁷

Specific measures to prevent exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers do make a difference if they are consistently implemented. “Previously, NGO staff would come to the camp, have relationships with female residents who would then get pregnant. The NGO staff did not take on their responsibilities and would just go on their way,” said a member of a camp committee in Thailand. Girls, boys and women had not been consulted on the measures being put in place to keep them safe, but had numerous ideas about what could be done.⁵⁸

STRATEGIES FOR GENDER JUSTICE

Women's Link Worldwide looks at access to justice – what recourse in law is available to an adolescent girl subjected to sexual violence in post-disaster Haiti?^{59,60}

On 12 January 2010 a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti. At least 200,000 people died as a result,⁶¹ and an additional 1.5 million people are estimated to have lost their homes and now live in one of 1,300 camps for IDPs.⁶²

In recent years, different national and international actors, including Women's Link Worldwide, have become aware that in times of humanitarian crisis, the destabilisation of social and family structures exacerbates gender-based power imbalances, making women and girls even more vulnerable to violations of their rights, but particularly their sexual and reproductive rights⁶³ and their right to live free from violence. This can be clearly seen in the high rates of rape and sexual violence in displaced persons camps during every sort of humanitarian crisis, as well as in the use of rape, sexual violence and other forms of sexual exploitation of women and girls as a means of spreading terror and controlling the enemy in armed conflicts.⁶⁴ Humanitarian response actions that fail to take into account gender-based imbalances risk intensifying this situation.⁶⁵

'I DON'T FEEL SAFE IN THE CAMP'

An 18-year-old girl recounts her story of sexual violence in an IDP camp in Haiti⁶⁶

"After the earthquake, we slept in the streets. I was in agony; there were dead bodies and people crying. Two days later, we went back to the house to get some clothes and then straight to a camp. Five days after that, I found my mother.

After six months in the camp, I was raped. A caseworker from the International Rescue Committee took me to the hospital, but it was too late – I was pregnant.

I never saw the rapist again. I left the camp to stay with my aunt and, once the baby was born, I moved in with my mother, who was staying in a tent. There's not enough security in the camp. I don't feel safe: the same thing could happen to me again. We need more security and lights at night, and those rapists should go to prison."

The right to be free from violence and the implications for sexual & reproductive rights (SRR) in the context of disasters⁶⁷

Within International human rights law (IHRL), girls and adolescents have the right to protection under a set of specific regulations intended to protect children and women.⁶⁸ Human rights protection regulations in general also apply to them.⁶⁹ These sets of rights are recognised in multiple international and regional treaties which in turn are supported by case law established by United Nations treaty bodies, the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court, and the European Court of Human Rights.

International human rights law defines SRR as those rights that allow for the regulation and autonomous and responsible control over all matters relating to sexuality and reproduction, without coercion, violence, illness, or suffering of any kind.⁷⁰ They include the right to decide autonomously how to experience one's own sexuality and reproduction, as well as the right to have access to all the healthcare services necessary in order to make such decisions in a safe and timely fashion.⁷¹ The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health issued a special report calling for the immediate removal of all impeding restrictions to abortion, full access to modern contraceptive methods and complete and accurate information on sexual and reproductive health.⁷²

CEDAW recommends that State parties should ensure that adequate protection and health services are provided for women, especially those in difficult circumstances, and international and national case law has developed the duty of States regarding the rights of girls in humanitarian crisis situations.⁷³ This case law states that ending impunity and ensuring access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services for victims of serious human rights violations constitutes a form of reparation of the harm inflicted, which in turn is crucial for the recovery of the victim.

The dire situation of Haiti and the pervasive harm done to girls and women resulted in action by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) who granted precautionary measures for the girls and women living in 22 camps for internally displaced persons.⁷⁴ The IACHR called on the State of Haiti to adopt four types of measures to protect the rights of women and girls subjected to sexual violence in the camps.

- 1 Providing security for women and girls at the camps and ensuring that the law enforcement agencies tasked with responding to incidents of sexual violence receive the necessary training to respond appropriately to reported cases of sexual violence and provide the necessary security to the camps, such as the lighting of bathroom facilities and latrines.
- 2 Providing women and girl survivors of sexual violence with comprehensive healthcare, including sexual and reproductive care, within parameters of privacy and in compliance with medical confidentiality requirements and culturally sensitive; providing personnel trained in assisting in cases of sexual violence, including the availability of female personnel, as well as the provision of sexual and reproductive healthcare services such as prophylactics for prevention of HIV/AIDS and STIs and emergency contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancies.
- 3 Ensuring the elimination of impunity in reported cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence by promoting the establishment of special investigative police units within the Office of the Attorney General.
- 4 Ensuring that grassroots women's groups fully participate and have a steering role in the planning and implementation of policies and practices aimed at combating and preventing

rape and other forms of sexual violence in the camps.⁷⁵

These measures should be universalised.

International human rights standards have also indicated a positive obligation on the part of States to provide women with access to abortions in safe conditions as well as information on sexual and reproductive health.⁷⁶

Although the intervention from the IACHR is understood as progress for Haitians seeking to address their rights through international courts, in reality the issue of accessing justice in order to obtain justice remains a challenging task in many parts of the world due to 'systemic' inadequacies of the domestic judicial system. This limits the extent to which a disaster victim could exercise the right to a remedy. In post-quake Haiti, troublingly, very few cases of sexual violence are reported, investigated and prosecuted. The reasons why Haitian women and adolescent girls do not report sex crimes are multiple and complex: many are not aware of their legal rights and do not have access to legal services and aid; judges and prosecutors, who are not trained in women's rights, tend to distrust and minimise cases involving sexual violence or regard them as domestic issues with no legal relevance. In addition, the existing laws are non-responsive to gender issues. For example, the crime of rape was only integrated into the Penal Code of Haiti in 2005 and gender rights and policies still require effective mainstreaming.⁷⁷

Haiti camp.



An adolescent girl's rights to redress

Girls and adolescents in the affected country are entitled to the protection of their human rights and this protection, in the vast majority of situations, should be provided and ensured by the State. In the particular case of Haiti the legal situation is slightly more complicated in that the United Nations has been, and arguably continues to be, operating some state functions. As such it may potentially be more difficult to hold the State itself accountable. That said, international law provides for and enables girls and adolescents to seek the protection of their rights from the State in question.

In order to ensure the protection of the rights accorded to them under international law, adolescent girls in Haiti could take the following steps, with a view to filing a case before any regional or international human rights body:

- 1 **Evidence gathering:** Girls and adolescents must start with their own testimonies of human rights violations. Their stories can support evidence from the extensive and detailed reports concerning the situation of adolescent girls in IDP camps drafted by organisations such as Amnesty, Madre and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Humanitarian workers and specialists in the problem of sexual violence in the context of humanitarian crisis can be called as first-hand or expert witnesses.
- 2 **Framing the information gathered in the context of the right to be free from violence to create an effective legal argument:**⁷⁸ outlining in detail the legal underpinnings of such an argument – which can be found in Section 3 of this report – combined with the facts and realities contained in the victims' testimonies and other reports referred to in Step 1.
- 3 **Framing the information gathered in the context of the sexual and reproductive rights consequences of sexual violence:**⁷⁹ outlining in detail the legal underpinnings of such an argument, found in Section 3 of this report, combined with the facts and realities contained in the victims' testimonies and other reports referred to in Step 1 to create an effective legal argument.
- 4 **Seeking reparations** which address the intersectional reality of issues affecting adolescent girls in Haiti. Reparations sought should have an intersectional approach, and understand the particular realities of adolescent girls. Reparations can include: **restitution** – the reunion of girls with their families;⁸⁰ **compensation** – providing the expenses of pregnancy resulting from rape;⁸¹

rehabilitation – medical and psychological support; **satisfaction** – the prosecution of reported rapes;⁸² and **guarantees of non-repetition** – the liberalisation of abortion laws.⁸³

- 5 **Exhaustion of domestic remedies:** generally in international law there is a requirement to exhaust domestic remedies. All legal arguments must be made within and before the State system, in order to provide the State with an opportunity to respond and address the situation, before engaging with a regional or international human rights system. There are a number of exceptions to this, one of which is that where the domestic remedies available would be ineffective there is no point and therefore no requirement to exhaust them. In the case of Haiti, it could be argued that there is a proven disregard and/or lack of interest in the rights of adolescent girls affected by sexual violence. Thus there may be a direct route for girls and adolescents to file their case against the State of Haiti before a regional or international human rights body.

Conclusion

The rights of girls and adolescents in humanitarian crisis situations require special analysis in order to comprehensively understand how their right to equality and freedom from discrimination is a central pillar of IHRL. To this end, we must consider the ways in which age, sex and status, among other aspects, interact to produce unique situations of discrimination that go beyond the simple sum of the discriminations faced by groups such as children, women or displaced persons.

Moreover, it is important to emphasise the value of understanding the violations of girls' rights to freedom from violence and their right to have their sexual and reproductive rights respected together. Drawing a distinction between sexual violence and sexual and reproductive rights sometimes leads to a false choice between addressing one of the two and the appropriation of resources, for instance, to the protection of the right to freedom from violence but not to sexual and reproductive rights – as if it were somehow possible for girls and adolescents to be subjected to rape without the risk of pregnancy or contracting an STI. A comprehensive analysis and treatment of all these rights together allows actions to protect and ensure girls' rights in humanitarian crisis situations to be truly responsive to their essential needs.

It is of key importance to lend greater visibility to the ways in which girls and adolescents are exploited in the context of disaster and conflict, not as collateral

Haiti camp.



WILLIAM DANIELS/PANOS PICTURES

damage or minor violations, but as systematic gender-based crimes which must be investigated and prosecuted as such. Failing to do so makes it impossible to eliminate impunity leading to the normalisation of this criminal conduct. Finally, it is worth highlighting at this point the issue of implementation. As noted above, the consistent ineffectiveness of the Haitian state (and the presence of other legal actors fulfilling some State functions) may affect its ability to be held effectively legally accountable. This same inability to fulfil its functions, including the protection of human rights, even where it is addressed and overcome through legal victory, may seriously affect the implementation of any successful decision. Thus, it may be opportune to form alliances with influential actors (such as donors, UN agencies and State representatives) in relation to the case in order to attempt to ensure that any successful outcome may generate positive effects in the lives of Haitian girls and adolescents.

**INTERVIEW WITH ADOLESCENT GIRL
DISPLACED TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AS
A RESULT OF THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE⁸⁴**

"I came to Jimaní for the first time in February 2010. I was 18 years old. A friend that helped me cross the border told me I had a place to stay here; otherwise my aunt would not have let me

cross the border. When we arrived we stopped in front of the hotel and he told me to pretend to be looking for a room... I spent a few days there but had no food or anything and was very hungry and thirsty. There was a Haitian girl who dressed nicely and left the hotel in the evenings and when she came back she gave me some food. One day I asked her why she went in and out of the hotel like that. She responded 'do you want to starve to death? You will have to make money somehow, I can't keep giving you my food'. I told her that if my family found out they would kill me and she left me alone. Fifteen days passed, and I couldn't bear it any longer, I was dying of hunger. A Dominican man came requesting my services and I said no. He left, came back again, and said he would give me RD\$500 and I accepted. I stayed in the room, men paid RD\$1,000 for the room and gave me RD\$200, RD\$300 and sometimes RD\$500. I spent a year like that. Then many girls arrived charging RD\$50 and the prices went down. One day I met a Haitian man who asked me, 'do you like this life?' I said no and he said he would rent me a room just to be with him. I agreed to leave with him. I became pregnant, had a son, and now we work in the market. I left school early and didn't learn anything. I would like to return to school someday. Now I go to church."

4 'Lots of girls here suffer' – why early marriage may increase in disasters

"Lots of girls here suffer. At the age of 13, they are married and taken out of school. They are made pregnant because the family have no money so they sell the girls for food and they have no money for dowries. Girls at 13 get fistulaⁱ and often die."

Zabium and Idie, 15, from Niger⁸⁵

"In Uganda, the food crises associated with climate change have been linked to higher rates of early marriage for girls, as they are exchanged for dowry or bride price."

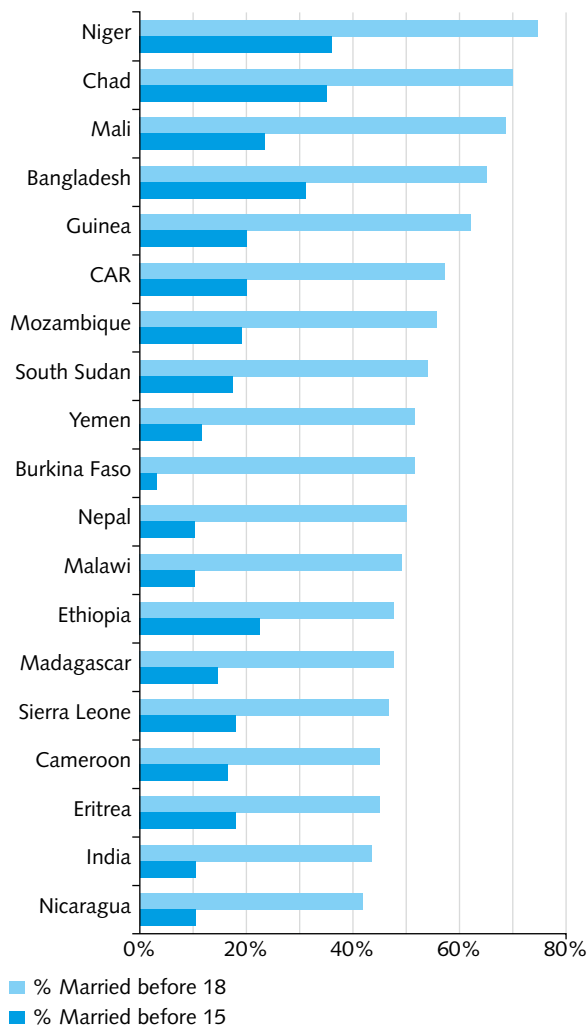
Thalif Deen, Inter Press Service⁸⁶

Child marriage – sometimes called early or forced marriage – is a problem from a human rights point of view, from an educational perspective – child brides usually drop out of school – and in terms of a girl's health. Despite the fact that international conventions, signed by many countries, proclaim that child marriage is a violation of human rights, it is still widespread.^{87,88} One report found that out of 16 countries, 11 recorded more than half the young women as being married before they were 18.⁸⁹ And some girls are married even younger than this – a 2012 report estimated that 1.5 million girls under the age of 15 are married each year.⁹⁰

Most of the 25 countries with the highest rates of child marriage are considered fragile states or at high risk of natural disaster, ranking highly on relevant global indexes (Failed States Index (FSI) and World Risk Index (WRI)).⁹¹

As has already been noted, there is evidence that disasters may lead to an increase in child marriage. A UNFPA report on child marriage observes that parents may marry off their young daughters as a last resort, to bring the family some income, or to offer the girl some sort of protection.⁹² A report by World Vision also notes: "Girls who live in countries facing humanitarian crises are most vulnerable [to early marriage], as existing social networks and protection mechanisms are disrupted, leaving them more exposed to abuse. In extreme cases, during violent conflict for example, informal community welfare networks can break down entirely, and support for the protection of children may be non-existent. Research in Somaliland, Bangladesh and Niger found that child marriage is often perceived by families as a protective measure and used as a

Age at first marriage (under 18 and under 15) in selected countries⁹³



community response to crisis."⁹⁴

In 2010, staff from Interact Worldwide and Plan International reported increases in child marriage amongst the communities they were working with in the aftermath of the floods in Pakistan.^{95,96} Following the 2004 tsunami, girls in Indonesia, India and Sri Lanka were forced into marriages with 'tsunami widowers' and in many instances did so to receive state subsidies for marrying and starting a family.⁹⁷

West Africa has the highest incidence of child marriage, with Mali, Chad and Niger recording rates in excess of 70 per cent.⁹⁸ The Tuareg people fleeing fighting in northern Mali still practise child marriage

ⁱ A rupture between the birth canal and bladder or rectum, caused by prolonged obstructed birth, resulting in incontinence. More common in young pregnant women whose bodies are not yet fully developed for birth.

in the camps in Burkina Faso.⁹⁹ Fatimata Nabias-Ouedraogo, Plan Burkina's Child Protection Advisor, believes that more than half the girls between the ages of 11 and 17 are already married or promised in marriage. But, she says, this is impossible even to talk about: "It is taboo to discuss child marriage. If we notice a young girl in the company of a man and we ask who this man is, they would say 'Oh, he's a friend'. We know that he might in fact be either the husband or fiancé who is looking over her."¹⁰⁰

Research for this report in Niger and Burkina Faso, where there have been chronic food shortages over a number of years, found that: "Early marriages generally, and those due to the food crises, were particularly criticised by the adolescent girls as being traditions which prevent progress... and prevent them going to school."¹⁰¹ The research, however, is not clear-cut: it also reveals evidence that in certain circumstances child marriage can decrease in disasters.

There is international recognition that child marriage is a widespread problem, but the link with disaster situations has not yet been recognised.¹⁰² Ending such practices requires a holistic approach that includes working with boys and men as well as girls and women.¹⁰³ There is an opportunity here for the humanitarian and development communities to recognise that child marriages can increase at such times, and that precisely because it is a disaster situation, they can take action and in so doing, make a difference to thousands of young girls' lives.



GIVING YOUR GOAT TO YOUR NEIGHBOUR: ADOLESCENT MARRIAGE IN THE FOOD CRISES IN THE SAHEL¹⁰⁴

The Sahel region has faced a series of major food crises. Research carried out for this report in Niger found two opposing trends in relation to child marriage in times of crisis...

Out of the 135 adolescent girls aged between 12 and 19 interviewed during focus group discussions, 64 per cent were already married and 39 per cent already had children. The average age of marriage was 14.

But the situation is complex: the food crises have opposite effects on child marriage in different communities. In Tillabéri and a part of Dosso, the crises seemed to reduce child marriage. In Maradi, they seem to have increased it. This may be related to ethnicity – the Haoussa and the Peuls, who live in Maradi, often marry girls very young, while it is less common for the Zarma, who live in Tillabéri and parts of Dosso, to do so.

In the Tillabéri region, a focus group with eight girls said that food crises slowed down child marriages. One girl said: *"In times of food crisis, you have nothing to eat; your parents have nothing to eat; and your neighbours have nothing to eat. If you give your daughter in marriage to another member of the community who is in the same position as you, you risk losing out, because the man to whom you gave your girl is as poor as you. He will marry your daughter but what is sure is that she will return to your house to look for food. It is as if you had sold your goat to your neighbour because you do not have anything to feed it and it keeps returning every day to your house to eat."*

Another girl added: *"Even if you want to get rid of your daughters by giving them in marriage, you will not find any boys who would accept them because they have serious problems of their own. A food crisis is about eating and the man is supposed to feed his wife; if he is not able to do it, it is a shame for him."*

The research found that the food crises delayed the age of marriage for young men because they could not afford a wife.

On the other hand, in Maradi and parts of Dosso the food crises seemed to increase the numbers of girls marrying young. One of the participants in a focus group discussion said: *“If you have a big family with a lot of girls and you do not have anything to eat and feed your children and a rich man comes and says to you that he likes one of your daughters, what are you supposed to do? Do you say ‘no’ to him and watch your children die or do you accept and he goes with your daughter and takes care of her and in addition he gives you a lot of money?”*

Another girl said: *“Parents will not say that they gave their girls in marriage because of hunger, but everyone knows that this is the main reason and the girls do not complain because they will be fed by their husbands. These things happen here often but we accept it because we do not have the choice.”*

Parents in the communities of Maradi also say that the lack of means is one of the factors that compel parents to marry their daughters young. In contrast with boys, who can emigrate to look for work abroad and send money to their families, girls are a burden because even if they help with the domestic chores, they need to be fed in times of famine. One of the parents to Kaiwa, in the department of Tessaoua, summarises it in the following terms: “If you refuse to give your daughter for marriage while she is still young and beautiful, when the famine arrives, she will be ready to do anything to find food

to eat. If you do not have anything to feed her, she risks bringing shame to the family. As the head of the family, you have the responsibility to preserve your offspring and the honour of your children; in this case, if you see a man who has the means to take care of your daughter, it is better to give her to him and to be sure that she will live as a good Muslim.”

ONLINE SURVEY FINDINGS: CHILD MARRIAGE¹⁰⁵

In our online survey of humanitarian workers, we asked respondents to indicate which of a number of actions had been implemented in recent emergencies to address the risk of child marriages in the aftermath of disasters – these included: gathering evidence, monitoring increased incidence of child marriage, initiating strategies to prevent it, and consultation with adolescent girls.

Out of a total of 208 responses, 41 per cent indicated that some strategies to address child marriage had been part of the emergency response, while 38 per cent indicated that it had not been considered. In the additional comments section many respondents said they were ‘not sure’ how to respond. This highlights a lack of general awareness around how to tackle the issue. Also, as child marriage is not currently in IASC gender-based violence guidelines,¹⁰⁶ there is lack of clarity around whose responsibility it is as it tends to fall between the Child Protection and GBV clusters.



On the way to market in Niger.



5 Keeping quiet – why girls don't speak out against abuse

"The reason why most girls are not confident to report is that the message will go straight to the community that she is not a girl any more, that she is spoiled, and no one will want to marry her and no one will look after her. So she just keeps quiet."

Young girl in South Sudan¹⁰⁷

"Girls cannot go out that much during the floods, because bad men try to touch them intentionally. Then girls come home and cry, but cannot complain to anybody."

Bangladeshi girl from an urban slum in Gazipur District taking part in a focus group discussion for 12 to 17-year-olds¹⁰⁸

In many societies, especially those where women and girls have little status and less power, sexual abuse and violence is a taboo subject. Rape brings shame on the girl, and even in richer countries, judges and the judicial system may blame the victim rather than the rapist. In some countries, this means that the survivor does not dare seek help and is afraid of being thrown out of her family because she is seen to have brought shame on her family and violated its honour.

In Pakistan, a former teacher from the Punjab told of a mother who found her daughter sobbing and discovered that she had been raped but did not dare to tell anyone.¹⁰⁹ "After disasters, children, especially adolescent girls, are the most vulnerable as they are most susceptible to sexual abuse and harassment," says the

South Asia Partnership (SAP), Barguna, Bangladesh.¹¹⁰

In Tamil Nadu, India, after the tsunami, many young women like this one did not dare report what had happened to her for fear of being socially outcast: *"I am 17 years old. In the relief camp when I was sleeping in the night I was raped. I did not know what had happened to me. I do not know the face of the man. I had heavy bleeding. I did not share this with anyone. Now I see some disturbances in my body and when my mother took me to hospital I was told I am pregnant."*¹¹¹

And in Somalia, this mother said: "My young daughter was raped by a man with a military uniform two weeks ago while she was coming back from school. With the assistance of my neighbours, I took her to the hospital. She sustained very serious injury to her genitals. I was not able to buy the drugs prescribed by the doctors because the medical bill was too high. Everyone advised me not to go to the police because I will not get any help – they will just waste my time. Thank God she is doing well healthwise but she keeps having nightmares."¹¹²

In Haiti, Human Rights Watch found that many women and girls did not ask for help following a rape after the earthquake because they were ashamed to report what had happened. Mary, 15, waited eight days before telling an adolescent cousin about being raped, and then only told her because she knew the cousin had been through the same experience: *"After eight days, I talked to my cousin about it because she had also been raped after the earthquake. She advised me to go to GHEKIO [the acronym for the Haitian Group for the Study of Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infection] Center. I had an infection. Before I talked to her about my rape, I was really shy but I told myself that she was raped so I can talk to her about my situation."*¹¹³

Others do not know where to go: "I would want to report an incident, but I don't know how to do this," said one young woman in Thailand.

This girl from Kenya said: *"People don't use the complaints boxes. If someone sees you putting a letter in there they will make you feel ashamed, will make fun of you and make up songs to sing about you."*¹¹⁴

Médecins
Sans
Frontières
billboard in
Liberia.

During emergencies, protection mechanisms are often weakened, which makes it more difficult for girls and boys affected by violence to access the necessary preventive, responsive and remedial services. It is the responsibility of protection service providers to foster an environment where survivors of violence are identified and referred to appropriate services. Formal and informal reporting and referral mechanisms need to be strengthened, awareness raised and attitudes changed.

Sometimes, because of the efforts to deal with violence on a large scale, the referral and reporting mechanisms actually become stronger after a disaster. There is then an opportunity to make a lasting difference to the culture of reporting and referral, and to make sure that it is girl-friendly. For example, following the conflict in Timor Leste in 2006, Plan worked with other agencies and the government to set up child protection referral mechanisms through the establishment of a focal point system in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. Later, this system was expanded by the government, with support from Plan, to areas outside camps as well.¹¹⁵

The ability and the mechanisms to report abuse and violence; the certainty that they will be believed; and the knowledge that perpetrators will be brought to justice, would all help girls, not just in disaster situations, to be able to speak out when they are raped or abused.

6 A small window of opportunity: keeping adolescent girls safe in disasters

"Programme interventions targeted at adolescent girls in emergencies can keep them safe – and in school – whilst also using the small window of opportunity presented by emergencies to encourage community discussion around the rights and potential of adolescent girls."

Katie Tong, Plan International specialist on adolescent girls in emergencies¹¹⁶

"We think we know what to do about reporting problems, but today justice is just for rich people because usually if the poor ones are reporting, no attention was given, there's no solution unless you have money."

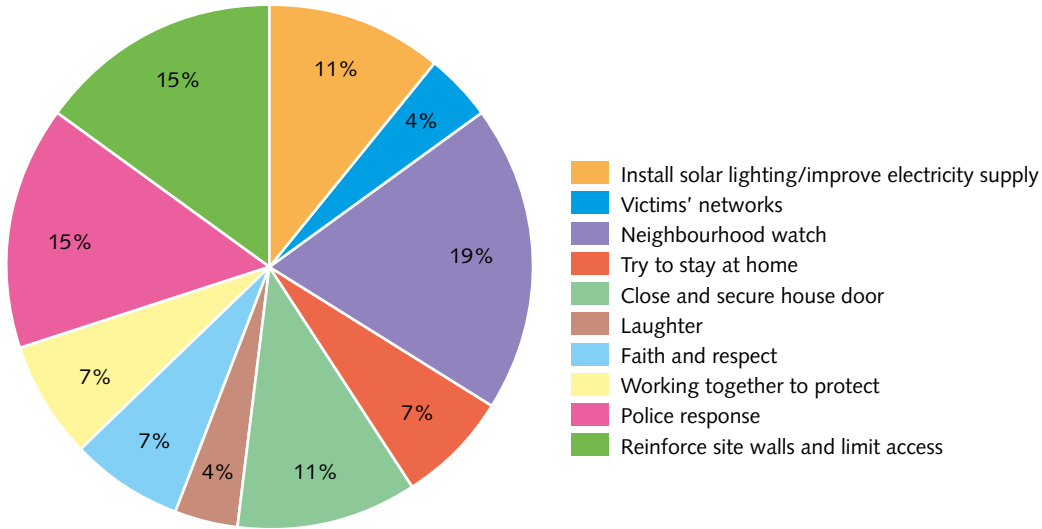
Christine, 14, the Philippines¹¹⁷

Many of the ideas for keeping girls safe during and after a disaster are not complicated. They also serve to keep the whole community safe. Interventions in emergencies are more likely to succeed if they are part of longer-term initiatives that were under way before the disaster, and do not end once the disaster is 'over'. Often, humanitarian responses are made at speed, and are not connected to longer-term work, creating a host of problems and missing many opportunities for positive change.



Nearly 300,000 people were forced to evacuate from villages near the Mount Merapi volcano in Indonesia.

Community solutions for improving security (all groups) in La Piste



Simply being aware of the possibility of sexual abuse and violence, including abuse and violence perpetrated by those in the family and the community as well as those working in the humanitarian response sector, can help to protect girls both in emergencies and in ordinary life. This requires more training, and the establishment of mechanisms to monitor whether key humanitarian response interventions are gender and age aware.

As we have seen, these include ensuring that in camps, toilets have separate spaces for women and men, are not too far away and are well lit at night; providing adequate shelters by family unit, making sure that there is space for adults and children to sleep separately, making communal sleeping spaces sex segregated; or ensuring that water points are located close by and in safe places. It also means that existing protection mechanisms need to be activated – for example, prevention and response services, and child-specific gender-based violence mechanisms.

Keeping adolescent girls safe in such situations is not something that is up to girls themselves. It is the responsibility of service providers, but also of the entire community. For example, boys can play an important role in the protection of girls and women, provided that they are informed and know about abuses and how to report them. Boys

and men, armed with the right information and committed to addressing gender-based violence, might be more likely to speak up for girls in their families and communities.¹¹⁸

It is also the responsibility of the humanitarian community. Ignorance is no longer an excuse; we know how and why adolescent girls are at risk, and what can be done about it. Girls themselves can only adopt a range of strategies that may help to protect them, such as travelling in groups, but many of the other options they have to survive are detrimental to their wellbeing.¹¹⁹

Research in two urban camps in Haiti found that all sections of the community, though they feared violence themselves, agreed that young women were the most vulnerable and that sexual violence was the most problematic.¹²⁰ They came up with a range of solutions to the problem of violence, as shown in the pie chart above. In La Mairie, another site, the community also included 'parental guidance activities'; 'community issues and meetings'; and 'do not leave the site alone'.¹²¹

Knowing who to contact in case of need is also important, so services like the freephone set up by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in Haiti (box page 82) can be life-saving for a girl who feels she cannot talk to her family – provided she has access to a phone.

SOLIDARITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY: THE 572 EMERGENCY RESPONSE HOTLINE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN HAITI

In 2010, New York-based non-profit Digital Democracy (Dd) began a collaboration with Haitian women's group KOFAVIV (The Commission of Women Victims for Victims) to design technology tools to address gender-based violence (GBV) in Haiti. Working together, the two organisations launched an information management system and an emergency response hotline for survivors of GBV.

Despite the influx of NGOs and multilateral organisations after the earthquake, many efforts to address GBV were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, from failing to adapt to local language needs to a lack of understanding of the local environment. Humanitarian coordination meetings were held exclusively in English and French in the first months after the disaster, excluding community-based actors and grassroots groups who spoke only Haitian Creole. In some camps, international organisations established Sexual Violence Clinics for rape survivors, many of which sat unused for months. Grassroots community actors explained that not only were many women and girls ashamed of their local community knowing what had happened to them, but that being seen entering a rape response clinic could pose a serious security threat if a woman's aggressor still lived in the community.

In the year following the earthquake, Digital

Democracy and KOFAVIV began partnering to develop technology systems that would streamline existing and effective community-based efforts to provide medical, legal and psychosocial services to survivors of violence.

Recognising the urgent need for a centralised system to report instances of gender-based violence and connect survivors to necessary care, the two organisations partnered with mobile-service providers *Digicel* and *Voilà* to launch the first GBV Emergency Response Hotline in the country. Active 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the hotline's call centre is staffed by women agents of KOFAVIV and is free to all mobile subscribers by dialling the shortcode 572. Through the call centre, women and girls are provided with information on what to do after an incident of violence and access to direct services through KOFAVIV and other providers. The call centre has fielded over 10,000 calls to date and has connected hundreds of GBV survivors to free services.

As the popularity of the 572 number has grown, KOFAVIV has expanded beyond its original focus on post-rape care to serve as a popular information centre – especially for Haitian girls. “We receive a lot of calls from girls seeking advice, sometimes for how to navigate a relationship their parents don't approve of, sometimes for working through an argument or fight they've had with a boyfriend. You can hear in their voices that they feel better just having someone to talk with about these issues. I feel proud to be there for women and girls in need and provide information that can help them make better decisions,” said Wismide, a 572 Call Centre Operator.

As they continue to strengthen referral networks for survivors of violence through the call centre, KOFAVIV operators receive cases referred by the UN Police, Haitian National Police, the Women's Ministry, and other local and international organisations. The project has also allowed KOFAVIV to capture a wide set of data on gender-based violence in Haiti that is shared on an ongoing basis with national and international authorities and advocates to inform measures for increased protection of women and girls in Haiti.



EMILIE REISER/DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

By Emilie Reiser & Garance Choko,
Digital Democracy, March 2013.

Feeding centre in Burkina Faso.



P.L.A.N

In order to keep adolescent girls safe, and to ensure that they have a part to play in preventing and mitigating disasters, it is important that relevant laws and guidelines around protection are adhered to and implemented in times of disaster, and that they also include specific provision for adolescent girls rather than grouping them under 'women' or 'children'.

And it is not enough just to have laws in place; they need to be implemented and justice enforced. As a statement produced by the Bangladeshi NGO Odhikar for International Women's Day points out: "There are laws to protect women from various forms of violence, including the Acid Crime Control Act 2002, Dowry Prohibition Act 1980, and The Prevention of Oppression against Women and Children Act 2000. However, these Acts are of little use due to lack of proper implementation. Violence against women in Bangladesh is deeply embedded in the patriarchal mindset which leads to social injustices. A weak judiciary also contributes to the lack of protection of women and many accused persons cannot be brought to justice due to their influential power. This 'power' can be monetary or political or both. Sometimes due to corruption of police or by not preserving evidence properly, women simply do not get justice."¹²²

This is why, in emergencies, international and national NGOs, peacekeeping forces and others need to demonstrate that they have

the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse built into their codes of conduct and policies. Staff need to be aware of protection issues, and organisations need reporting mechanisms and investigating procedures. Donors could monitor this to ensure accountability and see that justice is done.¹²³

And finally, the humanitarian community needs to work with, and consult, adolescent girls and their families as well as communities and those in authority, whether they are parents, teachers, local officials and councillors, aid workers, peacekeepers or national government. Only then will adolescent girls' need for protection in disaster situations be met.

A 'SAFE HAVEN' FOR THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN A CAMP¹²⁴

A study in Tanzanian camps in 1995 by the Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children found that women from Rwanda and Burundi were being sexually assaulted when collecting wood and water. Attacks were often committed by government soldiers or security forces who were not well supervised and did not receive clear directives from superiors regarding their duties. Alcohol abuse and personal gain from robbery was often involved. Very young women were often the target of attacks given the perpetrators' desire to avoid getting HIV. In 1999, the Women's Commission

evaluated the programmes and found a number of positive initiatives, including:

- UNHCR staff in the Mukgwa camp in Tanzania cut the grass on a route which women frequently travelled, provided women with torches, educated them to walk in groups, and assisted communities in setting up 'neighbourhood watches'. The organisation also developed a campaign to inform women about ways they could protect themselves, resulting in an improved security situation. Precautions were also taken to ensure that latrines were placed in safer areas. There was an effort to bring community-based service workers and protection officers together to discuss protection strategies, emphasising the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women and Girls.
- 'Drop-in Centres' had been created as part of the IRC's Sexual and GBV Programme in four area camps at health facilities which raised awareness about protection as a human rights issue and about how to report violence; built strong community participation and empowered women within the

community in a culturally sensitive way; developed support within the male population for the programme; convinced more women to take legal action; was universally regarded as helpful by survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and their families; encouraged the development of complementary programmes; and increased the awareness of Tanzanian authorities about sexual and gender-based violence.

- In Kenya, UNIFEM's (now UN Women) African Women in Crisis NGO developed a training module for Kenyan military units in an effort to stem abuses, and encouraged the placement of a police post near the camps. UNHCR also established a programme to plant 'live' fences to discourage incursions into the camp area, and involved the women in developing responses. The number of reported rapes dropped by nearly 50 per cent as a result of these programmes, although it is unclear how many rapes went unreported. Young girls continued to be the primary rape victims, however, and impunity for perpetrators continued to undermine protection.



JASPREET KINDRA/IRIN

PRIMARY RESEARCH FROM BURKINA FASO AND NIGER

Key findings

Since the early 1980s, the Sahel region has been faced with severe recurrent food crises that compromise the survival of its most vulnerable inhabitants, who live predominantly in rural areas. Several studies have been conducted to document the impact of the food crises, but these have focused mainly on children under five. The specific impact that these food crises have on adolescent girls and boys has not been fully investigated. The overall aim of this study, therefore, was to carry out research that would explore the effects of food crises on adolescent girls and boysⁱ, and thus help to strengthen protection and coping mechanisms.

Objectives

This study was carried out by Yssa Oumar Basse and Natalie Lucas, from Groupe Stratégies et Leadership.

The research had two main objectives:

- 1 To explore the effects of food crises on adolescent girls' and boys' right to protection and participation, and in particular their exposure to sexual exploitation and abuse and child marriage.
- 2 To investigate the factors making adolescent girls and boys particularly vulnerable or resilient to these threats, and to explore the possibility for leadership opportunities.

Methodology

The study consisted of a literature review and field data collection conducted in Niger and Burkina Faso between October and December 2012.

In each country, the team selected three administrative regions affected by recurring food crises.ⁱⁱ Data collection, both qualitative and quantitative, was carried out with the assistance of local researchers in nine communities per region, visiting a total of 27 communities, most of which were located in rural areas.

Methods included 990 structured questionnaires; 239 to adolescent girls, 250 to adolescent boys, 251 to mothers or female heads of household and 250 to fathers or male heads of household. There

were three focus group discussions in each region, case studies with adolescent girls and boys, and a wide range of in-depth individual interviews. These involved local community leaders and government representatives, mayors, teachers, social workers, healthcare professionals and NGO representatives.

The findings of the research are categorised under survival, health, protection, education, participation and resilience.

SURVIVAL

Changing roles

The food crises – and subsequent mental, financial and physical strain – often changed the roles that adolescents played within the family. Teenagers were increasingly relied upon to engage in paid work to increase the family income. Parents had changed their expectations of their children, who have been forced to abandon both childhood and leisure time, assuming adult roles and responsibilities before they are ready to do so. Despite this, most adolescents accepted their new roles as a necessity, even if they were aware of the implications for their own futures.

Child work

In both Burkina Faso and Niger, there was an increase in paid labour due to the food crises. In Burkina Faso, 81 per cent of adolescent boys and 58 per cent of girls said they were regularly obliged to undertake paid work for their families, compared with 75 per cent of boys and 42 per cent of girls before the food crises. Both girls and boys said they went to work in the goldmines, but while boys tended to migrate to mines further away, girls went to sites closer to their communities.

In Niger, 60 per cent of adolescents (89.07 per cent of boys and 30.93 per cent of girls) reported that they were regularly obliged to undertake paid work due to the food crises, compared with 31 per cent (39.6 per cent of boys and 22.4 per cent of girls) who had worked before the food crisis. Adolescent boys were most likely to engage in paid employment at times of crisis, leaving to find work in larger towns or abroad, while adolescent girls remained in their communities to undertake unpaid domestic duties of housework and childcare and collecting wild plants for food.

ⁱ Adolescent girls and boys aged from 13 to 18.

ⁱⁱ The three regions selected in Niger were Tillabéri, Dosso and Maradi; in Burkina Faso the three regions of Kouritenga, Namentenga and Sanmatenga were selected

HEALTH

Access to healthcare

Adolescent boys and girls in both countries said they found it difficult to access healthcare, girls having more difficulty than boys. In Burkina Faso only 64 per cent of girls reported having access to a healthcare centre compared with 81 per cent of boys. But it seems that access to healthcare was not especially affected by the food crises. Among those adolescents who did not currently have access to a health centre only 19 per cent reported that they had access before the crisis.

The study found that despite the stress they were suffering, there were no structures that offered psychological support to adolescents.

PROTECTION

Social protection

In Niger, communities and families were traditionally organised in ways that enabled solidarity and the sharing of the resources so that those who were less fortunate could still find assistance in times of need. Children were raised by the entire community. This form of traditional social protection had weakened in times of crisis, leaving both children and adolescents more vulnerable.

Asked where they turn to in times of trouble, 62 per cent of adolescents surveyed in Niger said their 'family'; 15 per cent said 'no one'; 11 per cent said the 'village chief'; 4 per cent said the 'police', 3 per cent said 'God'; and 5 per cent said 'others'.

Early marriage

In both countries, early marriage is common.ⁱⁱⁱ The impact of food crises on child marriage seemed to differ according to particular areas of study. In certain regions, crises were found to exacerbate the practice, while in others they were found to delay it, or at any rate the traditional ceremonies that officially confirm marriage.

These variations could be attributed to cultural differences in the areas of study. The main reasons given for a decrease in early marriage in some areas related to the unwillingness of men to take on new responsibilities because of their lack of financial means. In other areas, however, parents gave their girl child in marriage in order for her to have a better life; to reduce the number of children that they must feed; and to obtain a dowry from their new in-laws.

Prostitution and transactional sex

Some adolescents engage in transactional sex in Burkina Faso. Of the adolescent girls and boys

interviewed, 7 per cent of boys and 25 per cent of girls admitted having received money or gifts for sexual relations. It should be noted that this is a highly sensitive topic and the incidence could be much higher than the research suggests. Almost half – 48 per cent of boys and 46 per cent of girls – noted that they had started such relationships during the recent food crisis, indicating an increase in the use by adolescents of transactional sex as a disaster survival mechanism. In Niger nearly all adolescents denied having engaged in transactional sex because of food crises.

Prostitution was found to be a hidden practice in Burkina Faso; although almost a quarter of parents and adolescents interviewed admitted knowing of girls in their communities who were forced to engage in prostitution at times of crisis. In Niger, while in public interviews participants denied the existence of prostitution in their communities, during in-depth confidential interviews 29 per cent of adolescents confirmed knowing girls in their communities who had engaged in prostitution at times of crises. In both countries, it was found to be more unusual for adolescent boys to resort to prostitution at such times.

EDUCATION

School dropout

Apart from hunger, the major concern of the majority of adolescents in both countries was that the food crises deprived them of an education. In Burkina Faso, this had differing impacts on adolescent girls and boys. Boys' school attendance dropped from 73 per cent before the crisis to 53 per cent after; girls' attendance fell from 61 per cent to 52 per cent. In Niger, only 35 per cent of boys and 27 per cent of girls were in school before the food crises; this dropped to 22 per cent and 19 per cent respectively.

There was also a decline in school performance due to the food crisis. In Burkina Faso, just 19 per cent of boys and 33 per cent of girls interviewed reported that their school performance was currently 'very good' or 'good', compared with 40 per cent of boys and 52 per cent of girls before the food crisis. This decline in performance was largely attributed to hunger – both boys and girls said they were unable to concentrate or fully understand their classes due to not having sufficient food. The study revealed that in Burkina Faso, in times of crises families would feed younger children before older children or adolescents.

ⁱⁱⁱ In Niger, of 135 adolescent girls aged between 12 and 19 years interviewed in focus groups for this study, 64% were already married and 39% already had children.

PARTICIPATION AND RESILIENCE

Faced with increased demands to support their families financially, the violation of their rights, and the obligation to endure the suffering imposed by migration and strenuous physical work, the adolescents in the study showed considerable resilience in continuing to adapt to adverse circumstances. But despite this, most said they were not involved in community decision-making processes. In Burkina Faso, just 13 per cent of adolescent girls and 36 per cent of boys felt that they were involved in decisions that affected them. While some adolescent boys were given more respect and included in the organising of public events because of the roles they took on in disasters, adolescent girls continued to be marginalised.

The lack of involvement of adolescents in community decision-making and in decisions that affect them points to a lack of leadership opportunities. There were also very few youth organisations to support adolescents during these

difficult times. None of the support structures encountered in the course of either the Burkina Faso or the Niger study had developed a programme of assistance targeted at supporting adolescents in times of food crisis.

Conclusion

The current generation of adolescent girls and boys who are helping to support their families financially spend too much of their teenage years coping with community and family problems brought about by a series of food crises. At the same time they are deprived of the resources they need to help them to do this because they have had to drop out of school. The result is the creation of a vicious circle of poverty which can only be broken by ensuring that adolescents stay in school rather than being forced to migrate for paid work or being married at an early age. Measures to change this involve challenging the status quo and no longer relying on short-term solutions to problems which are in danger of becoming structural and permanent.



PLAN/PETTERIK WIGGERS



Building a new life: adolescent girls' education and learning in disasters

4

Summary

This chapter takes it as a given that education for girls is vital for their own development and that of their communities. It shows how, despite the increasing numbers of adolescent girls who are going to school, these gains can be swiftly reversed in a disaster.¹ It looks in detail at the immediate and the long-term effects of disasters on adolescent girls' education, and the consequences of being forced to drop out of school and seek work to help their families survive. It also argues for the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the school curriculum, for quality secondary education, and flexible non-formal learning and vocational training. And finally, it looks at how disasters can open up a window of opportunity for adolescent girls' education and learning that can change their lives forever.

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 28

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available to every child.

- In Pakistan, after the 2010 floods, 24 per cent of girls and 6 per cent of boys in Grade Six dropped out of school.²
- In Zimbabwe, primary research for this report found that two in three heads of household said boys would be more likely to attend school than girls after a disaster.³

1 'Send your girls to school' – the importance of education for adolescent girls in disasters

"My message to the women in Congo, in the Sahel, everywhere is: send your girls to school. This is the best you can do for their future."

Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response⁴

"A generation without education is doomed. We need to be heard and to participate, we need a future. We have a right to education and we want to go to school."

Betty, 17, displaced young woman, northern Uganda⁵

Much has been made of the empowering nature of education for girls. It gives them the ability to become active citizens and the possibility of more choice in their lives.



PLAN

It means that as adults they are more likely to earn a living that can help lift their families out of poverty. It also makes it more likely that their children will survive childhood and be better educated themselves. It is the reason why 15-year-old schoolgirl Malala Yousufzai, from Pakistan, was prepared to risk her life so that girls could be educated.⁶

Thankfully, in many countries, increasing numbers of girls are now going to school. However, during an emergency, education is often disrupted, sometimes permanently. And yet it is at such times that education is particularly important. "Education brings stability, normality and routine into a child's life, which is absolutely essential, especially when they are displaced," said Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.⁷

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) notes three ways in which education can benefit adolescent girls in disasters:⁸

- 1 It can provide physical protection. When a girl is in a safe learning environment, she is less likely to be sexually or economically exploited or exposed to other risks, such as child marriage.
- 2 It can offer a psychosocial safe space that helps girls make sense of what is happening around them. It can provide a sense of routine and longer-term benefits for the promotion of the right and responsibilities of children.
- 3 It can be the vehicle for the communication of life-saving messages: schools may act as hubs for

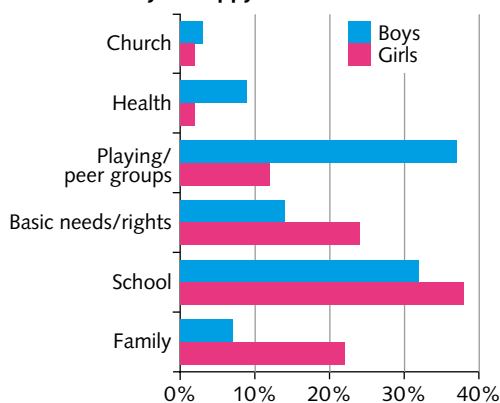
communicating messages on hand-washing, reducing the risk of disease, how to avoid HIV infection and how to access healthcare and food in an emergency. In this way, adolescent girls can learn how to play a positive role in disaster risk reduction as potential agents of change.

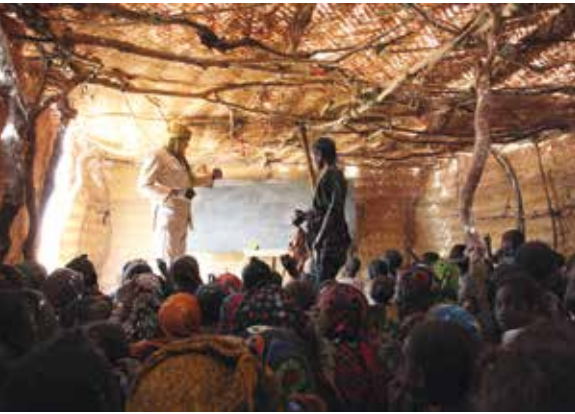
Fourteen-year-old Amy from the Philippines agreed. She was talking about the effects of Typhoon Ondoy: *"We need help going to school quickly so that we can be busy and be normal again. Before I went back to school I was sad all the time; I had time to think about the destruction and deaths. When I went back to school I was able to work towards catching up. This was hard, but it gave me determination."*⁹

A study in West and Central Africa¹⁰ on the impact of war, HIV and other high-risk situations found that in answer to the question, "What makes you happy?" the most commonly cited answer from all the children was "participation in school". This was the case for both boys and girls, with girls in fact arguing the case more strongly than the boys. The authors said: "It appears that the simple fact of being registered for school, having one's fees paid, receiving textbooks and doing well in exams, is a source of wellbeing for children."

A recent report by the World Bank asserted that there is a direct link between the numbers of educated girls and women and the effectiveness of measures to reduce losses in disasters caused by climate change.¹¹ "Countries that have focused on female education have suffered far fewer losses from

What makes you happy?





PLAN

Refugee children at temporary school in Niger.

droughts and floods than countries with lower levels of girls' education," says the report. It goes on to calculate the cost and makes the link between development and humanitarian provision, arguing that: "Educating young women may be one of the best climate-change disaster prevention investments, in addition to high social rates of return in overall sustainable development goals."

Education as a right is enshrined in international commitments and national legislation all over the world. And yet, as the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) points out: "Until recently... education was seen as part of longer-term development work rather than as a necessary response to emergencies. However, education's life-sustaining and life-saving role has been recognised and the inclusion of education within humanitarian response is now considered critical."¹²

EDUCATION AND EMERGENCIES AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Lori Heninger, director of Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) reviews provision of education in emergencies for adolescent girls.

Prior to 2000, the provision of education in emergency situations was extremely limited; humanitarian intervention focused on shelter, food, water, sanitation and health. These were, and to a large extent still are, considered the 'life-saving' interventions during emergencies. Child protection and education were not considered life-saving, and were not prioritised in emergencies. This was

despite the fact that education is one of the first things requested by affected communities, and an estimated half of primary school-aged out-of-school children were in crisis situations.

That same year, during the Education For All Conference, a small group of people came together to create the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies to work for children's right to education in emergencies. In 2004, the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crisis and Early Reconstruction were launched. The revised Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery provides a common language and platform to support education in crisis situations, and gender is mainstreamed through the document. In 2006-07, the IASC Education Cluster was created, institutionalising education in humanitarian response alongside water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food, shelter, and camp management. Education Clusters are now operational in over 40 countries. These initiatives have helped to increase the visibility of, and access to, education in emergencies. However, funding still lags significantly and most education initiatives are focused on primary-aged children. This leaves adolescent girls with little access to age-appropriate education. INEE's Pocket Guide to Gender in Emergencies can help in the design and implementation of education programmes for this group.

Building a new house in Uganda.



MONICA ARACH/IRIN

Despite these commitments, financing for education in emergencies remains low – although the percentage of humanitarian aid destined for education nearly doubled between 2006 and 2008, it is still only two per cent of total humanitarian assistance.¹³ Ensuring that education becomes a key factor in the humanitarian response to disasters and emergencies, not just on paper, but in reality, is becoming a matter of urgency as we approach the end of the Millennium Development Goals in the hope that the goals of education for all and gender parity in education may be achieved. Permanent school dropout for adolescent girls due to disasters must not be one of the factors that prevents these goals being achieved.

'EDUCATION BRINGS LIGHT' – TWO GENERATIONS ON TWO CONTINENTS SPEAK OUT FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

The following stories from two generations of women in Chad and Pakistan illustrate the importance of girls' education in emergencies.

Madiya Ahmat Abakar is 19 and from Sudan. She has lived in a refugee camp in Chad since she was nine. Apa Khursheed is a grandmother and lives in a village in Pakistan and is still rebuilding her home after the 2010 floods in Pakistan. Both are clear that their own education even during times of conflict and disaster has changed their lives and will do the same for future generations.

Madiya attended a school in the camp. She is now teaching while she continues her secondary education. She says: *"If you are not educated it is a hard life. You cannot find work, and you are forced to leave your family and move away. Now I have education and a job, I can help my whole family. I can support them in their problems and provide for them. Without an education everything is dark and life is difficult; education brings light and you can see a positive change. Now I have learnt new skills I want to travel and see and work in different countries."*¹⁴

Apa Kursheed is an ex-teacher and former local councillor in Southern Punjab in Pakistan.¹⁵ She is also a member of the school committee at the local high school, and mentor and supporter to countless women and girls in her village and those around it as they struggle for education and continue to cope with the aftermath of the floods. She is adamant in her defence of girls' education: "My father was a tailor, my mother worked in the home. Although my father was illiterate, he wanted his three daughters to be able to read and write. So we all went to school and we all became teachers ourselves, thanks to my father." She says: "I believe firmly that parents and the government both need to support and promote girls' education so they can earn their living like I did. I am an optimist. I believe change is possible. I have three sons and five grandchildren. One is a girl. I am sure she will have as bright a future as her brothers."



Madiya.



2 'If there is no education you are nothing' – why adolescent girls leave school in disasters

"We found help, food and water, but my biggest problem is that we cannot attend school. I really wish schools will reopen soon, I have stayed at home, doing nothing, I can't bear it anymore."

16-year-old girl from Haiti¹⁶

"Now for us to survive my sister aged 16 does hairdressing, my brother aged 12 does odd jobs, but that is only enough for bread and a bit more."

Orphan girl caring for two younger siblings, Mozambique, 2011¹⁷

Once the need for food and shelter has been addressed, it is likely that children's education will continue to be disrupted. School buildings may have been damaged or ruined, or if they remain standing, they may be used as shelters for homeless families. Teachers may have been killed or injured or are busy looking after their families. This can mean weeks, months or sometimes years without school.¹⁸ In Sri Lanka, two years after the tsunami, Save the Children conducted a consultation with nearly 2,500 children and found that almost a third were still displaced and had not been able to return to normal schooling.¹⁹ In Niger, according to the Ministry of Education, 47,000 children were obliged to abandon school in 2012 because of the food crisis.²⁰

Disasters often negatively affect family income, in the medium to long term as well

as immediately after the disaster, which may lead to school dropout. In a UNICEF study in East Asia and the Pacific, almost a quarter of rural children said they had to leave school because crop failure meant their family could no longer afford to send them.²¹ This young woman in Zimbabwe said: *"I am the head of the household. I dropped out of school in 2012 when I was in Form Three to give myself more time in the fields to fend for my siblings."*²²

Missing school for a period of time leads to many, especially girls, not returning at all – in the Philippines the girls talked about the difficulty of catching up leading to permanent dropout. *"The reason that they didn't go back was that they are shy because it's almost a month since they attended school and it's too late for them to make up the lessons,"* said Mirasol, 16.²³



School damage in the Philippines.



Rolling beads in India.

PLAN One 15-year-old girl interviewed in Niger explained: ***"All our problems have come about because we don't have anything to eat. You can't understand what the teacher is saying if you go to school without eating. So I hope that I will be able to have enough to eat and go to school."***²⁴

In the Philippines after Typhoon Ondoy, Jolianne, 15, said: ***"I'm no longer studying because we lack money. I was forced to work because of what happened. My siblings don't have anything to eat so they just quit school."*** Other girls said they were embarrassed to go because they didn't have the right clothes. ***"When I went back to school, I was sad and ashamed because I was only wearing slippers,"*** said 17-year-old Vanessa.²⁵

In many cases, it is boys and young men who leave school to seek paid work, while girls have to bear additional tasks at home. But in Ethiopia, Plan found that girls also work for cash when there is a drought.²⁶ A study by Young Lives in Andhra Pradesh, India, found that when a family's crops are lost due to a disaster, girls' workloads increase from 3.5 to 6.5 hours a day – a 40 per cent increase.²⁷

'EVEN THE DONKEYS DO NOT EAT THESE LEAVES'²⁸

Our research found that the recurring crises in Niger had put the burden of the responsibility to feed the family on the shoulders of adolescent girls and boys. Adolescents said that before the food crises, only 31 per cent of them were regularly obliged to work to help their parents. But during the food crises, this rose to 60 per cent. The research found that 86 per cent (91 per cent of boys and 80 per cent of girls) now worked more than five

hours a day either at home or outside.

One of the adolescent girls said: ***"It is true that our parents force us to leave school to find work, but in many cases, they do not even have to ask us to give up school. We do it on our own because if you know that when you leave school and you return home you will find nothing to eat, you are obliged to do something to help your parents and also to help yourself."***

Another adolescent girl remembered: ***"I will never forget the 2011 food crisis. After selling all our animals, we were so hungry that a lot of children died. Even those among us who were stronger kept falling sick because of hunger. I used to wake up every day before prayers to go in the forest to gather leaves that were going to be sold at the market so that we could buy sorghum. We used to leave our homes before the morning prayer and come back to the house after the evening prayer with a single bag of leaves. One bag can only buy two kilograms of sorghum, which was not enough to feed our big family for even a day."***

"I remember that one day I woke up early in the morning, it was still dark and I was very hungry and I had to walk further than the preceding day because when we arrived to gather the leaves, we found girls from other villages had come to do the same thing. We had to fight and work quickly to fill our bags. That day, my shoes had got torn and I had to walk barefoot. I walked for so long that my feet were bleeding. I arrived home late at night knowing that I had to wake up very early the following day to go back to look for these leaves that even the donkeys do not eat in normal times."



PLAN/JENNY MATTHEWS



PLAN/LUCA TOMMASINI

Back to school after the floods in Pakistan.

Hard choices – boys rather than girls?

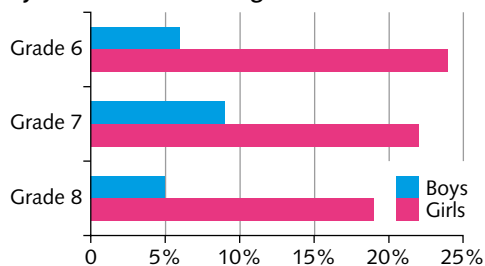
In many countries, there is still a preference to send sons rather than daughters to school if parents are forced to choose. This may well be exacerbated in an emergency, as one study noted: “Overall, girls and women are more likely than boys and men to have their education cut short due to adverse circumstances such as poverty, conflict, natural disasters, or economic downturn.”²⁹ In Nepal, both girls and boys reported that when post-disaster hardships force their parents to make trade-offs, it is usually girls who are withdrawn from school.³⁰ In Niger, Tani Yamboni, a nurse, said: “The food crisis caused families to put all their money into their bellies... girls had to drop out from school to reduce family expenses.”³¹ In Sri Lanka, Udani, now 20, pointed out: *“Since the tsunami, the education of many girls has decreased, because families cannot afford it.”*³²

Research in Pakistan compared school attendance records in eight schools in rural areas in Grades Six to Eight before and after the floods in 2010.^{33,34} In all cases, more girls than boys stayed out of school when the schools resumed after the floods. After the flood, 22 per cent of girls and 7 per cent of boys dropped out, making the differential even more stark. One girl in Grade Six said: *“A lot of girls went on leave for months, after the flood. A number of girls came back*

and continued education, but a few of them could not, as their parents were no longer in a position to send them to school, due to poverty.”

In Burkina Faso, Niger, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Pakistan and the Philippines, our research found that levels of school dropout were high for both adolescent girls and boys in times of crisis, but respondents felt that girls were more likely to drop out than boys.³⁵ In South Sudan, 15-year-old Sarah said: *“This year [2013], I do not think my parents will be able to send me to school as the cattle they had hoped to sell to generate money for my school fees died as a result of last season's severe drought. I really don't know what to do as this situation is proving to be an obstacle to my education. I sometimes ask myself: why did God create me to be punished this way?”*³⁶

Percentage dropout from school in Pakistan due to 2010 floods, by sex, Grades Six to Eight





Apart from lack of resources, parents may also withdraw their adolescent girls from school because they fear for their safety. Again, this is true when there is not a disaster, but after one has occurred, they may be even more fearful. Addressing the issue of safety both on the way to school and in school is crucial.³⁷ Local education committees in Iraq, for example, provided escorts for girls going to school and identified mothers to serve as female classroom assistants to male teachers, thus making families comfortable to allow their adolescent daughters to attend school.³⁸

HAYMANOT'S STORY³⁹

Haymanot lives in rural Ethiopia. Her story illustrates the cumulative effects of drought that can cause girls to drop out of school.

In 2008, Haymanot was 12 and living with her aunt. She went to school in a nearby town. But then her mother became ill, and she went home to look after her and her younger brother and sister. Because her mother could no longer work, the family income dropped and they had very little to eat. Initially Haymanot went to school in the afternoons and worked in the mornings. But then her sister became ill as well. At the same time there was a drought in the area and crops failed. Her mother explains: "There was drought all over the community. God didn't give us rain and there was no grass, no crops from the land. We were short of food."

As a result, Haymanot had to drop

out of school and go to work in a stone-crushing factory. She said it was her own decision but that: *"I feel very bad because I am not going to school and my mother is sick."* Her mother also recognised that it was not good for Haymanot to drop out of school: "By stopping her from [going to] school, I know that I am disrupting her future opportunities."

Then Haymanot herself got malaria, and became ill with diarrhoea, vomiting and fever, exacerbated by her workload at home and at the factory. Life was very difficult, and eventually Haymanot and her mother decided that although she was only 15, getting married would provide security and protection as the family were in such a difficult situation. Her husband, chosen by her family, is a government employee. She has been able to stop work in the factory.

Haymanot's life is a hard one. But her story also illustrates her resourcefulness. Her hard work and robust approach also enhanced her reputation in their community. Her mother said: "Some people who saw her always working admired her and say: 'How did she manage to work and withstand such hardship at this age?'"

Today, Haymanot says that her life has improved, and she hopes to delay having children and go back to school next year – if her husband will allow it.

Ethiopia.





Bushfire smoke covers a harbour in Sydney.

Missing school because of a disaster is not confined to the developing world. Susan Davie explains how her experience in the Australian bushfires of 1983 led to her repeating a class – and also shaped her future.

BECAUSE I WAS A GIRL...

Susan Davie, now Senior Policy Advisor (Domestic Emergencies) at Save the Children Australia, tells of her traumatic experience as an adolescent girl in a bushfire in Australia, and how it led her to become a nurse and a humanitarian worker.

I was 16 years old on 16 February 1983 when a bushfire ignited a few kilometres from my home in Victoria. I went with my father and brother to try to find my elderly aunt and uncle. We searched evacuation centres all night. Tragically, the following day it was confirmed that my aunt and uncle were among those who died.

My school was closed for several days following the disaster. When it reopened there was a focus on families whose homes were destroyed in the fire. Although I felt that my family had suffered a much greater loss, I felt unable to speak about this. In one class when I was directly asked by a teacher if the fire had affected my home I said 'no'. I was then reprimanded for not completing my homework. I was unable to say out loud that my aunt and uncle had died – I just didn't know how. I refused to attend school again until after the funeral.

I missed two weeks of school. Along with my distress and grief, this meant that I was behind my classmates from the beginning of the school year. Although I passed the year I had to repeat the following year. At that time there was no formal support

offered to me as I did not live in the area that was affected by the fire.

During the weeks and months that followed the disaster my younger siblings looked to me for support. Our parents were very distressed and I didn't want to worry them. Because I was a girl my siblings expected me to be able to provide emotional support that they would usually get from our parents. Their wellbeing was an extra worry for me and I felt that I just had to cope with the emotional trauma to protect my brothers.

I went on to study to become a nurse and now work in emergency management. My experience in 1983 has given me insight into the way disasters affect children. I've never forgotten the way I felt at that time and this has influenced the work that I do now where I advocate strongly for planning for the unique needs of children. I particularly understand that girls and boys have different needs following disasters and try to influence emergency management planning to reflect this.

The fact that so many adolescents – particularly adolescent girls, for whom education is so important – are forced by disaster or conflict to leave school and are then not able to return, should be a source of shame for an international community that is committed to education for all. It requires urgent action.

"Perhaps if we had programmes helping people to realise the importance of girls' rights, and girls' rights to progress in their education after the age of 16, that would help families to keep girls at schools... To go forward as a girl, you need an education."

Udani, 20, Sri Lanka⁴⁰



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3 The silver lining – how emergencies can offer new opportunities for adolescent girls

“I can't wait to go back to school because I love school very much. If there is no education, if you don't go to school to learn, you are nothing in this life... When I grow up I'd like to be a great doctor, a great gynaecologist, and to run my own private hospital. I'll have compassion for the people.”

Christina, 14, Port au Prince, Haiti, displaced by the earthquake⁴¹

“Because we are all together here we can educate our girls. That is the silver lining of Darfur.”

Father in Chad⁴²

Sometimes when formal schools no longer exist, non-formal courses can bridge the gap between education before and after a disaster. It might be a temporary school, or classes a few hours a day, or vocational skills training. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has recognised the importance of vocational skills for young displaced people, noting that: “The exclusion of young people from mainstream secondary and tertiary education means that often the only

possibility is vocational training.” It is also possible to include vocational training and education in one package. For example, UNHCR in Dadaab, Kenya, has a Youth Education Pack Programme which offers a year-long vocational and life-skills training course to 250 young people each year. In 2012 UNHCR increased its livelihoods budget by 75 per cent compared with 2010 and its prime target audiences are women and youth, whose “skills will contribute to community development, challenging traditional gender roles and support youth and women to move away from dangerous coping strategies”.⁴³

For older girls, as this young Somali woman pointed out, *“Education is not only about primary and secondary schools but also about vocational training”*. She herself had benefited from tailoring school where she had acquired a means of earning an income.⁴⁴

In Pakistan after the floods in 2010, a number of agencies set up such schools with a particular focus on girls. Karen Allen, UNICEF Pakistan Deputy Representative, speaking about girls' attendance at temporary schools set up after the floods in 2010, told of parents who said: “Maybe we should consider sending our girls to school because look how happy it made them and they were

A temporary classroom in Pakistan.

really learning useful things.” She added: “We believe that when they take their children back home there will have been a mind-shift or at least the start of a mind-shift about sending girls to school.”⁴⁵

Emergencies can sometimes make education more affordable for the families of adolescent girls: school fees can be lowered or completely abolished, scholarships for adolescent girls can be established, and steps can be taken to reduce the costs to parents who educate their adolescent daughters. This can be carried out both at programmatic and policy levels. In Bangladesh, for example, the Female Stipend Program has helped pay for girls’ secondary education costs such as school supplies, uniforms, shoes, textbooks, examination costs, transport and school fees.⁴⁶

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS ON EDUCATING GIRLS IN PAKISTAN⁴⁷

In the immediate aftermath of the 2011 floods in Pakistan, Plan established child-friendly spaces for children of various ages which included non-formal education, psychosocial and recreational activities. As a result, in an area where



PLAN

there were traditional and religious barriers to girls’ education, many girls, often for the first time, were able to attend these non-formal schools. In fact, more girls than boys participated and there was a gradual change in attitudes towards educating girls.

Three key elements were vital in providing this access for girls and in initiating change in the long-held beliefs of the community that girls did not need to be educated:

- 1 Women were recruited as facilitators. Many parents felt more comfortable sending their daughters to a place where there were more women looking after and teaching the children.
- 2 The programme engaged parents throughout. Parents’ interest in their children’s educational progress increased and they also learned about their protection and developmental needs during a disaster. Mothers, particularly, were excited that their daughters had the chance to learn for the first time. The Mountain Institute for Educational Development (MIED), Plan Pakistan’s partner organisation in emergency responses, said it saw a positive change in the attitude of parents toward their children’s education and in particular towards girls’ education.
- 3 Religious leaders were involved. The child-friendly spaces were established near mosques in order to win support from mullahs and imams. Some were even hired as facilitators for the activities along with women from the community. Religious leaders have a lot of influence in certain villages, and their involvement encouraged other members of the community to support the education of both boys and girls. Nadia, a teacher at a girls’ school in a camp, said: “I have 103 students here. These girls are studying Urdu, English and mathematics. They are eager to learn. By seeing other children study, more are becoming attracted to learning for the first time in their lives. Some of them were not going to school but they are studying here and with a lot of eagerness.”⁴⁸

Providing safe spaces in Pakistan.

It is key, however, that such opportunities continue once the immediate crisis is over; something which is difficult if – as in Pakistan – schools may not be available for girls.

In Sudan, UNICEF provides evening classes for girls so they can catch up on lessons they have missed if they were not able or allowed to attend school before. They are then expected to attend regular school when they are ready and are provided with school uniforms as an incentive.⁴⁹

As much as access is important, quality of teaching and learning is paramount. Emergencies in Yemen and elsewhere have offered opportunities to introduce new teaching practices, participatory learning, child-friendly classroom management and gender-sensitive, non-violent and non-abusive language in the classroom. Furthermore, emergencies have allowed new curriculum content to be introduced that is particularly relevant to adolescent girls: human rights and peace education, life skills, sexual and reproductive health, pre and post-natal care, personal hygiene, vocational and skills training.⁵⁰

Emergencies open up opportunities that need to be supported by the humanitarian community in collaboration with governments to introduce and mainstream these kinds of supportive services for adolescent girls at national level. This might mean new or revamped laws, standards, policies, national education sector plans and contingency plans.⁵¹

GIRLS ACCESS EDUCATION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DARFUR REFUGEE CAMPS⁵²

While the Darfur conflict has had devastating impacts on communities, it has also provided the opportunity for girls to gain access to education for the first time.

According to data from UNICEF, girls in the refugee camps in Eastern Chad attended primary schools and flexible learning programmes in greater numbers than boys because they were so excited to have the opportunity. Older women, many of them the mothers of these first-time learners, also wanted to learn, and as a result UNHCR and other NGOs started literacy and numeracy classes for women. Adolescent mothers, as well as girls looking after younger siblings, could participate in classes where childcare support was also provided.

UNHCR and other NGO partners also persuaded the ministries of education in Chad and Sudan to agree that students returning to Darfur would be credited for the education they completed in the camps. In addition, the Sudan government authorised the administration of their exams in the camps in Chad so children could be part of the Sudanese education system. This has allowed girls to have qualifications valid in both Sudan and Chad. For adolescent girls in particular, this long-term crisis has meant sustained access to unprecedented educational opportunities.



Vocational training in Haiti.



G.M.B. AKASH/PANOS PICTURES

4 Education for increased resilience: involving adolescent girls in disaster risk reduction in schools

“Thank God we'd already had that preparation at school, so we knew more or less how to lead a committee, to organise ourselves to get people out of their houses. I was one of the people who had to leave their houses... I think that we put into practice everything we had learned in school and that helped us a lot.”

Xiomara, 19, from Zapotal, El Salvador⁵³

Throughout this report, we have featured examples of girls being involved in disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities both inside and outside the classroom. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), a 10-year strategy developed during the 2005 Hyogo World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, sets three main goals for DRR in schools: student and staff protection; educational continuity; and a culture of safety. These can be accomplished

through three overlapping areas of activity: safe school buildings, school disaster management and DRR education. The last needs to include practical skills as well as being able to identify risks.

In Musaffagarh in Pakistan, 16-year-old Saina is the president of a Child and Youth group set up by Plan and its partner RDPI. There are currently 75 such groups in 75 villages. Saina explains about the training she and her colleagues have had: *“They trained us in how to prepare an evacuation*

Bangladesh.



NIKKI VAN DER GAAG

Saina.

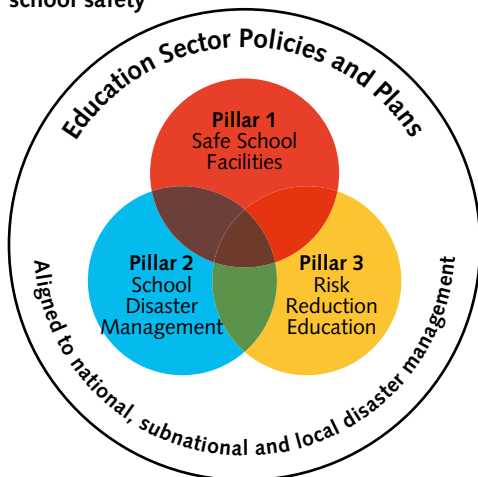
bag which has medicines, milk for children, blankets and other stuff. We also had a first aid session and learned how to get someone out if they are trapped under debris. Our families and classmates also know we have had this training so they can come to us if we are needed.”⁵⁴

With support from UNISDR’s Safe Schools Campaign, which includes the three pillars of school safety, and efforts by international NGOs, UN agencies and others, DRR is becoming increasingly visible in education policy and practice.^{55,56}

In some countries where disasters are common – such as Ecuador, Cuba, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, El Salvador and Panama – disaster risk reduction and preparedness activities have become part of the regular school curriculum.⁵⁷ In South Africa too, the National Disaster Management Framework calls for the integration of disaster risk reduction in primary and secondary school curricula. Donald Grant, minister of education, Western Cape provincial government, said: “We need to educate our children about disasters, whether in or out of school. As education minister, one of my priorities is to ensure a safe and secure environment for our children.”⁵⁸

As yet, there seems to be little emphasis on the need to involve adolescent girls as well as boys in these activities. When girls are involved, they often take an active part, but they may need special programmes or

The three pillars of comprehensive school safety



additional encouragement. Katerin, 11, from La Libertad in El Salvador, explained her role:

“We do training sessions at the schools. What you should do in emergencies is explained with pictures to the youngest kids. We do different activities. The last time we gave a training session at the school, we gave the smallest kids crayons and colours so that they could draw. They drew the river when it gave way, the fallen trees, when the animals died, they drew all this. They remembered it all... We explain that when there’s a flood they move to higher ground, that they must take care because there could be a landslide or if there’s an earthquake that they don’t go running around.”⁵⁹

Fifteen-year-old Jonisha lives in a village in Nepal that is at high risk of storms and floods. She participated in DRR activities in her school run by Plan and its partner NGO Samudayeek Urja and Paryavaran Vikas Manch (Community Energy and Environment Development Forum). She says:

“My grandfather died [after being struck by] lightning, so I get scared as soon as I hear about a disaster. At the training, I learned that we can minimise the damage of disasters by managing them. As I gained skills in helping people after a disaster, carrying out rescue work during disasters, and giving first aid to people injured in disasters, my self-confidence increased and I now know what to do if any disaster should happen in my school or in the community.”⁶⁰

In Haji Sattar Dino Taandio village near the sea in Thatta district, in the Punjab, Husan Bano says: *“Our knowledge has increased so that we can face the situation better. Training helps lessen fear. Now we are more confident and courageous. The younger people feel more independent and don’t wait for older people to help them.”⁶¹*

If DRR activities and materials include an awareness of gender as a crosscutting issue, they can help counter prejudices against girls, especially if girls like Katerin, Jonisha and Sindy are involved in doing the training, and materials feature girls actively participating in disaster management. At present this unique opportunity for change is largely being lost.



PLAN/LUIS TOBAR

RADIO ON: THE RIGHTS OF GIRLS IN EL SALVADOR

Sindy, from El Salvador, learned from her own experience of disasters just how important it is for girls to know about their rights – which is why she now runs a radio show especially for girls.

Sindy, from La Libertad, lives in a community that is constantly battered by disasters. She was only 13 in 2005 when her area was hit by Hurricane Stan.

“The river inundated our community and people lost their homes and what little they had. We stopped going to school because it became a shelter for families who had nothing. I helped my father with sorting food.

“Then in 2009 we were affected by Tropical Storm Ida. I was in my first year at high school and the bridge collapsed so it was hard to get to school to continue studying. In any case, my school once again became a hostel and my friends and I helped to run activities for children there. We used the school radio to broadcast information: for example, answering people’s questions about where the damage was.

“In 2011, my area was once again affected by a tropical depression. By this time I was studying technology. Once

again our school radio gave information about how people could protect themselves, what shelters were available and to let the public know just how difficult the situation was in each place.”

Sindy is now a well-respected community leader. She hosts a weekly radio programme on CESA FM radio which reaches six neighbouring communities, a total of 3,000 households, with disaster preparedness and mitigation messages. There are also talk-shows and interviews with local authorities, holding them to account for their duty to act in times of disaster. *“I interviewed Felicita Ivarra, who is the coordinator of Civil Protection in our community. With these interviews I aim to raise awareness about emergencies and I hope one day this will save lives.”*

Sindy also runs a weekly programme called The World’s Girls. *“We talk about the rights of girls in our community. So many girls are marginalised and exposed to violence. We want to raise awareness about the importance of girls. They may be known as the weaker sex, but they should have the same opportunities as boys.”* Sindy is already passing on the skills she has learnt, teaching other young women how to make radio programmes and learn radio production.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

*This report has for the most part chosen to focus on adolescent girls and disasters, arguing that it is at adolescence that girls' vulnerabilities and needs become increasingly divergent from the categories of women and children in which they are normally included. In the following piece **Elaine Enarson** argues that, although adolescence is a key period, we need to bring into focus the gendered needs of much younger girls so that the rights of girls of all ages are respected and their capabilities acknowledged.*

Like their mothers, girls of all ages are the unacknowledged shock absorbers of crisis who take up the slack if they must. Girls, even the very young, are pushed into expanded domestic roles when disastrous floods or earthquakes transform their family's routines or rob them of family altogether. They walk further for fuel wood and water, increasing their vulnerability to sexual assault. If their school still stands, they leave that behind, too. While disasters clearly jeopardise children's rights, even the youngest of girls are far from passive and can help others learn how to cope with loss and reduce future risk if they are heard and listened to.⁶² How do we know this? In fact, we don't – for girl children are rendered invisible in disasters and overlooked in research. But what we do know compels us to take a closer look. No firm and fast line divides young girls from adolescent girls, so the challenges reviewed elsewhere in this report may well be faced by young girls – we cannot know yet.

Not seen, not heard

Children's images are readily exploited to garner funds or attention in disasters – and just as quickly the real child falls out of sight. Studies and project reports promising age and gender analysis typically collapse the distinct lives of younger schoolgirls with those of older teens on the verge of womanhood, leaving the girl child in the shadows and doing justice to nobody.⁶³ Child protection standards too, are writ large, not highlighting the gender dimensions of childhood or the developmental stages of gender identity which come into play during and after emergencies. Good practice guides for humanitarian relief are equally opaque in considering 'girls', as are most disaster researchers, even when, rarely, they explore both age and gender. Girls may literally not be 'counted' when bereft of family, undocumented, homeless, socially isolated through disability, from a stigmatised ethnic

group, or otherwise left out of any disaster relief registry. Protecting the girl child in crisis and engaging her in disaster resilience demands a close focus on the age and gender differences and inequalities that shape her world institutionally, culturally, and at home. This is enabled by disaggregated data and more nuanced age and gender analysis, a small methodological shift but a larger shift conceptually, and one which will benefit girls of all ages.

The girl child in emergencies

As has been highlighted elsewhere in this report, persistent gender inequalities relate back to development and forward to disaster risk, both shaped by gender relations and all other social axes of power that heighten vulnerability differentially. Though girlhood is a broad social category that cannot be understood out of context: girls in low-income nations where gender discrimination is the norm are less likely to survive a disaster – a fate shared by their mothers and older sisters.⁶⁴

Relative to their brothers, from an early age girls may be physically weaker due to food deprivation leaving them malnourished in 'temporary' camps and more vulnerable to the effects of drought, for instance.⁶⁵ In the urgent relief period, girls and boys alike depend on parents, guardians, or older siblings to secure essential supplies. Distributing food through women's networks may increase the likelihood that they receive a fair share though targeting relief in this way is not without controversy. Young girls, again like their older sisters, may also be further weakened by cultural norms that discourage rigorous physical activity leading to potentially life-giving strength or skills. In the aftermath, simply being female is found to be a high risk factor for negative mental-health effects, both for adult women, adolescent girls and for younger primary-school girls. Girls, whatever their age, also strive to come to terms with disasters differently, relying more on interpersonal coping skills than their brothers who generally externalise stress or emphasise problem-solving.⁶⁶ Psychosocial outreach to girls must be sensitive to these gender patterns.

As we have learned, family life is not inherently safe for children so we must also understand the gendered limitations and threats that confront the younger primary-school girl, including in homes where she may live with adults left chronically depressed, unemployed, or disabled by disaster. Young girls are vulnerable to child abuse as well as

to trafficking and other forms of gender violence that escalate when protective networks are frayed and poverty deepens. Displaced adult women are increasingly, though not sufficiently, among those consulted about the location of latrines and lighting, hygiene needs, and the design of safe spaces for women – but are girls? How can we know how ‘girl-friendly’ our child-friendly spaces are without asking?

More present than ever before in primary grades, girls’ school-leaving rates remain stubbornly higher than boys’, and disasters exacerbate the challenge.⁶⁷ Girls can be difficult to reach due to extreme poverty or extreme sex segregation norms, but gender-responsive emergency education can help even the youngest girls and boys imagine a wider future. What texts should be taught – and what is the subtext of the lessons we teach girls in the aftermath of disasters? Whose authority is reinforced and whose knowledge validated? We must respect the friendships younger girls form and how they communicate, as well as how they negotiate relationships with older girls and boys, often despite the binary gender norms imposed in schools.⁶⁸ Avoiding play and school activities in emergency education programmes that reproduce gender inequalities is surely part of ‘building back better’.

Building disaster resilience with young girls

The primary-school girl is again ‘hidden in plain sight’ in girl-focused disaster reduction and empowerment projects, which, where they exist at all, implicitly exclude her in programmes that in practice best serve her elder sister.⁶⁹ But promising practices exist. The Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project based in South Africa profiled in this chapter offers younger girls as well as their teenaged sisters precious opportunities for self and skill-development by partnering with disaster management and development agencies.⁷⁰

Even the youngest girl has something to contribute. Like their brothers and elder sisters, girls have specific environmental and cultural knowledge based on the age and gender-specific division of labour of their time and place. They may help with community-led risk assessments, explaining in their own ways and words the hazards girls know of in their neighbourhoods and their ideas for adapting to or reducing these. Many

very young girls already take part in sandbagging, tree planting, rainwater harvesting, and a host of other mitigation projects. Girls’ feedback is needed about school safety plans also, which generally assume that girls and boys in primary grades live in essentially identical social worlds. But do they? How prepared are young girls and boys, respectively, to respond to immediate threats to their life and safety, whether at home or school? How can the youngest of girls as well as boys best be supported?

The curiosity and creativity of the young girl is a vital platform for community education to reduce risk.⁷¹ Disaster education is a two-way street, as amply demonstrated in the UNISDR 2012 campaign

on girls and women as ‘invisible forces of resilience’ and in the practical examples of risk reduction education around the globe compiled in *Let Our Children Teach Us*.⁷² Girls can and do share what they have learned about disaster risk management through girl-to-girl networks using age-appropriate and culturally competent ways of communicating which we know too little about. Disaster educators can and should partner with the youngest girls and their advocates, striving to build on gender-responsive ways of teaching and learning, and minimise in disaster education the gender stereotyping so rampant in children’s worlds and so very limiting. Not every girl aspires to be a ‘master of disaster’, to name one popular model for disaster education.

Count girls – make girls count

Without examining separately the distinct life stages of child and youth development, even our best efforts will sidestep the girl child. By leaving girls out, we further exacerbate their vulnerabilities and miss a critical moment of influence as young girls become the young women who will be such critical actors as we strive to adjust to the challenges of our more hazardous planet. Children at every stage of life have something to bring to disaster risk reduction and something to lose by being excluded. Count girls in.

Elaine Enarson is an independent scholar from Colorado.



TIM A. HETHERINGTON



5 Conclusion: 'It is the duty of the nation to protect girls' education'

"It would be good if they could invest more in girls' education. I think girls are beautiful flowers, and it is the duty of the nation to protect girls' education."

Chamithry, 22, Sri Lanka⁷³

"When I talked to [families] about what they wanted most for their children, it was not shelter, although they needed it; not security, although they required it; not food, although they desperately wanted it; it was education for their children."

Gordon Brown, United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education⁷⁴

We have seen in this chapter how and why adolescents, in particular girls, drop out of school during a disaster – and may never return. In an online survey of humanitarian workers for this report,⁷⁵ education was highlighted as one of the key interventions

that would protect girls in emergency situations. Going to school, or finding less formal spaces in which to learn, means adolescent girls can access information about health, protection and rights. This information in turn helps them negotiate the situation they find themselves in more successfully and so limits the damage to their lives.

Quality education in disasters is not only a right, but has short-term immediate benefits such as physical protection, psychosocial wellbeing and a return to normality. It also has longer-term benefits for girls themselves, their families and communities. It gives adolescent girls the knowledge and skills that will help them to obtain employment that supports their family. And when they are able to work and earn a good living, this contributes to a society's economic growth and prosperity. This is why temporary spaces or out-of-school education during disasters is so important: it can give adolescent girls new knowledge and skills that may be life-saving

Temporary school in Haiti.

and help them to eventually return to formal education. This may even encourage families who have never sent their girls to school to do so.

Boys and men also have a role in promoting girls' education as well as helping to raise awareness about the importance of keeping girls in schools; protecting girls in school from violence, and working against the gender stereotypes that are such big barriers to girls' education in disaster situations. In Baluchistan, for example, 40,000 scouts joined forces with UNICEF and were trained to help local communities understand the importance of educating girls.⁷⁶

Education in emergencies is beginning to be seen as an essential part of disaster response, but it still needs to be given increased priority, and we believe the education share of humanitarian funding should increase from two to at least four per cent. Donors and governments must ensure that humanitarian funding for education includes specific resources for formal and non-formal education programmes for adolescent girls in addition to support for primary education. Education sector plans need to have a gender and age analysis that ensures adolescent girls as well as boys have access to quality formal and non-formal educational opportunities. Adolescent girls themselves are absolutely clear that education is a priority – that in a disaster it is the one thing that will make them 'happy'. Can the humanitarian and development communities meet their challenge?

THE G.I.R.R.L PROJECT (GIRLS IN RISK REDUCTION LEADERSHIP)

"You have encouraged us in standing up for ourselves in facing the challenges to our lives."

Jerato, G.I.R.R.L participant, 18⁷⁷

For girls living in informal settlements in South Africa, the capacity to deal with floods and shack fires is undermined by physical and sexual violence.⁷⁸

With this in mind, the innovative G.I.R.R.L Project was launched to recognise adolescent girls as agents of change in disaster risk reduction.⁷⁹ It started in 2008, working with

marginalised adolescent girls from Sonderwater informal settlement. Training sessions in environmental education, first aid, and fire safety were provided as part of a capacity-building programme.⁸⁰ The girls designed and participated in a community event, which aimed to increase risk awareness of the wider community as well as demonstrating the girls' leadership capabilities.

Based on the success of the first project, the programme has been replicated in other areas of South Africa. Eighty-one adolescent girls have received direct training.⁸¹ As peer educators, the girls have passed their knowledge on to increase community awareness and improve survival skills. New opportunities have also been created in leadership roles and participation in disaster coordination. Some of the girls have also been involved in a weekly local radio broadcast, promoting safety within the community.

The G.I.R.R.L Project has helped in overcoming the perception of girls as victims, in a society which can present challenging social conditions and obstacles. It has brought their abilities and distinct needs to the attention of key local disaster personnel. And it has shown that by providing training and skills to girls, they can become confident and empowered to spread key messages to the wider community regarding disaster risk reduction.⁸²

G.I.R.R.L
Project group



KYLAH FORBES BIGGS

PRIMARY RESEARCH FROM EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Key findings

The four countries in this study – Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Sudan and Zimbabwe – are all prone to disaster, especially flood and droughts, and resulting food shortages. The overall aim of the research was to explore the effects of these on adolescent girls' and boys' rights to protection, health and education and to investigate their support structures and coping mechanisms when confronted with disaster.

The study was carried out by Plan Eastern and Southern Africa offices.

Methodology

The methodology combined qualitative and quantitative research including desk research, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and household surveys across four countries, which were carried out between December 2012 and January 2013. Focus group participants included mothers and fathers and adolescent girls and boys aged 10 to 19, married and unmarried. A total of 192 adolescent girls and 192 adolescent boys, both in and out of school, participated in the focus group discussions.

The findings are categorised under survival, health, protection, education, and participation and support. The research also noted that all adolescents in the disaster-prone areas have been affected in some way by previous disasters.

SURVIVAL

- In Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, adolescent girls were found to suffer more than boys from nutritional deficiencies in disasters. In Ethiopia, participants reported that boys are usually encouraged to eat larger quantities of food because it is assumed they need more energy to be active, while girls are expected to reflect a 'womanly etiquette' during disasters. In Zimbabwe, although families eat smaller portions during drought, skip meals or rely on unusual wild fruits and plants, it is the girls whose health is most affected.
- Adolescent girls and boys take on shifting roles and responsibilities within their households due to the increasing economic strain on family resources following disasters. Child labour was reported by a number of respondents across the countries as one of the ways parents alleviate the suffering of their households in the post-disaster period. For

example, the study showed that adolescent girls of school age in Mozambique often work as 'house girls' taking care of babies, cleaning houses and cooking.

HEALTH

- Early pregnancy was identified as a protection issue by girls in all four countries. In Ethiopia's SNNP region, unwanted pregnancy was associated with girls' increased vulnerability and engagement in transactional sex during disasters.
- Girls and boys consulted in the research study identified the following as unique needs of adolescent girls in disasters: sanitary pads, bras, underwear and other sanitary supplies, access to family planning services and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

PROTECTION

- The study found that adolescent girls who have been affected by disasters have unique protection needs and are particularly vulnerable to early marriage and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).
- Adolescent girls in all four countries identified early marriage as a protection issue. In South Sudan, respondents in Jonglei and Lakes states said that girls often marry young and against their will, due to the poverty of the families.
- In South Sudan, some girls who run away from forced marriage go into the sex trade, which potentially compromises their reproductive health and puts them at increased risk of getting STIs and HIV. Likewise in Zimbabwe, the study found that when disasters strike, girls may drop out of school to marry and they may also engage in prostitution and/or transactional sex for food. Those affected by HIV, orphaned, living with disability or out of school are particularly at risk.

EDUCATION

- School attendance was found to drop in times of disaster. Girl-only focus groups (in and out of school) in Mozambique highlighted the negative impact their heavy workload has on girls' school time. For example, after walking long distances to fetch water they found themselves less alert in class and not able to do school assignments, which impacted negatively on their school performance. Even if schools remained open, children's ability to

learn and meaningfully participate in school was negatively affected by disasters.

- In conflict situations such as in Jonglei state, South Sudan, schools have been disrupted for extended periods of time. Teachers have fled or have been killed, and schools have closed and reopened as fighting allows. In some areas of the country, it was reported that school supplies are often looted and security issues as well as fear of floods made it difficult for both girls and boys to travel to and from school.¹
- Adolescent girls and boys in the study identified the following as key needs for adolescent girls in disasters: encouragement to go to school even during disasters, clothes, school uniform, advice, counselling and awareness of life issues and rights, bedding and satchels and mosquito nets and school fees.

PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

- In Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, there are disaster risk reduction policies, laws, strategies and programmes, based on the Hyogo Framework and priorities which require governments to strengthen disaster relief management (DRM), governance, risk and early warning information, disaster education, reduction of underlying risks and emergency preparedness and response. These have been implemented at various levels. In Mozambique, for example, the government has set up the Coordinating Council for Disaster Management (CCGC) at national and provincial levels; technical committees at district level; and disaster management committees (DMCs) at the village level.
- There are both formal and informal support structures for people caught up in disasters. For most respondents in this study, the household is the key support structure in times of disaster.
- In Mozambique, 75 per cent of adolescent girls and 68 per cent of boys said they knew where to

go for assistance in case of a disaster. In Jonglei state in South Sudan, 65 per cent of adolescent girls and 42 per cent of boys also said they knew where to go for assistance in a disaster.

- Parent teacher associations (PTAs) in Ethiopia are actively involved in bridging the school and community to keep children in school. If the PTAs know that a child is out of school, they often come to check on the child at home.
- However, there is a lack of adolescent participation in programmes, including a shortage of dedicated resources, limited knowledge on gender and women's and girls' rights, and often a gender-blind policy framework.
- Adolescent girls from Zimbabwe listed a range of difficulties they faced in accessing assistance in disaster situations, including difficulty in registering because they didn't qualify for aid;

assistance was not reaching the area; there was lack of information; or parents were not encouraging young people to be involved. The girls said they were "sometimes shy to ask again from neighbours" and said that people "usually select the old and leave out the young".



HANNAH MCNEISH/IRIN

Conclusions

The study has shown that there are important age and gender differences in the way disasters affect populations. There is evidence that the right of adolescent girls to protection, health and education is significantly compromised. Many of the interviewees agreed that adolescent girls were particularly adversely affected by disasters and that child marriage and unwanted pregnancies were likely to compromise girls' rights to protection, education and health.

Finally, the study made a number of specific recommendations, in particular that gender and age considerations should be integrated into disaster risk reduction and management laws, policies, strategies and programmes. Governments should invest in both social and child protection to assure the wellbeing, reproductive health and protective education opportunities of adolescent girls as they grow up.

¹ In Pibor County, South Sudan



Niña

Fie Mujeres

La fuerza invisible de
3 de octubre 2012 - Día Internacional

Canal 2

Part of the solution: adolescent girls' participation

5

Summary

This chapter looks at why adolescent girls rarely participate in disaster management and mitigation. It shows that certain groups of girls – those from ethnic minorities, or who have a disability, or who face stigma on account of their sexual orientation – are even less likely to have their voices heard. It examines the consequences of this lack of participation – for the girls themselves, but also for their communities. And it tells the stories of adolescent girls around the world who have been listened to – and how they have helped to improve their communities' disaster preparedness and challenged gender inequality in their villages.

- In Burkina Faso, just 13 per cent of adolescent girls and 36 per cent of adolescent boys felt that they were involved in decisions that affected them in times of crisis.¹

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 12

Every child has the right to express their opinions in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

1 Part of the solution – adolescent girls and participation in disasters

“Children and young people normally have a minimal, if any, social or political voice. This is particularly true for girls in societies where they are considered second-class citizens.”

World Disasters Report 2007²

“When we organise people, I can be part of the solution, not be there as a victim any more.”

Fatema Idriss, young woman, Director of Tadamon, Cairo, Egypt³

We have seen, throughout this report, examples of adolescent girls who have shown courage, wisdom and initiative in the face of disaster, supporting their families, and even saving lives. These stories are unusual not because they are rare occurrences, but because they are rarely told either by the humanitarian community or by the media.

This silence is directly related to wider gender discrimination – for example, it often helps to have women around if adolescent girls are to be encouraged to speak up, but in disaster work, there are few

First aid class in Bangladesh.



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women in positions of any authority. The Humanitarian Response Index report noted: "The sector is still dominated by men, raising questions about the ability of humanitarian organisations to fully understand the needs of women and men in different cultural and social contexts."⁴ Our online survey found that the presence of women on needs assessment teams varied considerably – for example, in child protection teams, a third of respondents said there were no women, whereas for camp management, the figure was more than half.⁵

This absence of women may also affect the gender-blind way in which disasters are often managed. For example, in Japan during the earthquake and tsunami in 2011, only two out of the 27 members of the Central Disaster Management Council and 8.5 per cent of 1,169 regional disaster management council members were women.⁶ This imbalance played out in very practical

ways for those affected by the disaster. For example, women had to prepare meals, for which they were not paid, while men were paid for collecting and removing rubbish. As one report points out, this imbalance may also mean that: "The potential contributions that women can offer... are often overlooked and female leadership in building community resilience to disasters is frequently disregarded."⁷

"I think there is often a gender bias in the area of risk management and climate change," says disaster risk management advisor Francisco Soto, from Plan El Salvador: "It is very hard to know more about the impact on the whole community when 95 per cent of the time men answer the questions. It's not because the women don't know the answers; it's because they think they don't have the right to give their opinions. This is especially true of older women. When you ask for an opinion and five men raise their hands and you ask one of the older women: 'Dona Ana, what do you think?' she reacts very timidly, watching everyone around her. She answers with humility, trying to be brief. This tells you how it is for women to participate in decisions in the community."⁸

In Burkina Faso, research for this report found that 36 per cent of adolescent boys but only 13 per cent of adolescent girls felt that they were involved in decisions that affected them. The study also noted that: "Though many adolescents are encumbered with adult responsibilities of earning money

Young volunteers in El Salvador.



PLAN/WILTON CASTILLO

Japan, 2012.



PLAN/KO SASAKI

Defining child participation¹²

Children have the right to participate in matters that affect their lives and their participation should be in line with the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It should be non-discriminatory, and in the best interests of the child, who has the right to express her or his opinion freely. Meaningful participation can only take place in an environment of mutual respect and learning, and therefore creating that environment must be a priority. The suggested principles of participatory programming are: inclusiveness, democracy and equality of opportunity; physical, emotional and psychological safety of participants; and that participation should be a voluntary, enjoyable and stimulating experience and be monitored by responsible adults. Participation can help children to protect themselves. It can enhance their coping skills, self-esteem and confidence.

and providing food for their families, the lack of involvement of adolescents in community decision-making forums – including decisions that directly affect them – points to an evident lack of leadership opportunities.”⁹

The World Disasters Report notes that: “In a disaster response, despite the available tools, few humanitarian agencies make the effort or commitment to ensure that assessments and the design of programmes include gender-balanced child participation which is not tokenistic. This results in interventions and programmes – even those specific to children – that do not include children’s voices.”¹⁰

One secondary schoolteacher from Mutorashanga in Zimbabwe, where Save the Children was proposing children’s feedback committees, said: “It has been tradition to look down upon our children and just simply pour information into them as if they don’t think. We tend to forget that they are human beings, people who can make meaningful contributions. They have knowledge with them which they can only express and share with others if given the support to do so.”¹¹

If adults do not listen to children during disasters, then mistakes may be made. To give one example: “In relief and reconstruction efforts after the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India, that killed over 11,000 people, a number of the structures to improve children’s lives were found to be dangerous because they had not been properly considered from a child-centred perspective. The project put glass panes in windows that could be easily removed and broken by curious children, they built playgrounds that were dangerous, installed

Working on disaster risk reduction in Cambodia.



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toilets with flushers that children couldn't reach, and that required water children's families didn't have, and they made kitchens that were not appropriate for rural children and their families who cooked on the floor and needed smoke ventilation in order to avoid respiratory illness."¹³ Similarly, camp organisers issued water containers that, with a capacity of 20 or even 50 litres, were too heavy for girls to carry when full. Nobody had thought to check with the girls themselves, although collecting water is a task that usually falls to the girls in a family.¹⁴

In our online survey, respondents from the different clusters said that 'meaningful consultation with adolescent girls' was low, at its highest in the water and sanitation cluster (47 per cent) and at its lowest in the protection cluster (26.8 per cent).¹⁵ And yet 83 per cent of respondents identified this as an important priority in humanitarian planning and programming.

We have seen that when girls fully participate, things begin to change, as Francisco Soto explains: "This [DRR] training, which started out as a workshop when they [the young people] were 12, opened up a pathway to a longer-term positive community development change. Now young people, and particularly young

girls, are understood as capable leaders of their community. The young women participate just as much as the young men. In fact, often the young women participate more; they are first to raise their hands, they speak out more. They have courage. This is an indicator that young women are moving forward and they know they have the same rights as the guys."¹⁶

María Elena, now 18, was one of the girls who participated in the training. She said: *"For me, in my personal life, the training has helped me in various ways. It has helped my self-esteem, it has helped me not to feel less than other people because I am a young mother... and I know about my rights, how to defend my rights and how to prevent them from being abused."*¹⁷

Training on its own is not enough: it must go along with the much more difficult task of tackling prejudice and discrimination against girls. But the best way of ensuring that those in charge of disasters know what adolescent girls need is very clear: build their trust, give them the skills and confidence to speak, and create spaces where they can speak more openly about what is affecting them. And finally, see that their ideas are taken on board, and that they have a role in shaping these ideas.



Jackeline, 14, El Salvador, member of the Civil Protection Committee.

KEEPING THE SNAKES AWAY – SHAPLA'S STORY¹⁸

"My name is Shapla. My island is called East Holdibari. It is in North West Bangladesh. When it floods here, some people go to the mainland. They have land or family there. But we don't. So we have to stay behind. To me the river is painful because when the water level rises, the houses are flooded, our crops are destroyed and we run out of food. But the river also brings joy because when the water level goes down it gives us fertile land for our crops."

Shapla is 11 and she is a confident and articulate girl, but as she explains what happened during the 2008 floods it is clear that it was a very frightening experience: *"During the flood the water came up to here"* – she indicates a point, at about shoulder level, on the wall of her home – *"so we put rope around the bed and hoisted it up to the ceiling. I stayed up there with my brothers and sisters for seven days. For that time we had hardly any food and we were scared of snakes so some nights we couldn't sleep."*

After the flood, with Plan's help, the Holdibari Children's Group decided to create an action plan to prepare for future floods: *"Now we save some rice so we will have food if there is a flood. When the rice runs out we can use money from this money bank. This is carbolic soap. We break it up and hang it in the corners of the house to keep snakes away. I've just hung all these things up here so they don't get wet when the floods come."*

Shapla with family and friends.



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Shapla's mother says: "I've learned a lot from the children's group. Shapla has even shown me how to hang a vegetable garden."

Shapla says: *"We have also designed a portable stove because it is hard to cook when there is a flood."* Her brother adds: "My mum is making a stove from mud I have brought from the riverbank. She is mixing the mud with water and shaping it."

"I don't fear the river," says Shapla, *"but it takes a lot of things away from people and that's what frightens me. If the river keeps on eroding we won't be able to stay here any more. We'll just have to move to another part of the island. We hope that the work of our group will keep children and families safe."*



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Resilience and adolescent girls

Both the humanitarian and the development communities are currently interested in the concept of resilience – which, as one report notes “has become everyone’s concern but nobody’s full responsibility”.¹⁹ One way of building such resilience is to take account of the needs and wishes of adolescent girls and boys. Participation in disaster risk reduction (DRR) work can give adolescent girls and their communities many benefits:

- Increases a girl’s self-esteem, confidence and resilience
- Improves communication, negotiation and teamwork skills
- Builds more positive relationships with adults and boys
- Ensures that they are aware of who to go to if there is a problem
- Gives them the confidence that someone in authority is looking out for their needs
- Encourages better educational performance for the girls themselves
- Improved disaster preparedness for themselves, their peers and their community
- Contributes towards gender equality – adults and adolescent boys see that they

are capable; more respect for girls’ ideas and girls’ rights.

Girls have strength and stamina, as our research with girls from the Philippines after Typhoon Ondoy makes clear: “The girls interviewed in this study are strong – mentally and emotionally. They have had to adapt to their circumstances and find positivity through their friends, family, and contentment for each day.”²⁰ But there are still too many girls whose experience of disasters has led to a downward spiral of violence, poverty and discrimination.

The humanitarian community needs to recognise that adolescent girls are key to tackling the root causes of intergenerational poverty and vulnerability in disaster. This means listening to girls’ wishes and experiences. There is no point asking a ‘community’ what they think or need: it will often be the men who answer. Women and men, girls and boys must be consulted separately. The humanitarian community knows that is what it needs to do, and why, but consistently fails to do it. Adolescent girls can show the way forward in disasters – if only we would give them the chance to speak.

The aftermath of Typhoon Bopha.

'WE COULD DO THAT HERE' – INVOLVING GIRLS IN REDUCING THE RISK OF DISASTERS

A project in Indonesia, Child Centred DRR, worked with girls and boys to build local resilience to disasters.²¹ Girls mapped out local risks facing their community and were perceptive in analysing why some members of their community were particularly vulnerable.

"The trees get cut down for farming but the hillside is steep and the soil washes down. Then there is a landslide and houses are buried and animals die. In some places they build a terrace and that can stop the landslide. We could do that here," said 13-year-old Helen.

The programme also supported girls to make use of their new knowledge to mobilise others in the community. For example, girls from Rembang used *Quasidah* music traditionally played at festivals and religious events. They wrote lyrics that promoted disaster risk reduction (DDR) action and proudly performed their new songs at events in their villages. They were encouraged by positive feedback from their peers and parents and by hearing so many people afterwards singing the songs' catchy lyrics. Girls from other communities

used theatre and videos. *"Through video, we are able to explain the real situation in our village. This is one of the best ways to influence people. We are not only talking about our problems but also showing something real that we can do together to help solve these problems,"* said Marlis, a 15-year-old girl from Sikka.

As a result of their work, the communities where the girls live have improved their waste management, and planted several hectares of trees that will help to protect them from floods and landslides and protect their water sources. They have also secured greater commitment from community members to prevent further damage to local mangrove forests. The determination of these girls to make a safer future has fostered a new perspective in their local leaders. S Hamid Hasan, Head of the Indonesia Association for School Curriculum Development, said: "The most effective way to minimise risks is by educating children, by introducing disaster risk reduction [DRR] from their early years. We need to involve both girls and boys."



Young people on their way to plant mangroves in Indonesia.

2 No voice for the most marginalised

"I think one of the worst challenges was that we weren't able to speak. The community wouldn't recognise that we had something important to say because we were young and female."

Xiomara, 19, from El Salvador, who became involved in a disaster risk reduction programme at the age of 12²²

"Disasters compound social exclusion and existing vulnerabilities, disproportionately impacting the poor, women, children, the elderly, disabled, minority groups, and those marginalised in other ways. Reconstruction and recovery interventions are also not neutral. They can increase, reinforce, or reduce existing inequalities."

Margaret Arnold and Cynthia Burton²³

If women and adolescent girls are often marginalised and not listened to in a disaster, the situation is even more difficult for those who find themselves facing multiple aspects of discrimination, not only because of their age and sex, but also, for example, because they come from an ethnic minority group, or have a disability, or are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation

and gender identity, or several of these combined.

Although more research is needed, there is evidence that girls who come from religious, ethnic, linguistic, racial or other minorities are more likely to be excluded from school even in normal times, and face added disadvantages in disasters.²⁴ For example, a Human Rights Watch report notes that after the earthquake in Gujarat in 2001, camps were segregated by caste and religion, with Dalits and Muslims denied equal access to adequate shelter, electricity, running water, and other supplies that were available to higher caste Hindus.²⁵ There is evidence that during the 2004 tsunami in India, Dalits (formerly known as 'Untouchables'), continued to be discriminated against in disaster provision. This schoolgirl from Raja Nagar described her experience: *"At my school, they were handing out shoes, books and other things for the tsunami victims. As our village was hard hit, and my parents had lost their work, I too accepted the things. But the Meenavar [higher caste] children got their parents to make the teachers take them back off us. I had to give back everything. The teachers made me kneel in front of the school to humiliate me, as a punishment."*²⁶



Dalits living near the railway in New Delhi.

The right to a full and decent life – adolescent girls with disabilities

“The whole question of how to assist people with disabilities in emergencies, let alone how they might help themselves, each other, and assist planners, has been roundly overlooked.”

Professor David Alexander,
University College London²⁷

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 23

A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children.

The World Report on Disabilities states that about 15 per cent of the world’s population and 200 million children are estimated to be living with disabilities.^{28,29} Four out of five live in the developing world. There is no indication of the numbers of girls and boys or of the numbers of adolescents in these figures. Nor is there any official provision for young people with disabilities in disaster situations. “Conservative estimates suggest that seven million children with disabilities are impacted by disasters each year. Millions more acquire disabilities during childhood as a consequence of disaster,” says one report.³⁰

There are a number of barriers to inclusion for children with disabilities in disasters:

- Aids and devices lost during disasters are rarely included in non-food item lists
- Girls and boys with disabilities are often invisible in registration processes and excluded from emergency support and essential services
- Girls and boys with disabilities are often excluded from disaster risk reduction (DRR) education programmes and community activities where such interventions take place
- Children with disabilities, especially girls, are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, particularly in refugee or displaced persons settings where they may be separated from their families and communities.³¹



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For example, though they did not differentiate between girls and boys, in Bangladesh research showed that respondents believed “disabled children are neglected by their families during natural disasters. Their illnesses are treated much later than those of other children. They are often rebuked if they talk about their physical problems. The respondents mentioned that during disaster times it is much more difficult for disabled children to go to a *Kabiraj*, or village doctor, or to the Upazilla Health Complex. These children do not get outside treatment during natural disasters, and are taken to outside facilities only if their life is at risk.”³²

Likewise, primary research in South Sudan for this report found that: “Being physically challenged makes disabled children more vulnerable.”³³ For instance, in Jongolei state the study noted that physically disabled children are usually abandoned as the rest of the family ran away from danger. Some of the abandoned disabled children were burnt as attackers torched houses, others were slaughtered.

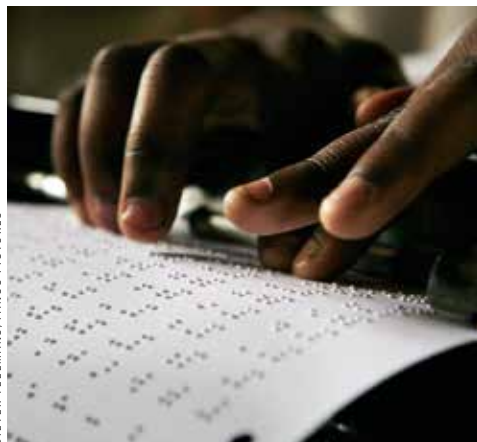
Disability can also make women and girls more vulnerable to sexual assault and rape – one review in Haiti found more sexual assaults among women and girls with disabilities than those without.³⁴

Adolescent girls with disabilities face discrimination in such situations due not only to their disability, but also their age and sex. "The children bother me. They throw stones and shout at me... I would prefer that they speak to me and tell me who they are," said Hodan, who lost her eyesight and her lower arm in a bombing near her home in Somalia when she was nine years old. She now lives in a refugee camp in Ethiopia, has learned Braille and is a confident young woman.³⁵

One report by the Women's Refugee Commission found that: "In all the refugee camp situations surveyed, more boys with disabilities were attending school than girls with disabilities."³⁶ In Thailand, for example, the 2005 ZOA Education Survey found that 51 per cent of children attending schools in the Karen camps were boys and 49 per cent were girls. But data from World Education and the Karen Women's Organisation show that among disabled children attending schools in the same camps, 61 per cent were male and only 39 per cent were female.³⁷

In Dadaab camp in Kenya, notes the Women's Refugee Commission report, "considerable community awareness raising was needed to persuade the refugee community that all children with disabilities, including girls, had the right to education".

Disabled girls may be more vulnerable to abuse. This mother of a young woman with disabilities in Aw'bare camp, Ethiopia, said: "If you have a disabled girl, you always worry – a man might come and give her money. She takes the money to get food and he will ask for something back – she will end up pregnant."³⁸



DIETER TELEMANS/PANOS PICTURES

KAZOL'S STORY³⁹

Kazol is a young woman from Bangladesh. She uses a wheelchair and is president of the Ward Committee on Disaster and leader of a sub-committee on cleanliness during floods.

"In 2003 I fell from a chair and the lower part of my body was totally paralysed. From that day we tried different treatments from doctors and others but my condition did not improve.

My life was good before the accident. I was in school and I got married. But after my accident my husband left me. Community attitudes also changed. I became an additional burden in my brother's family, as they had to spend a lot of money for my treatment.

Before, I was treated with affection, but after the accident, it was no more. I felt very sad.

People from GUK, a local organisation, identified and supported me. They provided me with a wheelchair which helped my mobility. It helped me a lot to use it in the community.

Before the wheelchair, I had a problem with safe water and sanitation: the tube-well and the toilet were not accessible for me. At least two persons would have to carry me to the toilet and to the tube-well. It was a big thing for me when the wheelchair came and the ramp was put in to make the tube-well and toilet accessible.

I received training from GUK in sewing. I bought a sewing machine, and I get orders from the village people and then make the garments and sell to them. With all these changes, I don't feel like a burden any more in the family; in the community people treat me nicely.

I'm the president of the Ward Committee on Disaster. Also I'm the leader of a sub-committee on cleanliness during floods. I have to help people understand how to keep food clean so that it is not affected by germs. We have an early warning system, and make sure a person with speech and hearing impairment knows how the warning system is working for them.

When a flood is coming, we have to

WAHID ADNAN/DRIK, BANGLADESH, CDD/CBM AUSTRALIA.





prepare: we store dry food and firewood. We make a list of doctors with their phone numbers; we use that list during the flood if needed. We also plan how to rescue people with disabilities during a flood and where to take them to a shelter, with accessible toilets.

Before these committees, we were very vulnerable. When the area was affected by flood, nobody bothered about the person with disabilities; we were totally neglected and helpless as there is always a rush for leaving. But now we have made a list of persons with disabilities in the area. We know in which place the person with disabilities is living so we can take immediate steps to evacuate them.

I was always afraid when there was a prospect of flooding but now we know what to do, so I'm not afraid anymore. If there is a flood, I can face it. I feel proud with my role in the community: people didn't know what to do and now I'm there to help them learn. I feel good!"

'They told my parents they didn't need to feed me' – discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation

"When the district leaders came to hand out food supplies, my family got half of what other families got. They told my parents that they didn't need to feed me, and that the family didn't deserve the full portion because they had a child like me."

Manosh, who lives in a village in Nepal and identifies as a *meti* or male-bodied feminine person, often categorised as 'gay' or 'transgender'¹⁴⁰

We know that existing prejudices tend to be played out in disasters, and

prejudices against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are no exception. Adolescent girls who are lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex may also face difficulties in disasters. In some societies, homosexuality is illegal or unrecognised, and young lesbians and gays already struggle with the discrimination they face in coming out; a struggle that is not made easier in a disaster.

For young men and women who know they are not heterosexual, or who are finding out about their sexuality, adolescence can be a difficult and confusing time. Documents produced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) make no mention of the needs of LGBTI people. Nor do the disaster and crisis relief protocols of UNAIDS, the Joint UN Programme on HIV/ AIDS.

One study in Nepal notes: "Relief efforts typically use the family as a common unit for analysing and distributing relief services. As a result, relief aid rarely extends to LGBTI people. LGBTI people are vulnerable to being forced out of their family living situations as a result of stigma and prejudice. For those who live with their families, prejudice inside the family unit can mean that LGBTI family members receive less material aid inside the household."

On the other hand, the impact of a disaster can sometimes lead to a re-evaluation of young women's lives and a new confidence in their sexual orientation and gender identity and in who they are and what they want to do.

Marching for Gay Pride in Nepal.



PIERS BENATAR/PANOS PICTURES

GROWING UP FAST – YOUNG WOMEN REFLECT ON THEIR SEXUAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA⁴¹

As part of the primary research for this report, Lisa Overton spoke to eight young women who lived through Hurricane Katrina in 2005 in New Orleans, Louisiana, which is one of the poorest states in the US.⁴² At the time of the disaster they were aged between 13 and 20; they are now between 20 and 26. They all spoke of how Katrina shocked them into realising how important it was to live happy and fulfilling lives and remain true to themselves. The young women all remembered Hurricane Katrina very clearly; where they were, who they were with, and what happened to them. They all talked about the fact that being young and struggling with their identities made the experience particularly difficult. Beaux said: *"It was a crazy time and I don't think people knew what they were doing. I was terrified*

about being alone after Katrina and as a young woman I felt so vulnerable. It made me realise how dangerous the city is."

They all recognised that if Katrina had happened when they were 'full-grown adults', their experiences would have been entirely different. Katrina changed their adolescent years by changing the roles they played within the family: *"I think a lot of [kids our age] were expected to grow up faster than we wanted to. I think we expected a lot more from the older people and they expected a lot from us."* This was both a negative and a positive experience: *"I think it was better for us though... I got a new independence out of it,"* said Elizabeth.

"My sister was so upset and she only wanted me or my mum" said Beaux. *"But my mum was trapped*

New Orleans,
2005.



at the hospital and none of us even knew if she was ok. We didn't know anything but I had to reassure Amy and help her... Every night I would just cry on my own in my room... And then I would be strong for Amy and for my family."

For some girls, relationships with family members were already tense, and Katrina exacerbated the stress. Before Katrina, the girls said they felt a lot of pressure from family to behave in a certain way because of gender norms and because they were young. Betty says: "Over the years my mum tried to make me like her perfect daughter." And Jessica explains: "I felt [discrimination against gay people] at home but that's because I come from a Hispanic family. My mother believes that when you get married it's a woman and a man not a woman and a woman."

Girls of college age were able to benefit from post-Katrina goodwill where many colleges opened their doors to 'Katrina evacuees', not only waiving school fees for the semester but also providing free accommodation, small grants and other support.

For the young women at college, it was the first time they had been away from their hometowns and their families, so it was a chance for them to be independent, self-reliant and build their characters. As Beaux explains: "Moving away allowed me to start with a clean slate. My coming out kind of happened in stages and it was nice after Katrina. I was able to have a coming-out experience I could control."

Jessica feels the same way: "Katrina was a sexual exploration for me. For one, I started dating girls and I realised that I wanted to be with girls. It was a revelation [and I learned what] I wanted sexually. It was almost like, so this disaster happened, what else more can happen? It felt like a lot of people changed after Katrina and became more accepting."

Elizabeth, who was 17 and had a drug habit at the time of Katrina, also decided to turn her life around. She explains: "Katrina was the best and worst thing of my life... when the storm was over I would go and sit on the roof of my house and I would just listen to the silence. It started to make me appreciate all the things I didn't appreciate before and it was that time when I decided to get clean so it was a turning point for me. I realised who I was. Today, I still have my independence, I'm still clean and I'm still loving life, I love my girlfriend, I love women and I love everything. If you did it, survived it and are still living that's the really good life." Elizabeth now has a career as a hairstylist.

Asked what could have been done at the time for adolescent girls, the young women had a number of suggestions. The most prominent was some kind of 'safe space' to go to, both inside and outside school. Phoebe suggests "hang-outs and a space for young people to go to just meet people without having to drink to socialise". Jay had the idea of safe space training where teachers learn about LGBTI issues and display a triangle sticker so students know they can talk to them about sexuality-related issues. Billie wants "a place to get away from family", and Jessica suggests "self-defence classes so that young women know how to protect themselves".

Despite the fear and the stress clearly articulated by the young women interviewed, this small study also reveals that some good came out of the experience of the hurricane. It opened up an opportunity for these girls to further explore their sexualities and to change prejudices and stereotypes. Through their own determination, resilience and resourcefulness they were able to create something positive for themselves, even in such difficult circumstances.





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3 'A way to be heard' – exercising power to support girls

"International Disaster Risk Reduction Day 2012 is about moving away from portrayals of women and girls as victims. It's about showing the world that they are really among the most active when it comes to creating resilience and protecting their communities."

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström

"I want someone who I can go to if there are problems. We should be able to tell our government that we need help, that we need shelter, food, jobs, school, places to wash privately. I want a way that I can be heard."

Sheila, 16⁴³

Time and time again, girls and young women have proved their intelligence, common sense and tenacity in times of disaster, often saving their families by thinking on their feet and acting to save siblings, grandparents and possessions from wind, waves and water.

We have shown examples of how things

can be done better and what happens when girls are consulted. Many of these are quite simple. Girls and young women who have taken part in disaster preparedness programmes know the danger signs of a flood or tsunami. Those who have taken part in mock drills have learned how best to work together if a disaster arrives. They have used their knowledge to keep not only themselves and their families safe, but also their friends and the wider community. Adolescent girls can also be consulted on a range of activities, from needs assessments to camp design, from disaster risk reduction activities to monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

Girls like Honey, who lives in Santa Paz in the Philippines. She was 15 when she learned at school that the government had found that her school was built on a site at risk of landslides. She decided to do something about it. So, along with some of her schoolmates, she started a campaign to get the whole high school of 379 students moved somewhere safer. At first, parents and local government officials opposed her – it was too expensive, it would never happen, there were other more important things to do... But Honey and her friends persevered. They organised a community-

wide referendum – and won. They went on to lobby the provincial governor, who eventually agreed that a new school should be built in a safer place. Today, though Honey has grown up and left school, her younger siblings and their friends are in a new school, where they no longer have to live in fear of the next disaster. Honey says: *“I hope that all the people in our village will learn that it’s really important to think about safety first, so that the children will be safe and their lives will not be lost if there is another disaster.”*⁴⁴

Xiomara and María Elena from El Salvador were involved in disaster risk reduction work from the age of 12.⁴⁵ Their advice to other girls is: *“Don’t give up; there comes a time when you will be able to have your say, but you have to work hard and all come together. As they say, ‘there’s strength in numbers!’ We want to encourage and inspire [other girls] so that they are able to have the same initiatives, the same energy, the same positive attitude as us, so that when their moment comes, they can do things themselves.”*

These girls are up to the challenge. It is also a matter of raising the awareness and strengthening the capacities of adults, education practitioners, communities, media and local government so that they are aware of adolescent girls in disaster management and planning. It is up to those in charge of policy and practice to decide to listen to adolescent girls and to act on what they have to say, to the benefit of the whole



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A disaster drill in Bangladesh.

community. The media, too, needs to be made aware that different sectors within a population have different needs, and ensure that the voices of adolescent girls are heard.

When asked in the survey of humanitarian workers for this report what a best practice integrated response would look like in emergencies, girls’ consultation and participation were seen as key.⁴⁶ As one respondent noted: “An integrated response is one where needs are identified by the girls themselves, and implemented with their participation and continuous feedback. Awareness-raising within the community regarding adolescent girls’ rights and participation should be an integral part of the response, with advocacy at the higher level to back up change.”

The next chapter outlines in detail what needs to change for adolescent girls to be included in humanitarian programming. If those managing camps and distributing emergency provisions do two things: count girls by age, and as separate from boys rather than including them under ‘women’ or ‘children’; and work together with girls like Honey, Xiomara and María Elena to identify what is needed for girls and their families and how it can be put in place, then disaster provision will be improved, not just for adolescent girls, but for everyone. In a world where climate-related disasters are increasing, and emergencies are becoming ever more complex, it is both a practical and moral imperative to address the needs of adolescent girls, and to listen to what they have to say.

First aid training in Bangladesh.



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REAL CHOICES, REAL LIVES

Over the past seven years Plan's 'Real Choices, Real Lives' cohort study (see Section 2 of this report), has followed 142 girls, born in 2006, who live in nine developing countries around the world. Earlier this year, we ran a series of focus group discussions in three of these countries which had experienced a disaster – the Philippines, El Salvador and Vietnam – with teenage girls from the same communities as the cohort study participants. Plan's researchers in each country also conducted in-depth interviews with the older girls.

The insight they provide reinforces the views and research outlined elsewhere in this year's report. It also underlines the importance of girls' participation in disaster risk management and in formulating strategies to encourage resilience and reduce risk.

Responding to disaster – 'There is nobody to teach us'

It is clear from all our interviews in the three countries that girls want to participate in activities in their communities to reduce the risk of, or respond to, disasters.

Our research suggests that while girls have the capabilities, knowledge and skills to contribute to disaster awareness programmes, they need to be empowered to put this into practice. Some girls identified both causes and effects of potential hazards, demonstrating that they had received some form of education regarding disaster risk reduction and response. Sixteen-year-old Mary Jane from the Philippines told us that during disasters she knows how to *"keep things safe, and then get food that is not easily spoiled, and then the clothes, prepare them, so that when there is a typhoon coming, it will be easy to pack up"*. Likewise, 17-year-old Evelyn from El Salvador told us that following an earthquake in 2011, *"now I know more or less what to do, because we had simulations at school"*.

However, other girls had little or no knowledge of how to respond to a disaster. Many reported that they relied on their fathers during such times. Thirteen-year-old Ngan from Vietnam confirmed, *"If disaster or emergency occurs, I don't know what to do and I must ask my father."* This statement is one example of the tendency to revert to traditional gender norms and stereotypes during times of disaster and of the general disempowerment of girls and women and their capacity to contribute to response efforts. In contrast, 16-year-old Linda from El Salvador attributes her survival during flooding

in her community to her mother: *"Thank God my mother felt it coming; when the water was near she noticed a bad smell, a muddy smell, because the rushing water is all dirty. So my mother smelled the mud and she got up and saw that the river was coming close, so we all began to pack up clothes, shoes, our documents and our things to leave the house. By the time the water came into our home we were on higher ground."*

The girls went on to explain some of ways they learned of potential disasters: from second-hand information passed down by their parents or other adults attending village committee meetings, through loudspeaker networks, school lessons, or from leaflets distributed at school. Some also mentioned access to television and other technology, such as radio and social media, as outlets of information for disasters. In Vietnam, 19-year-old Hue said: *"In my family, my parents watch this weather forecasting programme every day to know which day is rainy, which day is sunny, to have proper preparedness."* Likewise, in the Philippines, girls told us how disaster announcements are made on television and radio, and *"the village government announces it. They advise us to store food."* In El Salvador, 16-year-old Miriam told us that she was alerted to a storm by a television show: *"We had heard on Moises Urbina's news programme that there would be strong winds."*

April, 13, in the Philippines explained that she believed that men are more prepared for a disaster, and are more likely to know what to do in the event of a disaster because of *"their abilities"*. However, she says that women are more likely to have more information on disaster alerts through television as they are *"just in the house"* while the men are *"in the farms, while others are out at sea"*.

Many of the other girls we interviewed were well aware that they had a contribution to make.



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Seventeen-year-old Evelyn's school in El Salvador is in a landslide risk zone and is located underneath a large boulder. She told us: *"If it falls, it would destroy the school. The teachers have written several letters for help but nobody does anything, so when it rains they cancel classes so that nobody is in danger... When it rains I don't feel safe at the school, I feel safer at home; I'm afraid to be at the school."* Evelyn went on to tell us that she and her classmates could be supported by training: *"My role as a young person, I think, is to take care of the younger children. If anything like this happens then we have to help the teachers to calm the children down at the school. If we get trained then that knowledge shouldn't stay just with us... we would have to teach the rest of the grades what to do in case of emergency."* Eighteen-year-old Hoa from Vietnam said: *"In my opinion, girls should have their own sense of responsibility. They should improve their knowledge through watching TV, reading newspapers or learning at school. When disaster strikes, I must keep calm; and together with my parents be ready to put preparedness plans into action."* She went on to say that youth unions could play a role in helping girls to overcome difficulties faced in the disaster. This sentiment was echoed by other girls in Vietnam, including 19-year-old Hue: *"Children's clubs should be set up and children can join to share all of their concerns and the way to respond to an emergency. The thing that I can do by myself is to organise [training in] swimming techniques, resuscitation or basic life skills. When disaster occurs, girls will have different personal needs."*

Another group of girls between 13 and 15 in Vietnam suggested the use of home tutoring in order to help girls stay on top of their school work, and *"support and communicate with girls on personal hygiene or food to avoid disease"*. April, from the Philippines, talked of the 'happy' feeling she got from helping her family during a typhoon: *"It seems that you feel light, that you gave help, and it seems that you need not think of anything else."*

Suggestions from the 13 to 16-year-olds in Vietnam showed how they would like to see a wide variety of risk reduction activities in place directly targeting girls. They had some very practical suggestions: make sure girls have a 'safe space' to go to after a disaster, 'provide life jackets', 'provide separate temporary shelters and additional health checks for girls'. Aileen, 17, from the Philippines felt that *"There should be separate evacuation centres for male and female"* following disasters. Aileen also went on to say that *"If there are males and females,*



DRR training in El Salvador.

when sleeping you should be beside your mother, so that someone will look after you." Mynelyn, 17, from the Philippines added that *"women should have privacy"* in bathing facilities. Sixteen-year-old Linda from El Salvador said that in her community, *"some sanitary pads came with the food; but I didn't see if any toys came"*.

When asked if her life had changed because of the flood she experienced, Linda told us: *"I think so. I had never seen anything like it, I think I have changed, because the first time I saw it I was very afraid, but when it happened a second time I thought to myself 'this has happened to me before' and I wasn't as fearful as I felt the first time."*

Thirteen-year-old April from the Philippines says that 'self-confidence' is the key to unlocking opportunities for girls in disaster situations and governments could do this by providing what girls *"personally need for themselves... personal effects like comb, clothes, shampoo and soap, and footwear."* Girls talked of the importance of having a female representative or leader in their village committees, and as April rightly says, having female representation and girls' feedback on what they need during and after disasters is important *"because she herself will be the one to say what she knows, about her experiences, and what should be done"*. Linda, 16, from El Salvador, went further: *"Youth should be trained on sex education and sexuality, often young people need that... I think we need more training on leadership, lots of times young people don't learn because there is nobody to teach us... and also we should learn about emergency plans and other topics."* She added: *"There are many people who say that we shouldn't have a say because we are too young, but I do think that we can add our own ideas too."*



Translating ambition into action

6

“Failure to put women’s and girls’ needs and concerns explicitly in humanitarian work undermines the effectiveness of relief efforts.”

Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director, UN Women^{i,1}

“Most of the reports made by adults and children were different. For instance, children reported on neglect, sexual as well as physical abuse, whereas adults wanted to talk about food aid.”

Jesca, 17, Vice-Chairperson, Children’s Feedback Committee, Zimbabwe

Throughout this report, we have argued that putting young people and the local community at the heart of humanitarian action is key to a more effective response and to recovery. This requires an integrated approach that includes knowledge of the needs and rights of the affected population, an understanding of their capabilities and constraints, and a commitment to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. This need for integration comes into even sharper focus when the rights of adolescent girls are acknowledged as a critical issue.

Girls’ Rights in Emergencies

Key Action Points:

- 1 Consult adolescent girls in all stages of disaster preparedness and response
- 2 Train and mobilise women to work in emergency response teams
- 3 Provide targeted services for adolescent girls in the core areas of education, protection and sexual and reproductive health
- 4 Include funding for protection against gender-based violence in the first phase of emergency response
- 5 Collect sex and age disaggregated data, to show the needs of adolescent girls and inform programme planning.

In situations where gender inequality means that women and girls are already second-class citizens, the added burden of a disaster may put their safety – and even their lives – at risk. This is particularly true for adolescent girls, who are vulnerable both because they are female and because they are young. Research for this report has found that it is girls who are most likely to be pulled out of school, married too young, or



pushed into transactional sex or prostitution in order to help feed families struggling with the poverty and chaos disaster brings. Their specific needs, however, are rarely taken into consideration; they are neither counted nor consulted, and because of this they and their rights are ignored.

Conducting research, to provide the evidence to inform programming, is vital but is currently, at best, haphazard. A study by Tufts University² noted that “the humanitarian system shows significant weaknesses in data collection, analysis and response in all stages of a crisis or emergency”, and added that “having information gaps on sex and age limits the effectiveness of humanitarian response in all phases of a crisis”. The study found that, despite the fact that nearly all the guidance notes, whether general, or sectoral and agency specific, require the collection of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD), in practice it was very rare for this data to be collected properly, analysed and used to influence programme work.

A critical understanding of who is being responded to – what their needs, rights and skills are – is central to maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of relief

and response efforts. In most emergency situations, the local population are first on the scene and have the most in-depth knowledge of their communities. Efforts to help prepare all sections of the population and then to have a system in place that can harness their knowledge and skills during the response phase is crucial. In the survey of 318 humanitarian workers conducted for this report, consultation with adolescent girls, “*listen to girls to know the real needs of adolescents*”, was identified as key to both understanding their needs and responding to them effectively. Supporting the development initiatives of adolescent girls, strengthening their ability to protect themselves and to know their rights were seen as essential strategies to improving response.

Now is a good time to review humanitarian practice. In the run-up to 2015, when both the Millennium Development Goals³ and the Hyogo Framework for Action⁴ are set to be reformulated, there is an escalating global discourse on challenging business as usual by integrating Disaster Risk Management (DRM) more fully into development policy and practice. In effect, this will acknowledge the potential

for continuity between development and humanitarian work. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) transformative agenda⁵ is also looking to reinforce the response of the humanitarian system to disasters through strengthened leadership, improved strategic planning at the country level, streamlined coordination mechanisms, and enhanced accountability. These new initiatives need to ensure that any new global development roadmap integrates risk management as a core component and contributes to building resilience by tackling the root causes of vulnerability such as exclusion on the basis of sex and age.

Caught between categories, neither women nor children, adolescent girls are among the most hidden members of the community and, as we have seen, their invisibility increases their risk. However, without strong systems in place to protect them, there are risks too when they are visible. Reducing these risks, focusing on protection, education and sexual and reproductive health, making sure that girls are consulted, and that both their vulnerability and their capability is recognised, will mean that building back better, safer and fairer, is a more achievable goal. And the lesser aim of "do no harm" will not be violated. Already there are guidelines and standards in place to this end. However, they are rarely implemented or monitored, nor do they go far enough. Taking practical steps to consult girls themselves, to train staff, to take gender-based violence in all its manifestations very seriously and to put gender equality inalienably at the centre of humanitarian practice will both prove more effective and will promote and protect the human rights of girls and young women.

"If we want our assistance to be effective and cost-efficient, we must not just put a bandage on the wound – we must help find a cure. This requires a shared vision from the humanitarian and the development communities and a joint commitment to act."

European Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva, responsible for international cooperation, humanitarian aid and crisis response

Keeping girls safe in a disaster

Plan's research in Bangladesh and Ethiopia⁶ asked girls what they felt was needed to keep them safe in disaster. They had three clear priorities:

- 1 Greater access to quality education: to enhance their knowledge, skills and capacity to adapt and reduce disaster risks; improve their prospects to pursue more resilient livelihoods; and safeguard their futures.
 - 2 Greater protection from gender-based violence: to ensure those in authority understand and respond to the protection risks exacerbated by disasters and a changing climate, including child labour, child migration, child marriage and sexual violence.
 - 3 Greater participation in climate change adaptation decision-making and risk reduction activities: to ensure that the views of girls are listened to and their priorities acted upon in all decision-making which affects their wellbeing.
- This also builds girls' knowledge, skills and confidence so that they can become more resilient.

Bangladesh.



G.M.B. AKASH/PANOS PICTURES

Recommendations

In the sections below we make recommendations to the humanitarian and development sectors, working at international, national and local levels, to national governments and to local institutions, that could help transform the experience of adolescent girls in disasters.

They are grouped under the following headings:

Evidence: Understanding the needs and rights of adolescent girls in disasters

Resources: Providing targeted services for adolescent girls

Prevention, Participation and Integration: Building girls' resilience

Evidence: Understanding the needs and rights of adolescent girls in disasters

The IASC gender marker⁷ has been a positive step but its efficacy will be improved by looking not just at gender but at different age groups. The Sphere Standards currently in place must be implemented and their next revision should include the further disaggregation, indicated below. Precise information will not only increase the visibility of adolescent girls and enable services to be targeted more effectively but will be a step towards recognising that this age group can make a valuable contribution in times of disaster.

1 The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) must:

- a. **Include** age in the gender marker; donors must ensure that this new standard is implemented and monitored.
- b. **Collect** SADD with more precisely defined age groups in line with the Sphere standards – 0-5, 6-12, 13-17, 18-24 (young men and women) – and where possible provide additional disaggregation within these cohorts.

2 UN Agencies, INGOs, national and donor governments must:

- a. Ensure that all disaster needs assessment teams are gender-balanced.

- b. Integrate SADD into all disaster needs assessments.
- c. Ensure the participation of adolescent girls in the assessment process.

PROMISING PRACTICE

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE⁸

Working with survivors of gender-based violence in emergencies and post-conflict situations, the International Rescue Committee made broad shifts in internal policy and programming, after learning that 45 per cent of survivors seeking assistance in its programmes around the world were under 18 years old. Originally assuming that its women's programmes were meeting the needs of adolescent girls, the organisation recognised through further data analysis that its programmes' design either unintentionally excluded them or increased their vulnerability. The IRC began a conversation internally (in the Women's Protection and Empowerment, Child Protection, and Health units) and externally (including the Population Council, the Women's Refugee Commission, and others), which resulted in the identification of the following actions needed to improve programmes for adolescent girls and ensure that the organisation was doing no harm:

- Better targeting and segmenting of populations within programmes
- Understanding age-appropriate needs
- Creating safe spaces and recruiting girl mentors
- Developing positive social networks with mentors
- Working with families to establish support systems for adolescent girls.

Building upon this shift in approach and its significant experience in these areas, IRC then developed integrated programme models to maximise its collective response to adolescent girls. IRC's next steps are to continue internal collaboration around integrated models, and secure funding for a pilot.



Resources: Providing targeted services for adolescent girls

Education and protection are at the top of the list when girls are asked for their priorities during an emergency situation.⁹ And yet the money allocated to protection and education is not a large proportion of humanitarian aid budgets overall: OCHA's global analysis of funding demonstrates that the final allocation of funding to protection and education programmes is less than half the amount requested. Protection needs should be included across the different sectors in which humanitarian aid is delivered; planning for WASH, for example – the lighting, location and privacy of latrines and other sanitation facilities – should also keep adolescent girls safe and secure.

Legislation, tools, guidelines and resources already exist that should support and protect

adolescent girls in times of disaster. In 1999 the IASC issued a Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance, which has been bolstered by a variety of projects, tools, and resources. At the international level, the Hyogo Framework for Action includes among its priorities for 2005-15 the aspiration that “a gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training”. And yet these recommendations are not consistently put into practice and, furthermore, most of the tools and programmes never mention adolescent girls as separate from women or children or recognise that they have a unique situation both in disasters and in disaster risk management.

Schoolgirls in Pakistan.

Online Survey: Top Priorities

In the survey of humanitarian workers conducted for this report, respondents noted “an urgent need for training, guidelines and mechanisms to hold humanitarians accountable to adolescent girls.”¹⁰ Respondents were also asked to prioritise a list of key actions which, when combined, could present a best practice strategy for improving humanitarian response to adolescent girls in emergencies. The top priorities from 176 humanitarian workers were:

- Increase focus on building the research base on the specific needs of adolescent girls
- Increase donor interest in funding programmes for adolescent girls
- Improve and increase the collection of sex and age disaggregated data
- Create and promote specific guidelines / tools to respond to adolescent girls
- Increase capacity / training in response to the specific needs of adolescent girls
- Increase awareness-raising around the specific needs of adolescent girls
- Undertake meaningful consultation with adolescent girls to identify their specific needs.

3 Donors must:

- a. Make education a higher priority within humanitarian response. Funding for education in emergencies should be increased from two per cent to four per cent of overall budgets.¹¹
- b. Increase child protection funding¹² and target funds to combat gender-based violence against adolescent girls. This should be included in first phase response and all interventions must be accessible to and appropriate for adolescent girls.
- c. Allocate sufficient health funding and ensure the provision of sexual and reproductive health and rights information services for adolescent girls, including psychosocial care and support, in emergency response.
- d. Fund and require the integration of gender and child rights analysis throughout the humanitarian programme cycle.

4 UN Agencies, UN Humanitarian Coordinators and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee must:

- a. Strengthen the implementation of existing tools and guidelines, including the GenCap¹³ support to humanitarian programmes by increasing staffing levels and ensuring the deployment of at least two advisors per emergency (Level Two and above) as well as by increasing gender training for humanitarian staff.

PROMISING PRACTICE

DFID – VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS INNOVATION FUND

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) has invested to increase the evidence base on what works to tackle and prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), through the establishment of a fund of up to £25 million (over 2013-18).^{14,15}

The Fund will consist of three distinct but inter-related components that address critical international evidence gaps:¹⁶ the primary prevention of VAWG (in stable and fragile contexts), VAWG in conflict and humanitarian emergencies and the economic and social costs of VAWG.

It will collect evidence of violence against women and girls from 10 countries in Africa and Asia to help shape a new prevention



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strategy over a five-year period.¹⁷ It will drive innovation, build the global evidence base and support new programmes to tackle violence against women and girls. The funding will support operational research and impact evaluations, including programmes in conflict and humanitarian emergencies and innovation grants for new programmes that have the potential to be taken to scale.¹⁸

Temporary school in Burkina Faso.

Prevention, Participation and Integration: Building girls' resilience

Within work to support communities in emergencies it is vital to acknowledge the specific enablers that will promote the resilience of adolescent girls. Programme planning for development should integrate a thorough risk analysis which factors in the roles and capabilities of different community groups. Building resilience in a multi-risk environment can help bridge the gap between different disciplines such as development and emergencies. The divide between humanitarian and development work is essentially artificial, but it has taken hold in the minds of practitioners who have planned and practised their work over many decades largely in isolation. Today, the continuum and connections between development, building resilience and disaster response are becoming clearer and harder to ignore. The Post-MDG framework must support the closer integration of the humanitarian and development sectors, recognising the importance of building resilience as critical factors in achieving development outcomes.

5 United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) must:

- a. Include specific references to adolescent girls as an excluded group, recognising their unique vulnerabilities and promoting targeted measures to increase their resilience.
- b. Integrate SADD into the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) with indicators, against which governments report on progress.

6 Governments must:

- a. Undertake an emergency analysis of education sector plans and ensure the inclusion of education in emergency preparedness. Designate appropriate funding to address any gender gaps in these plans, and ensure that planning for education in emergencies is gender sensitive.
- b. Include in any disaster management legislation specific measures for adequate child protection, recognising and addressing the increased protection risks

- c. facing adolescent girls in emergencies.
- c. Take specific actions to involve girls actively and meaningfully in the development and monitoring of policies and legislation, including National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and disaster risk management measures.

7 All actors involved in programme delivery must:

- a. **Actively include** adolescent girls in their planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation throughout the programme cycle.

"My determination has grown stronger after the tsunami, and in the future, after I have completed my studies and hopefully become a teacher of political science, and I have established a good foundation for my future life, only then would I like to think about having children... I can see why it is so important for girls to be involved in tsunami relief activities, because they know what girls themselves need."

Udani, 20, Sri Lanka¹⁹

Playtime in a camp school.





Marcelle.

Because We are Girls

'Real Choices, Real Lives'
cohort study update

REAL CHOICES, REAL LIVES

The 'Real Choices, Real Lives' study, now in its seventh year, is following 142 girls living in nine countries around the world – Benin, Togo, Uganda, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, El Salvador, Brazil and the Dominican Republic. The study uses interviews and focus group discussions with relatives and community members to provide a detailed picture of the reality of the girls' lives. Born during 2006, they all turn seven this year.

Last year, we reported on the reflections and experiences of the girls' mothers through a series of life history interviews. We came to the conclusion that the girls' mothers – women in their twenties and thirties – hold the key to their daughters' futures in a way that no other generation of women has before. The main reason for this is that most of these women have had some level of formal education, and, as a result, are determined that their daughters too should go to school and so have the chance of greater gender equality and a more fulfilled life.

This year we will explore how, despite the promise this holds, daily life for these seven-year-olds and their families involves negotiating a series of risks and hazards, many of them unacknowledged and unrecognised.

With this in mind, we report on the girls' progress as they grow up, exploring their education, their health and general wellbeing, and their families' economic situation over the past year. What strategies are used by families and communities to mitigate the risks for girls? What interventions might be useful? Will the challenges of daily life, the discrimination which is entrenched in all societies, and the hazards to which girls are particularly vulnerable, mean that the obstacles in their way prove insurmountable as they approach adolescence?

Risk factors for girls

It is not only major events such as flood, earthquake and war – internationally recognised disasters – to which girls and young women are especially vulnerable.

Many of the families in this study live in chronic poverty, threatened by food shortages, poor infrastructure and rising costs. For many, daily life is a struggle against impending personal disaster. These daily stresses are often overlooked but can have a significant impact on the ability of girls and young women to build social and economic capital, to stay alive and healthy, and to access education.

From an early age, girls in our study have been actively encouraged to imitate the work of their mothers and grandmothers. They engaged in play focused around domestic activities when they were younger, and as they get older, are given increased responsibility for household tasks. Now, almost all of them have regular chores to perform. Bianca, in Brazil, explains: *"I do some things in the house when I arrive from school: I sweep the floor, clean the sofa, make the bed, and sweep the terrace and the backyard."* Thearika's mother, in Cambodia, told us: "She wakes up at 6 am, cleans her teeth, takes a bath by herself. She helps to take care of my small baby and then has breakfast before she walks to

school. It's about 10 minutes away. In the afternoon, she looks after her brother when he is sleeping, for around three hours." Our research also reveals the extent of daily risk faced by girls because of their gender roles and responsibilities. These more prosaic causes of injury and indeed death tend to be under-reported. In our own small study, six girls have sadly died; at least two of them as a result of household accidents – one involving a cooking fire in the home, another drowned while in a nearby river, used in place of adequate sanitation facilities.

During research interviews over the past six years we have explored the steps families take to reduce risk in order to protect their daughters. In some cases that very protection limits a girl's opportunities by



Girl doing homework, Brazil

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Girl with her mother, Cambodia

keeping her at home. Away from school, she has less access to information or chance to build her skills. The undermining of health and livelihood caused by chronic food shortages creates other risks and hazards. These ultimately affect girls' and young women's opportunities to pursue formal education. Families take action to anticipate, mitigate, prepare for and recover from hardship and this is critical for girls as they grow up. Many parents are aware that education is key to risk reduction, but sending their daughters to school is not always a simple matter of choice or desire.

Coping with financial and environmental stress

All of the families taking part in our study reported that prices have increased over the past year. With the exception of the Vietnamese families, all stated that the price of food has risen, by up to one third in some cases. Some explained that this was seasonal; others that the price-hike was unusually high. In Vietnam, the increases were limited to agricultural inputs. The impact on these rural household incomes was devastating. Hoa's father gave his view: "A combination of the rise in fuel price and in Chinese-food imports has increased the price of the inputs we need for our agricultural activities. But the price at which we can sell produce has decreased." The impact of macro-economics on household finances can be stark for families, especially those who are worse off, who often spend up to 90 per cent of their income on basic

necessities. Several studies have shown how girls and women tend to fare worse when families are affected by financial hardship over long periods of time.¹

A significant number of the families explained how seasonal drought, flooding and heavy rain had an impact on their daily lives. The increasing risk associated with climate change affects growing seasons and harvests, directly impacting on family finances. Almost all of the families routinely report crop failures, increased local food prices and food shortages at various points in the year. Sometimes, the impact can be more dramatic. The street where Amanda and her family live in Brazil does not have asphalt or sanitation. There is a large stream flowing just by the family's front door. The annual rainy season causes floods and mud slides, bringing risks to the lives of many in Amanda's community. In El Salvador, Bessy's mother worries about the ever-present threat of landslides during the annual hurricane season. She also explained how the families in her community now have to collect water from further away as their water source is drying up.



Girl with her father, Vietnam

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Girl at home, Benin

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Most families reported on a range of coping strategies for dealing with financial and environmental stress. Many stated that they do without particular food items, but on the whole, they have been able to feed their families. In Benin, however, Eleanor's family reported that during the annual food shortages they reduce the number of meals they eat from three to two per day. Others, such as Sharina's family in the Dominican Republic, adapted their own agricultural production to suit their needs when local food prices rose beyond their reach. In Uganda, a recent drought was named *Olukoba* – or cassava – after the only food families had available to them. Justine's father John explained how people had to look for odd and casual jobs, brick-making or working on the farms of the rich, in order to buy *olukoba*.

A small number of families reported that despite their best efforts, their situation is slowly declining. Lina's mother, in Cambodia, explained how the family has

been surviving for the past year: "We eat rice soup, and sometimes we supplement with [rice] noodles. For almost a year, we have not had enough food for our family. Sometimes when the children return home from a morning at school, there is no food. They simply eat rice." Malnutrition creates cycles of disadvantage that children will carry with them throughout their lives. Children and young people who suffer from hunger in their growing years often continue to be malnourished into adulthood.² They may never regain the weight they lost when food was short, their longer-term health is affected, and their cognitive abilities are impaired.³ Girls carry this cycle of malnutrition with them into motherhood.⁴

In some families, the coping strategy is increased reliance on a complex web of social networks. A growing number of the girls taking part in our study live with their grandparents, while their parents seek work in towns or cities. In Vietnam, Tien's grandparents care for her. Her grandfather explains his joy when Tien enrolled in school and how his happiness was accompanied by fear: "We were very happy but we were worried at the same time. Her mother is a widow. Our economic situation is hard. We're afraid that if we cannot afford to support her studying, she will not have good future." He adds: "We will support her in studying, depending on her ability, so that her life will not be as hard as ours." Others rely on family members, neighbours and friends for loans to pay school fees, childcare and food. Sometimes food is exchanged among families. Most reported that they have to borrow money in an emergency; very few have savings.



Girl with her family, Dominican Republic

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STATE SUPPORT

In Latin America and Asia a growing number of social protection or welfare schemes offer critical support for families with limited economic means. Some families in our study have benefited from a World Food Programme food-for-work scheme in El Salvador, from the Brazilian government's Bolsa Familia social protection scheme, from the Philippines' 4-*Ps* social protection and community-work programmes, and from Solidaridad, the Dominican Republic government's welfare programme.



Girl with her grandparents, Vietnam

For the most part, educating children forms a significant aspect of the families' expenditure. When the economic burden increases, families often feel that they are left with no choice but to make a decision about which child can continue to attend school. Over the past year, these kinds of decisions have had no impact on the girls in our study. However, in the Philippines, where the families taking part in the study are bigger, the girls' parents have discussed the kinds of strategic decisions they are forced to take about their older children's schooling. In Uganda, Justine's father John explains that his older daughter, Penny, is at diploma level "but this term she won't go to school. I don't have money. She was doing finance and accounting." His older son Richard, however, has had the opportunity to continue his education and is now at university. Ladi's family in Togo, meanwhile, reports that the cost of sending five children to school is easily affordable. The family has multiple sources of income, savings, and enough resources to be able to see both their sons' and daughters' education as an investment, with the potential to provide valuable returns.

Girls' education – 'she's only six and she can write her own name'

Almost all of the girls taking part in the 'Real Choices, Real Lives' study are in primary school and we are beginning to analyse how their families engage with their education. First, we asked their parents to tell us more about the girls' first day at school. Most families described a day filled with pride,

happiness and hopefulness. However, like many parents around the world, some experienced a day where their anxieties for their daughters' futures were at the forefront of their minds. Thom's mother in Vietnam explained: "I was worried that she would find it difficult to fit in with the new environment at school. I was also concerned about her journey to school and how we could arrange to pick her up on time." Almost all of the families explained how they prepared carefully for the girls' first day, using scarce funds, in some cases borrowing money, to purchase uniforms and equipment. Sharina's mother, Laura from the Dominican Republic, affirmed: "When you have a child and they are going to school and you are helping them, you feel really happy. She used to cry a lot because she wanted to go to school and so I took her and I enrolled her."

These are indications of the investment parents are making in their daughters' schooling. We estimate that families are spending between 5 and 30 per cent of household income on education-related expenses over the course of the school year. State primary education is free to students in all countries taking part in our study.⁵ However, many of the families reported the financial burden of the hidden costs – uniforms, shoes, meals, books, pencils and



Girl with her mother, Vietnam



*Girl at school,
Dominican
Republic*

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other equipment. Some poorly resourced schools even require families to pay for furniture. After food, the cost of educating children is the families' biggest expense. Costs are greater for the small number of families who have chosen to send their girls to private schools. Catherine's mother in Benin pays for extra tuition in addition to private school fees. "When she comes home from school I tell her to revise her lessons; she is also monitored by a teacher who comes to the house and helps her where she has some weaknesses. We pay for his services." She explains: "We spend a third of our annual income on schooling the children."

We assessed the family members' practical engagement with the girls' education as a measure of how engaged they might be as the girls grow up. In Brazil, Juliana's mother went to the school to complain about the new teacher who was missing classes. This led to the teacher's attendance improving. She now feels that she must be "visible and present at the school, as a monitor of the teachers' and school's performance" and is relishing this new responsibility. Saily's grandmother, in the Dominican Republic, indicated her commitment to her granddaughter's education by deciding when she would start school and reorganising household duties so that Saily would have sufficient time for her schoolwork. A small number of families reported that the girls themselves encouraged their parents to send them to school, looking up to older siblings and wanting to join them. In Benin, Thea's mother explained how "one day Thea followed her older siblings to school on her own initiative. She told the headmistress that she wanted to start school!"

SCHOOLS – SAFE SPACES FOR GIRLS?

Parents send their daughters to school with the aim of ensuring a bright and secure future. As confirmed in our study, parents have high expectations of their daughters' educational outcomes. However, the girls taking part in our study are already reporting incidences of routine violence they face at the hands of their teachers. Their own accounts of the risk of violence inside schools should not be overlooked. Corporal punishment is a gendered practice where teachers and school authorities attempt to control girls and boys.⁶ As girls approach adolescence, the risk of sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence in and around schools will increase.⁷ This has an impact on girls' educational experiences and outcomes, and is one of the reasons adolescent girls cite for dropping out of school.

But many girls and their parents give their teachers good reports. Six-year-old Lelem, in Togo, holds her 'lady' teacher in high regard. Both she and her grandmother have mentioned how well they feel she is teaching and supporting Lelem. Hoa's mother, in Vietnam, reflects: "Her teacher is a middle-aged woman and she is really kind and considerate towards pupils." Katie in the Philippines has this to say about her daughter Kyla's teacher: "You can see that she really loves her work." Marisha, Katerin's mother in the Dominican Republic, says: "The teacher is good. She is good, not like those teachers who like hitting children."



*Girl with her
mother, Benin*

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Girl at school, Benin



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Now that most of the girls are in formal education, we can also see more clearly how their parents' own educational opportunities might affect them. Bianca's mother had no formal education herself. She is supportive of her children's education, but is unable to practically assist them with their homework. She notes that Bianca is progressing well, however. "She is six years old and she can already write her own name... I can't read or write so I cannot help her. She tells me when she has homework. Danilo [Bianca's older brother] helps her when he gets home."

Lana, Layla's mother in Benin, explains how she would like to support her daughter's learning more but cannot as she has had no formal education herself.

Thearika's mother in Cambodia, on the other hand, explains: "She tells me about getting good scores at school. I always follow up her studies and [give her] extra teaching and additional explanation when she gets lower scores. I also help her prepare her school material and I take her to school." In Vietnam, Tien's grandparents, her main carers, have worked for the local government and the local health centre so have a clear understanding of her needs, and the knowledge and skills to support her at home with her education.

A significant number of the families are committed to their daughters' education in the long term and are planning for it. In Cambodia, Roumany's mother explains: "I have committed to send her to school until she finishes her bachelor's degree." Eleanor's

mother in Benin says: "I try not to give her household chores to do, so that she can have enough time for her lessons. I want her to finish college." She adds that pregnancy is among the things that might interrupt Eleanor's educational future. "To avoid this she will have to use family planning, but for the time being she is a small child." Eleanor's mother has told us of her determination for life to be better for all of her children, especially her daughters. Other mothers express concern about their ability to support their daughters over time. In Benin, Thea's mother says: "I want her to have her high school diploma. This is possible if she doesn't have to take any class twice. The reason for her early withdrawal from school would be the scarcity of financial means."

We are also learning just how much the quality of education the girls are receiving varies. Thom's mother in Vietnam told us: "She studies from 7.15 am to 10.30 am and from 1.30 pm to 4 pm. She has three afternoon classes a week. She learns literature, mathematics, handwriting practice, drawing, music and physical exercise. The school has a new gate and playing yard."

She is happy with Thom's teacher: "We can elect teachers for our children. I'm happy with the teaching methodology. I hope that there will be a class on information technology, so the pupils can have a chance to explore and take part in the mathematics contests on the internet." By contrast, the school facilities in rural Benin where Thea goes to school are more basic, with larger student-teacher ratios and fewer facilities.

On the whole, the girls' parents are happy with their education. The majority of the girls attend school regularly and almost all of them are accompanied to school by an adult or an older sibling, or they travel to school with their friends. A small number of girls go on their own. Just over half attend a school day that consists of a morning session only. Schools in El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines provide meals but those in the other countries in our study do not. Many families give the girls a small allowance to buy a snack during their day. Almost all the girls attend state, or government-run, schools.

Reducing risk by ‘protecting’ girls

Now that the girls are getting older and are regularly attending school, we are seeing how this increased exposure to the world outside their homes is producing concerns about the risks they face. Other studies show that parental worries about the journey to school grow as girls approach puberty, when the risk of sexual assault is perceived to be greater.⁸

For now, most parents are concerned about their daughters having to cross busy roads or highways. Catherine's mother, in Benin, says: "The danger is that the school is located near the road at a crossroads, and therefore it is a very busy road." Tan's mother in Vietnam says: "There is a bridge without a railing on the way to school. We also pass a crowded road with a lot of vehicles." During the rainy season in El Salvador, Stephany could not get to school at all due to flooding. Her mother says: "When the waves are strong, the sea washes the street away. The cars can't pass and the children can't make their way along the path."



Girl with her family, Brazil



Girl with her brother and cousin, Vietnam

The risk of violence is also very real for some. In Brazil, six-year-old Amanda says: *"My mother does not allow me and my sister [outside] to play with boys."* Plan's researchers in the area confirm that the community is unsafe; there are regular reports of robberies, muggings, gang fights and murders. Researchers commented: "Amanda's family worries a lot about home security. They told me that they will make the backyard wall higher and install an electric fence." The research team also noted when they visited Bianca's home in another semi-urban Brazilian community that: "There is a very high risk at the moment; the electronic equipment used for the survey could be stolen, since the house is located in a very dangerous area and does not have the minimum level of security." Seven-year-old Juliana in Brazil remarks: *"I don't like the criminals in the street. I would like to be a lawyer and work in the courts to put the criminals in jail."*

In El Salvador, many of the families taking part in the study live in constant fear for their personal safety. Some of the girls' mothers are survivors of sexual violence. Grandmothers of girls in the Dominican Republic have expressed, in previous interviews, their worries about increased sexual violence in their communities. As confirmed by the older girls we interviewed in the Philippines, Vietnam and El Salvador, fears of sexual violence increase in times of uncertainty and disaster.

One strategy for protecting against sexual violence can be to keep girls at home, removing them from school entirely. Boys,

meanwhile, are not deemed to be at risk of sexual violence on the journey to school.⁹ This situation can often expose the gap between the dreams and expectations of girls and their families (to attend secondary school or university), and the reality (to remain in the family home until marriage). Focus group discussions from our previous research in Brazil, Uganda and the Philippines illustrate the mismatch between the high educational expectations of girls and their parents, and the desire to protect girls and young women by restricting their movement to towns and cities.¹⁰ This strategy of limiting the mobility of girls and young women has a direct impact on girls' educational and social outcomes and may actually increase their vulnerability.

While the girls are young, parents deal with these risks by ensuring that they are accompanied on their way to school. In Benin, Eleanor's mother explains: "Her journey to school is a 45-minute walk through the bush. She is accompanied by her older brother." In Vietnam, Yen's mother tells us: "She travels to school by bicycle with her friends. She has to pass the 50-metre main road, which is crowded with vehicles and dangerous. The rest of her way is safe. Recently, she had to miss three or four school days because of a bicycle crash that made her knees sore."



Girl at home, Cambodia

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Girl with her family, Togo

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Girls' health – reducing the burden of illness

As the study has progressed, we have seen fewer reports of serious illnesses, although a small number of girls were treated in hospital for various reasons this year. All have recovered well. The vast majority of the girls were treated in local pharmacies, health clinics or using traditional medicine – depending on the extent of their symptoms and the family finances. Nini-Rike's mother in Togo says: "She's fine. When she was last ill, I bought her paracetamol from the roadside because I had no money to go to the clinic. However, she often suffers from malaria." Lelem's grandmother in Togo says: "If she complains of stomach pains, I give her capsules; if headache, paracetamol. I usually pay for it, but often we use herbs. She used to complain of stomach pains. She had a hernia that was treated." In Vietnam, Yen's mother adds: "Due to the long distance from home to the health clinic, we often buy medicines for her from the pharmacy."

In the countries where malaria most affects families – Benin, Togo and Uganda – almost all of the girls in the study receive regular treatment for malaria, although some sleep under mosquito nets. There were

outbreaks of dengue fever in Cambodia, El Salvador and the Philippines. Both malaria and dengue fever are mosquito-borne diseases. Families in Cambodia have reported how the ongoing risk was reduced. Lina's mother related: "The local authority gave us a mosquito net. A lot of children and adults are affected by dengue fever. Health centre staff also promote how to prevent dengue fever." In the Dominican Republic, the local health team made regular visits to families with young children, advising them on health protection. In Vietnam, Tan's mother explained how earlier this year they were alerted to hand-foot-mouth disease. "The healthcare staff gave us fliers warning about the disease. Teachers also cleaned up the school's health clinic."

'WE WOULD FEEL SAFER' – BUILDING LATRINES

It is estimated that 2.6 billion people live without proper sanitation and 2.5 billion people have no sanitation facilities at all.¹¹ They practise open defecation, presenting significant risks for women and girls. In our study, a significant number of families do not regularly use adequate sanitation facilities. All of the families we interviewed who have inadequate sanitation reported that they would prefer

to have improved and safer facilities. Lina's mother in Cambodia explained that they defecate behind their house and said: "We do not feel good but we have no choice. We do not have enough money to build the latrine for our family." She added: "Of course, if we had a latrine at home, it would be good for women and girls. We would feel safer than when we defecate in a field or in the forest." In Togo, Nini-Rike's mother said, "We don't feel free easing ourselves in the bush and fear others watching us, as where we go is close to the main road. We hide behind the bushes." In El Salvador, Bessy's mother says that she and her daughters feel "uncomfortable and unsafe, and fear that we are being watched". Reine's father from Togo adds: "We have no latrine. We relieve ourselves behind the house. It is not proper for women but we don't have a choice since we do not have money to have one built for ourselves. It is only God who protects them."

Conclusion

Our annual interviews with these families show what life is like for the millions of people around the world who live in poverty and respond, on a daily basis, to a complex web of risks and hazards. The rising cost of living and the increasing risk of natural hazards is a constant worry for many of the families. Some are making strategic decisions that will ultimately ensure that they are less at risk. These include building strong social networks, increasing their livelihood opportunities and lessening the burden of household work on school-age girls.

Protecting against risk, however, can also mean limiting girls' movement and access to education. It is this interplay between financial pressure and increasing risk, as well as the pressure to conform by fulfilling gender stereotypes, that often drives the decisions made within families that ultimately affect girls.

We know that this generation of mothers is committed to supporting their daughters' right to education, demonstrating a determination also evident in the young girls themselves. It is in this determination that we can begin to see a brighter future for girls.



Girl with her mother, Vietnam

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REAL CHOICES, REAL LIVES: Research from Philippines, El Salvador and Vietnam

Earlier this year, we ran a series of focus group discussions with teenage girls from the same communities as the cohort study participants in the Philippines, El Salvador and Vietnam. Plan's researchers in each of the three countries also conducted in-depth interviews with the girls.

These three countries are some of the most disaster prone among the nine countries in the study. The families taking part in the research have suffered from flooding, landslides and typhoons in the Philippines, from both drought and flooding in Vietnam, and in El Salvador have experienced earthquake, hurricanes and, most recently, floods. The Philippines is the country which, worldwide, after Vanuatu and Tonga is the most prone to natural disasters.¹²

The focus groups and interviews gave the girls an opportunity to voice why they felt gender inequalities in disaster situations existed and how, as adolescent girls, their needs were often overlooked in such situations. Their insight reinforces the views and research outlined elsewhere in this year's report. It also underlines the importance of girls' participation in disaster risk management and in formatting strategies to encourage resilience and reduce risk.

Environmental hazards and poverty – 'don't go to school anymore'

Nearly all the girls interviewed told us that climate change and a range of environmental hazards affect them and their communities. Hue, 19, from Vietnam echoed the sentiments of most of the other girls when she explained that: *"The seasons in one year are not clearly distinguished. Winter is shorter, the temperature is very low. The summer is extremely hot, the temperature is much higher. When it rains, thunder and lightning are more formidable. And we even get hail. Such weather phenomenon has a dramatic affect on my community. It affects the daily lives of local people. Travelling is harder. My house is near by the mountain; water poured down from the top so it is very difficult to keep food stores dry."* This image of increasing environmental instability was also brought up in the Philippines by 14-year-old Monica, who told us that *"[There is] also the intermittent rains: it isn't that it's not supposed to be rainy these days, because we're now in March, but now it rains intermittently because of climate change."*

Damage to the environment undoubtedly has an effect on communities which depend on it for their



The aftermath of Typhoon Bopha
in the Philippines, 2012.

livelihoods. This means family incomes decrease. Financial support for girls' education is often one of the first items considered 'non-essential' that is cut. Ngan, 13, from Vietnam has experienced this: *"When I was in Grade 4, due to crop failure, my parents quarrelled a lot. Once I was doing homework, and they were having a serious squabble. On seeing me, my father burst out 'when crops fail learning comes to nothing, you do nothing for your parents, don't go to school any more'. I felt sorry for myself and cried a lot. My father saw that and didn't say any more. He seemed to understand why I cried and afterwards he even allowed me to follow extra classes. I can see how much my parents love me and they always try to do the best thing for me in spite of our poverty."*

Even at the age of 13, Ngan, from Vietnam, is able to make the link between disasters, environmental damage and the effect on her education, and ultimately, her future: *"I go to school late because the slippery road makes me fall down; my parents can't go to the fields. They can't work; we then have less money and I have less chance to join the remedial lessons."* In the Masbate region of the Philippines, the girls discussed the effects of drought on their communities and 16-year-old Mary Jane told us that *"The farmland is parched... the rice will die because of the drought."* When we asked the girls about the further consequences of drought, 14-year-old Monica mentioned hunger, because *"there is no money to buy food"*.

Safety and security – 'sometimes it's scary'

The girls also discussed the impact of disasters on adolescent girls' safety. Girls in the Philippines mentioned that they felt 'shy' and 'not comfortable' when having to take shelter in other people's homes during an emergency. Fifteen-year-old Liezel told us: *"Sometimes, it's scary, especially when it's time to sleep, because the male in that house might be lusting over a girl."* When we asked her if this had happened during a disaster, she replied 'yes' and added *"But that's the only house you can go to when there is a typhoon. So your feeling of fear, you'll just have to bear that."* This thought was reiterated by 16-year-old Miriam in El Salvador who told us: *"To support girls in an emergency the important thing would be to give them protection, take them to a shelter, give them food, clothes a bed and blanket, and a safe place to sleep."* Likewise, Linda, 16, from El Salvador said after her family evacuated to a temporary house following a flood: *"I didn't feel safe at that house, neither did my father. We left our things there, but people who like to steal things were keeping watch, so my*



Focus group in Vietnam.

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father didn't feel it was safe for us to be there and he sent us to stay somewhere else... I didn't feel like that was a very good place for me to be."

Household responsibilities – 'we cleaned'

Our research illustrates how during and after disasters gendered stereotypes and behaviour patterns can be reinforced through reassigning traditional household roles and hierarchy. We were also told that during and after disasters girls' chores increase, which reduces their time to study and attend school. Girls from the Philippines told us that after Typhoon Frank¹³ it was *"Around one month starting in December we didn't go to school"*. When we asked what they did during this time away from school, they replied: *"We cleaned."* They also said their household chores increased and they spent their time cleaning clothes, drying clothes, looking after their younger siblings and helping their mothers. Fifteen-year-old Mary Jo told us she spent her time *"cleaning the house, because when the house is dirty and untidy, it still needs to be tidied up"*. Ofelia, 14, from El Salvador told us that due to drought in her community, *"sometimes we don't have running water at home, because the pipes break, and my mother works, so sometimes I'm the one who carries water, sometimes my oldest brother helps, almost everyone does it... Almost always me."* Fourteen-year-old Duyen from Vietnam said that during disasters: *"My life changes: a family member is sick... I do a lot of chores to please my parents. I feel happy to do that because I am a family member and responsible to my family."* Miriam, 16, from El Salvador commented that following a storm: *"I had to do more work, because all the debris blows into the house and I had to sweep it out again, I have to sweep because I'm the oldest daughter."* The interviews illustrate clearly how disasters can have a direct impact on girls' schooling and the time they have available to learn. Nineteen-year-old Hue in Vietnam also says she spends a larger

proportion of her time on household chores after a disaster: *“When disaster happens, I help my parents more, to share their burden. However, I am not allowed to go out to work to earn money to support my family.”*

It is clear that girls from all three countries are expected to take on additional chores which has direct implications, not only for the time they have for school work, but also for their general health and wellbeing.

Reinforcing stereotypes – ‘men’s work is really harder’

The girls in the Philippines mentioned the difficulty some mothers, who work outside the community, face in reclaiming their jobs if they return to their families following a disaster. Although it tends to be fathers who work outside the community, there are also some mothers who find work away from their families in other parts of the country. They told us that after a recent typhoon mothers felt obliged to leave their jobs in order to return and care for their families. While men also left their jobs to return to their families, there are clearly gendered consequences for doing so. When we asked girls in Masbate who were more affected – men or women – 14-year-old Monica replied adamantly that it was *“the woman, of course, because the father can find a job more easily than the mother... sometimes the women’s employers are strict: if they go home to their families, they won’t be hired by the same employer”*. They went on further

to define the roles of men and women following a disaster by saying that *“the role of women is to get relief goods and the role of men is to get the things for the house”* (April, 13). Women’s roles and responsibilities are domestic, collecting food and water, and those of men are associated more with earning a living and providing for their families. The girls’ evidence indicates that one of the impacts of a disaster is to reinforce traditional male and female roles. The research also suggests that the value placed on unpaid household labour (the majority of which is carried out by women and girls) is low when compared to men’s tasks outside the home. For example, in the Philippines girls told us that *“the girls’ tasks are lighter, because they just sweep, while the men use the spade to clean the surroundings”*, and 14-year-old Leah added that *“men’s work is really harder”*.

The girls from the Philippines also identified women as being more at risk of disasters than men, because women are ‘afraid’ and ‘tend to be nervous’. Fifteen-year-old Joan, however, has an alternative view and is clearly confident that girls are just as capable as boys in many respects: *“For me they are equal: equal because as my brother fetches water, I also fetch water. When it comes to using the spade, I use it too.”* Creating an enabling environment for adolescent girls like Joan to develop the self-confidence needed to participate in pre- and post-disaster activities is important so that they too can support themselves, their families and communities in times of emergency.

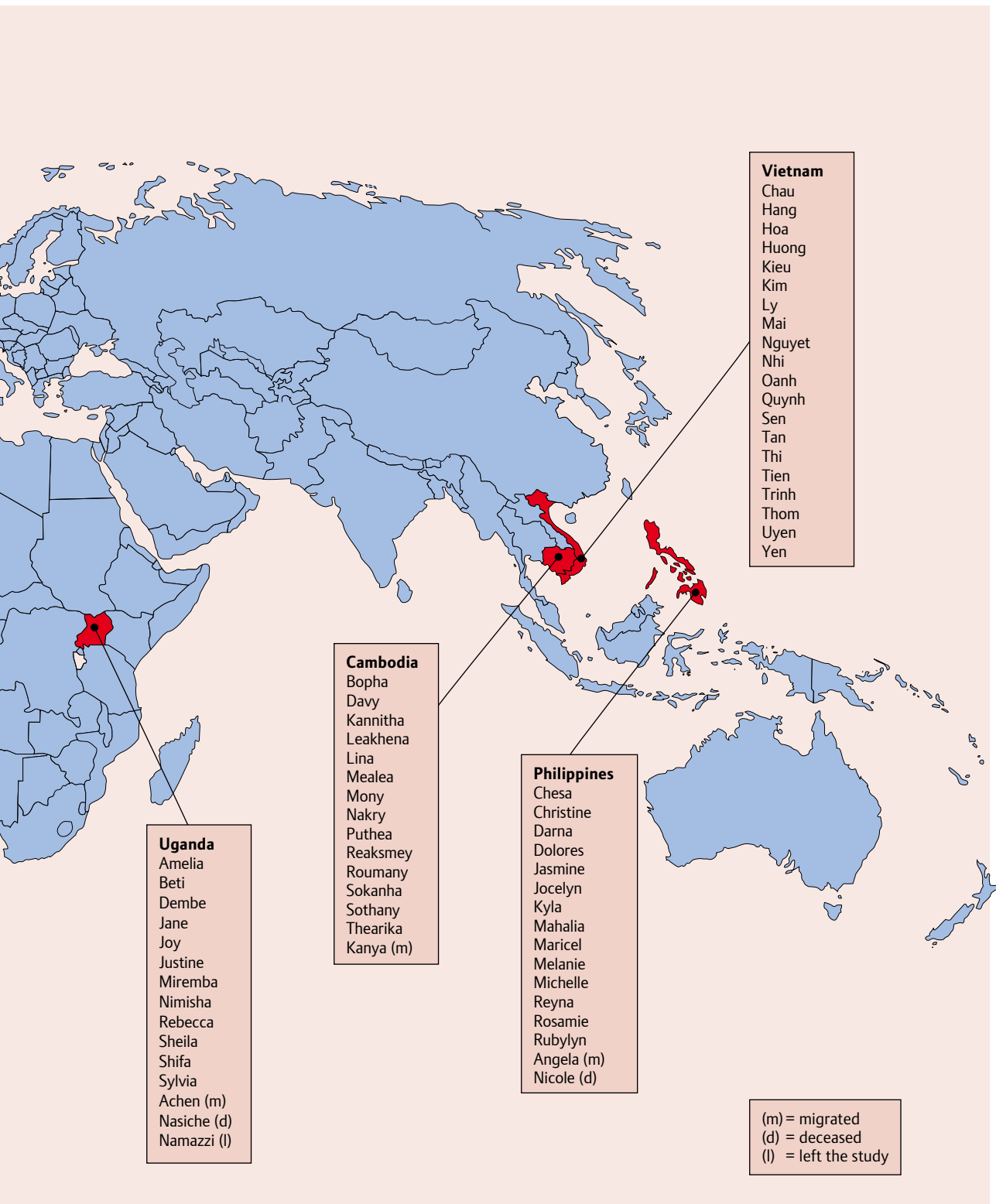


Focus group discussion in El Salvador.

Because We are Girls

'Real Choices, Real Lives' Cohort Study Map





- Uganda**
- Amelia
 - Beti
 - Dembe
 - Jane
 - Joy
 - Justine
 - Miremba
 - Nimisha
 - Rebecca
 - Sheila
 - Shifa
 - Sylvia
 - Achen (m)
 - Nasiche (d)
 - Namazzi (l)

- Cambodia**
- Bopha
 - Davy
 - Kannitha
 - Leakhena
 - Lina
 - Mealea
 - Mony
 - Nakry
 - Puthea
 - Reaksmey
 - Roumany
 - Sokanha
 - Sothany
 - Thearika
 - Kanya (m)

- Philippines**
- Chesa
 - Christine
 - Darna
 - Dolores
 - Jasmine
 - Jocelyn
 - Kyla
 - Mahalia
 - Maricel
 - Melanie
 - Michelle
 - Reyna
 - Rosamie
 - Rubylyn
 - Angela (m)
 - Nicole (d)

- Vietnam**
- Chau
 - Hang
 - Hoa
 - Huong
 - Kieu
 - Kim
 - Ly
 - Mai
 - Nguyet
 - Nhi
 - Oanh
 - Quynh
 - Sen
 - Tan
 - Thi
 - Tien
 - Trinh
 - Thom
 - Uyen
 - Yen

(m) = migrated
 (d) = deceased
 (l) = left the study



Section 3

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Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign

Plan's 'Because I am a Girl' campaign will support four million girls to get the education, skills and support they need to move themselves from poverty to opportunity.

Globally, one in three girls is denied an education by the daily realities of poverty, discrimination and violence. Every day, young girls are taken out of school, forced into marriage and subjected to violence.

Not only is this unjust, it's also a huge waste of potential. Millions of adolescent girls are being denied their right to education at the time when it can transform their lives and the world around them.

Progress has been made in terms of increasing the number of girls enrolling in school, but the quality of the education that girls are receiving remains poor in many countries. A quality education is relevant to the needs, rights and aspirations of girls and boys.

Plan's 75 years of experience has shown that real change can take place when girls and their education are valued. Supporting girls' education is one of the single best investments we can make to help end poverty for everyone. Providing a girl with at least nine years of quality education means she is:

- less likely to experience violence, marry or have children while she is still a child herself
- more likely to be literate, healthy and survive into adulthood, as are her children
- more likely to reinvest her income back into her family, community and country
- more likely to understand her rights and be a force for change.

The power of this is astonishing. It saves lives and transforms futures, releasing the incredible potential of girls and their communities.

We are working with girls, communities, traditional leaders, governments, global institutions and the private sector to address the barriers that prevent girls from completing their education.

Plan's 'Because I am a Girl' campaign is calling for:

Goal 1: Girls' education to be prioritised by world leaders

Goal 2: Girls' completion of a quality secondary education to be a major focus of international action

Goal 3: Funding for girls' education to be increased

Goal 4: An end to child marriage

Goal 5: An end to gender-based violence in and around schools

Goal 6: Girls and boys to participate in decision-making and inspire those with power to take action.

The 'State of the World's Girls' annual reports provide, and will provide year after year, tangible proof of the inequalities which still exist between girls and boys, and will support the campaign with specific girl-oriented evidence. The report will give concrete recommendations for the campaign to take forward on ways to tackle gender inequality and ensure that every girl is able to realise her full potential.

Join in and take action at:
plan-international.org/girls



PLAN/DAN POLLARD

BIAAG
ambassadors
at the UN.

Introduction



Business as usual in Pakistan.

TARIQ SAEED/IRIN

This section provides evidence to support the analysis of the 2013 report in the form of a study of humanitarian funding, examples of promising practice, a glossary, visual mapping of girls' rights data with a focus on countries affected by humanitarian crises, references, a legal analysis relating to adolescent girls in disaster settings, as well as further resources relevant to girls' rights in a disaster context.

- 1 **'Where does the money go'** demonstrates some key global trends in humanitarian spending and provides an analysis of funding streams in humanitarian crises. A gender-related analysis is given using the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Marker focusing on Haiti and Afghanistan as case examples.
- 2 The **legal analysis** details existing international law and human rights legislation applicable to adolescent girls in disaster situations.
- 3 The two **maps** in this section chart several indicators of adolescent girls' development; the rate of female adolescent illiteracy coupled with girls as heads of households, and girls married before age 18 coupled with girls who gave birth by age 15.
- 4 Our selection of **'Promising practice'** case studies provides detailed examples of innovative projects in different parts of the world which work with girls in disaster/post-disaster situations. The projects featured cover themes including education, gender-based violence and disaster risk reduction and resilience.
- 5 **The online resource section: 'Girls online'** provides a wide scope of useful reference guides for information on organisations, campaigns, research and databases, focusing this year on girls' rights and wellbeing in disaster settings.
- 6 The **Glossary** includes detailed explanations of gender and technical terms related to disasters and emergencies.

Where does the money go?¹

Tracking funding of gendered projects in humanitarian spending

In this report we highlight the need for increased humanitarian funding to support adolescent girls in disasters, especially in the areas of health, protection and education. Here we provide data and analysis to demonstrate some of the key global trends in humanitarian spending, and an overview of the distribution of funding streams per sector and by country.

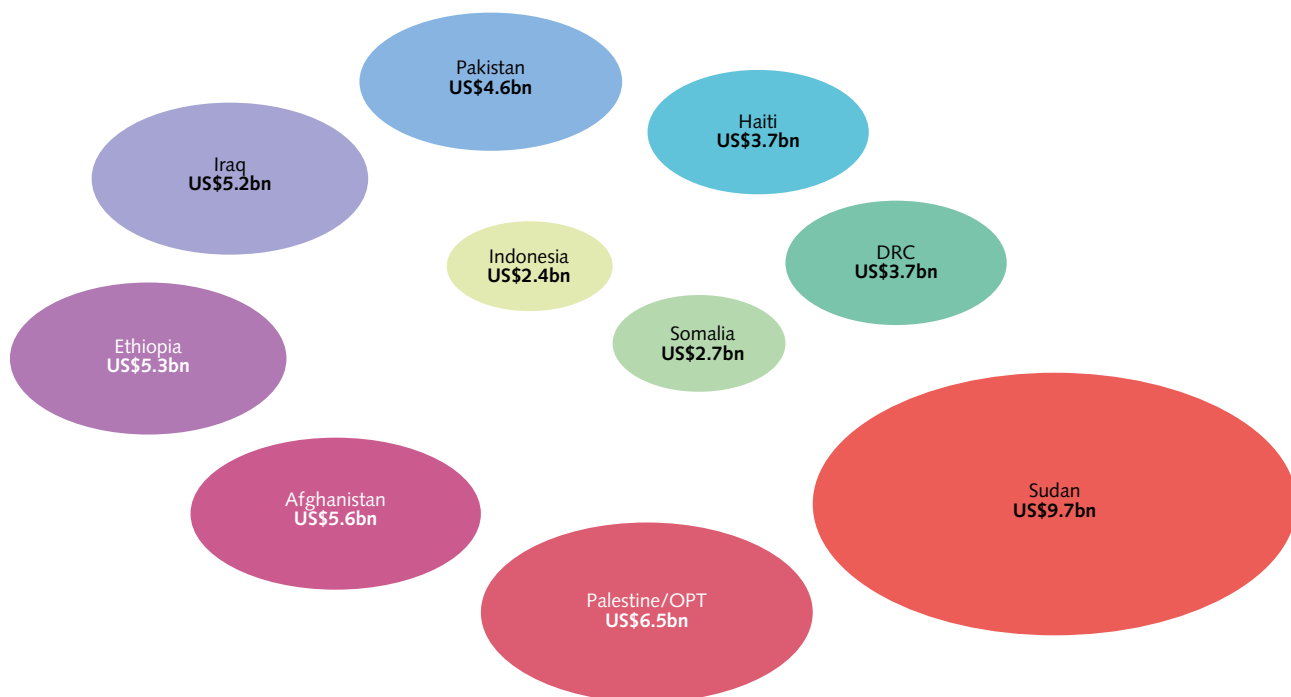
We also present research and analysis to highlight humanitarian spending that is specifically linked to gender-related programming using the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Marker,² although there is no indicator within the marker to measure funding for adolescent girls in particular.

Overall trends

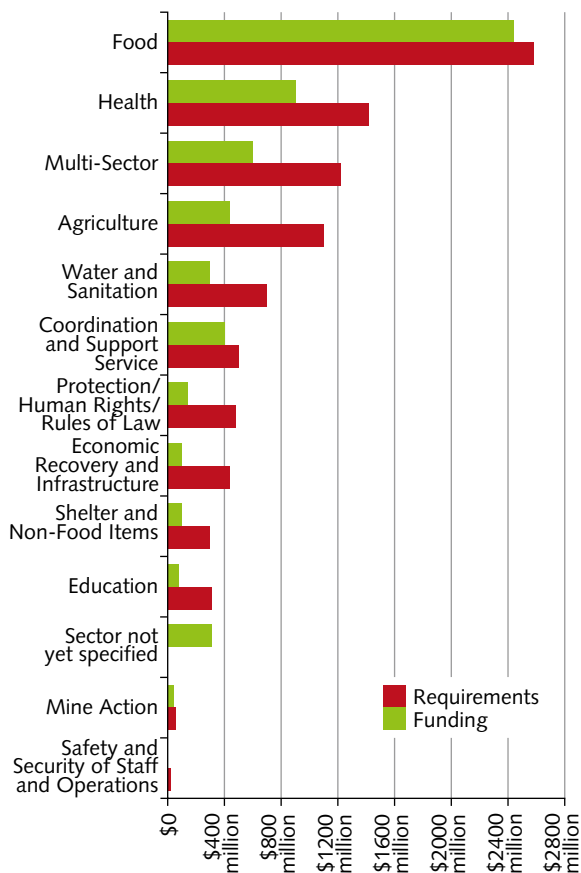
Between 2001 and 2010, a total of 151 countries received \$86 billion in humanitarian assistance, of which 20 recipients received 75% of the total over the period; 25% of the total was received by the three largest recipients alone.³

Towards the end of 2011 the United Nations launched a record appeal for \$7.7 billion to assist an estimated 51 million people affected by humanitarian crises.⁴ However, by the end of 2011, only 61% of this sum had been raised – a figure that has remained largely unchanged for the past five years, and masks the fact that some crises are neglected and even more severely underfunded.⁵ Among the top five recipients of humanitarian aid from 2001-10 were Sudan, Palestine/Occupied Palestinian Territories, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Iraq. All of these countries have been involved in complex or ongoing emergencies.

Top 10 recipients of international humanitarian aid, 2001-10⁶



Funding requirements vs. actual received⁷

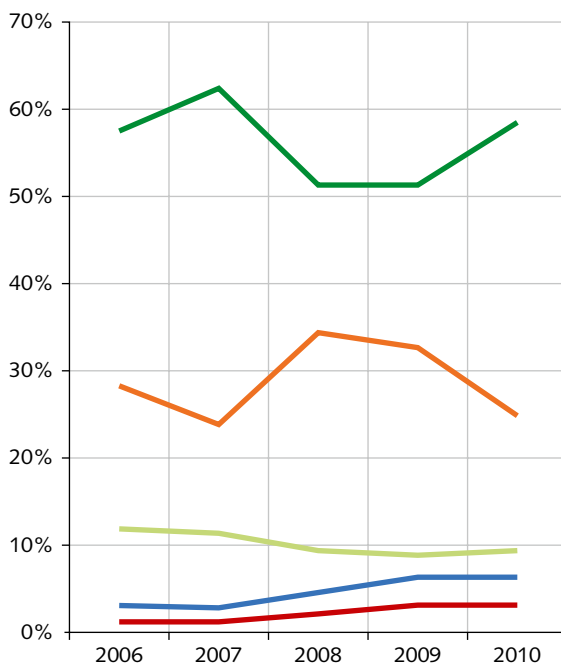


The chart above shows OCHA's global analysis of funding requirements for consolidated and flash appeals compared to actual funding received in 2012.¹⁸

Actual funding fell short of requirements in all areas, but is much greater in some than others. Funding for 'Food', the sector that receives most overall, has a comparatively smaller gap between what was required and what was received, but for 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' and 'Education', the funding received falls short of what was required by more than half. The requests for funding indicate a consensus amongst agencies that there needs to be substantial investment of humanitarian aid to sectors such as 'Protection' and 'Education', but there is a lack of political will, and/or commitment to fulfilling pledges made to ensure that these areas actually receive the funding required.

Disaster Prevention and Preparedness

Disaster Prevention and Preparedness is another area where funding is comparatively meagre. The chart below represents humanitarian funding from OECD DAC members from 2006-10. 'Disaster Prevention and Preparedness' was the lowest-funded sector, closely followed by 'Relief Coordination; Protection and Support Services'. Investing in disaster prevention and reduction strategies saves lives and money; many studies have indicated that disaster risk reduction is highly cost-effective – one dollar invested in disaster risk reduction can save between two and ten dollars in disaster response and recovery costs.^{9,10}



- Emergency/distress relief
- Emergency food aid
- Reconstruction relief
- Relief coordination; protection and support services
- Disaster prevention and preparedness

ⁱ Decisions on prioritising life-saving activities are managed by humanitarian actors on the ground. These priorities are organised into an appeal document and presented to Member States and other partners for funding. Generally there are two types of appeals: Consolidated Appeals are developed on an annual basis in countries where there are ongoing humanitarian needs; and Flash Appeals are developed following a sudden-onset emergency such as a flood or an earthquake.

Gender and Humanitarian Funding

The IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Gender Marker, created in 2009-10, is a pioneering mechanism which encourages and identifies humanitarian projects that promote gender equality.¹¹ The IASC Gender Marker is a tool that measures whether or not a humanitarian project is designed well enough to ensure women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally and if it will advance gender equality.¹² If the project has potential to generate gender equality results, the marker assesses whether the gender results are likely to be limited or significant.¹³ The introduction of a gender-related indicator to measure a project's contribution to gender equality is a step in the right direction. Its effectiveness, however, is currently limited: the marker would be a more useful tool if it were disaggregated by age as well as sex.

Using the gender marker as an indicator with the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), we have used global humanitarian funding to Afghanistan and Haiti from the year 2012 as examples by which to analyse the scale of gender-related humanitarian funding by sector. They are both amongst the top 10 recipients of humanitarian aid from 2001-10. They represent a conflict-related disaster, as well as a natural hazard-related disaster, and both merit increased focus on projects to support gender equality.

Gender Code	Description
0	No visible potential to contribute to gender equality
1	Potential to contribute in some limited way to gender equality
2a	Potential to contribute significantly to gender equality (equivalent to Code 2 for UNDP and UNICEF projects)
2b	Project's principal purpose is to advance gender equality (equivalent to Code 3 for UNDP and UNICEF projects)

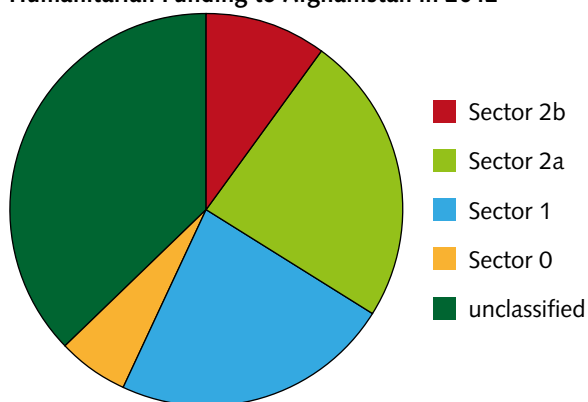
Afghanistan, 2012¹⁴

Afghanistan is one of the most challenging environments for upholding women's rights in the world. Although women have attained some leadership roles in the Afghan government and civil society since 2001 (the military invasion of Afghanistan), including as judges and members of parliament, Afghan women and girls continue to face everyday abuses. Many have been specifically targeted by Taliban and other insurgent forces.¹⁵

The UNDP's Gender Inequality Index rated the country as only 172nd out of 187 countries measured.¹⁶

Out of 103 projects analysed covering the sectors of Food, Health, Water and Sanitation, Shelter and Non-Food Items, Education, Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law, 10 projects were classified as '2b' on the IASC gender marker (meaning the project's principal purpose is to advance gender equality). All of these 10 projects were classified under the 'Health' sector, pertaining more specifically to nutrition; 7 of the projects were particularly focused on nutritional support to malnourished children and lactating/pregnant mothers. Although it is encouraging to note the significant number of projects classed as '2b' on the gender marker, it is discouraging to note that all of these projects are related to health only; for example, there are no projects designed to encourage gender equality under the sectors of Protection or Education.

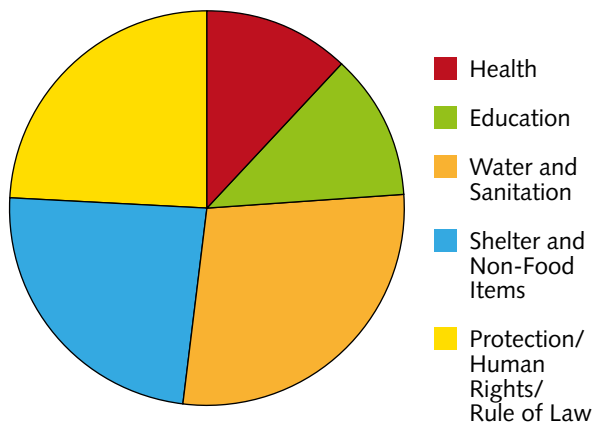
IASC Gender Marker Measurement of Humanitarian Funding to Afghanistan in 2012



There were a total of 25 projects rated '2a' on the gender marker (meaning they had the potential to contribute significantly to gender equality). Of these 25, 6 were classified under the 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' sector; only 3 projects were

related to the 'Education' sector, and there were no projects rated 2a on the gender marker related to 'Food'. The remainder comprised of 'Health' (3 projects) 'Water and Sanitation' (7 projects) and 'Shelter and Non-Food Items' (6 projects).

2a: Sector Analysis



There were a total of 24 projects rated '1' (meaning they had the potential to contribute in some limited way to gender equality). Of these 24 projects, none were classified under the 'Education' sector, only 1 was 'Shelter and Non-Food Items', 4 in 'Health', 5 projects in both 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' and 'Water and Sanitation'. There were 9 projects in the 'Food' sector.

Six projects were rated '0' on the gender marker (meaning they had no visible potential to contribute to gender equality), 3 projects were related to 'Health' and the remaining three projects came under the 'Shelter and Non-Food Items' sector.

There were 38 remaining projects that were unclassified using the gender marker.

Haiti¹⁷

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.¹⁸ While gender-based violence did exist prior to the 2010 earthquake, there have been reports that the sudden spike in internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in camps has seriously heightened insecurity and has led to an increase.¹⁹ However, despite this, of the 78 post-earthquake grants that the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) approved to date, only one addresses gender-based violence.²⁰

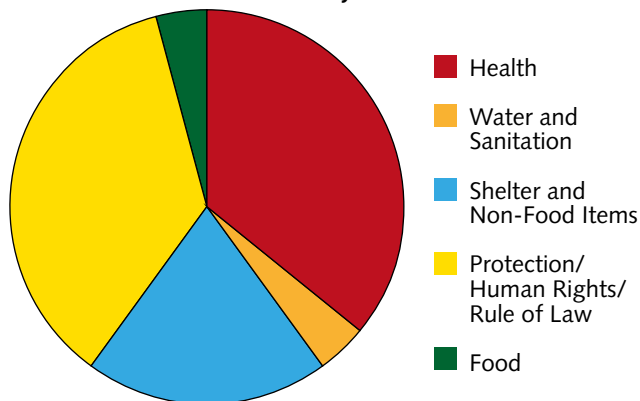
The UNDP's Gender Inequality Index rates Haiti as 158th out of 187 countries.

Of the 63 projects surveyed in Haiti in 2012 using the gender marker on the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), covering the sectors of Food, Health, Water and Sanitation, Shelter and Non-Food Items, Education, Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law, there were the following trends:

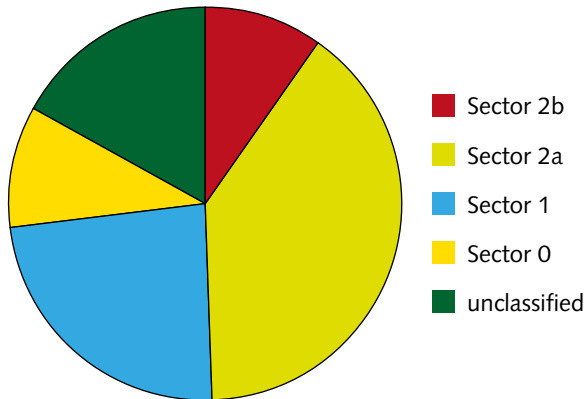
Six projects were classified as 2b on the IASC gender marker (meaning the project's principal purpose is to advance gender equality). Interestingly, all of the projects rated at this level came under the sector of Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law.

A total of 25 projects were classified as 2a, with the highest amount of projects (9 each) amongst the Health sector and the 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' sector. 'Shelter and Non-Food Items' made up 5 projects under this classification, and there was only 1 project each within the 'Food' and 'Water and Sanitation' sectors. There were no projects classified under the 'Education' sector.

Haiti humanitarian funding rated 2a on the IASC Gender Marker, broken down by sector



Distribution of humanitarian funding to Haiti by IASC Gender Marker Category



There were 15 projects classified as 1 on the IASC gender marker (meaning they had the potential to contribute in some limited way to gender equality). Of these 15 projects, 7 were classified as 'Water and Sanitation', and the remaining 8 projects were distributed amongst the 'Health' and 'Education' sectors equally. There were no projects classified under the sectors of 'Shelter and Non-Food Items', 'Food' or 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law'.

There were a total of 6 projects classified under the '0' classification using the IASC gender marker (meaning they had no visible potential to contribute to gender equality). Of these 6, 5 projects fell under

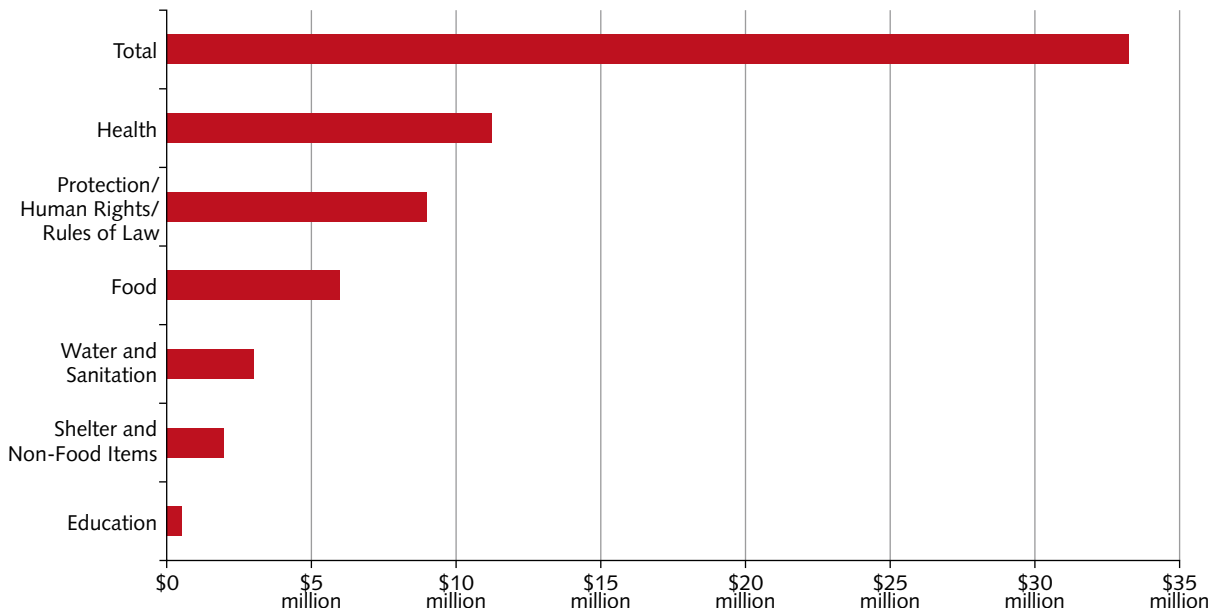
the 'Health' sector, and one project under the 'Water and Sanitation' sector.

The remaining 11 projects were 'unclassified' on the gender marker.

There are some interesting trends among the total funding figures for Haiti 2012:

- 1 The 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' sector has the second-largest allocation of funds and the majority of projects classified as 2b fall under this sector – there has been increased global recognition of the shocking levels of violence against women and girls (which was already prominent pre-2010, but has worsened following the earthquake).²¹
- 2 The amount of funding to the 'Education' sector is still disappointing, especially as the 2010 Haiti earthquake could be deemed to be a continuing disaster due to the numbers of internally displaced people still homeless three years on.²²
- 3 The total funding to Haiti appears to buck the trend of other humanitarian funding patterns, as the 'Food' sector normally takes precedence in humanitarian funding, above that of funding to other sectors such as 'Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law' and 'Education'.

US Dollars committed/contributed Humanitarian Funds to Haiti, 2012²³



Conclusion

Despite international agreements to further gender equality and the rights of girls it is difficult to find out exactly how much money and programming specifically targeted, and reached, adolescent girls.²⁴ The lack of an indicator within the gender marker relating to sex and age disaggregated data means that determining how many projects would have benefited adolescent girls in particular is virtually impossible.

However, although adolescent girls may not have been explicitly targeted in the projects analysed above, which are measured using the gender marker, it is also important to recognise that adolescent girls can fall into other categories and be disguised in their identities, such as being pregnant or lactating mothers, which

can prevent them from receiving age-appropriate care and can disguise the need for targeted interventions. Maternal mortality indicators, for example, may not be age disaggregated and therefore not pick up the fact that adolescent mothers are dying at a higher rate than mothers in their twenties.

This research and analysis also draws attention to the often protracted and complex scale and intensity of many modern-day disasters, and as such would argue that there needs to be a move away from the more traditional approach of 'first wave' humanitarian response towards a more fully integrated response which includes adequate funding for sectors such as Protection, Education and Health, specifically including targeted projects for adolescent girls.

The Humanitarian Funding System

Taken from John Holmes, *The Politics of Humanity: The Reality of Relief Aid*, 2013²⁵

Where does the money come from?

Mostly from a few Western governments, but also from the private sector and individuals.

Governments who give money to humanitarian causes usually set aside a certain proportion of their overall development aid budgets for this purpose, often around 10 per cent of the total. They then allocate this money through the year to the main crises, and sometimes smaller ones too, in response to appeals for help, usually from the UN acting on behalf of the rest of the system.

These countries are often collectively referred to as the 'donors'.

How is the money spent?

Around 70 per cent of humanitarian aid normally goes to the victims of conflict, with the rest going to those affected by natural disasters.

The destination of the money is most often humanitarian organisations – the Red Cross, UN agencies, or the major NGOs – though it can in some cases be given directly to the government of the affected country.

Some money is given as core annual financing for the humanitarian organisation concerned, not tied to any one crisis. But for the most part, the organisations put forward specific requests to fund specific needs.

How it is coordinated?

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has become centrally involved not only in coordination but also in areas such as policy development, standards, advocacy, training, early warning, and fundraising. It runs the collective appeals on behalf of all humanitarian organisations, with detailed projects in the key sectors: so-called 'consolidated appeals' for continuing crises and 'flash appeals' for new catastrophes.

Global policy coordination is assured through a body called the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). This brings together the heads of the main UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross family to agree on policies and wider issues and standards.

Most coordination is done at local level (where it is most needed) through the OCHA country office and a country-level humanitarian coordinator.

A new financing mechanism was also established: the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) financed annually by governments to the tune of some \$400 million, to kick-start the response immediately after a new crisis appears and ensure fair funding between different crises. It is under the direct control of the ERC.

Legal Framework

This section provides a brief overview of international law and human rights legislation as it applies to adolescent girls in disaster situationsⁱ

International law recognises the different factors that make adolescent girls susceptible to human rights abuses and affords them certain clearly stated rights and legal protection. The human rights of adolescent girls are part of the broader universal human rights framework and are therefore underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This also means that the framework incorporates civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights from the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) respectively. As part of this broad framework of rights, a wide range of social actors such as the state, institutions, community and family are recognised as duty bearers required to implement those rights.

The rights of adolescent girls under international human rights law (IHRL) recognise their dual status as children and women. Accordingly, the legal protection afforded to them safeguards their rights under both categories. The human rights of adolescent girls are principally addressed in two main treaties dealing with women and with children, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).¹ These international instruments complement each other and there is a great degree of convergence that ensures maximum protection for adolescent girls both as a woman and as a child.

Human rights of adolescent girls

Human rights law offers certain non-derogable rights which include those rights from which no abuse, detracting or derogation is permitted, even in exceptional circumstances when most fundamental rights may be ordinarily suspended. These include, for instance, the provisions within CRC that ensure the right to life or the right to freedom of thought or conscience. Being grounded in the fundamental principle of non-discrimination, IHRL applies most broadly and imposes legally binding obligations in all post-disaster settings when so many girls are vulnerable to harm.

IHRL provides the means to achieve substantive

gender equality and to eliminate discrimination against women and girls.² These principles of equality must be applied in all stages of humanitarian relief including rescue, relief and recovery initiatives to ensure a rights-based approach to post-disaster relief and reconstruction.

They include:

The right to a legal identity: The CRC recognises the importance of birth registration and identification,³ which enable children to assert their rights under the Convention. Birth registration is the first step towards the child's legal recognition, which enables their identity as a legal person to be documented. Consequently, this paves the way for other legal documents and rights including education, healthcare, social protection, inheritance and property rights. Both the CRC and ICCPR call for every child to be registered "immediately after birth".

In a post-disaster recovery situation, identity-related documentation holds special significance. In the aftermath of a disaster, displacement and separation of families are common place. Therefore, availability of these crucial documents allows a child to be identified, reunited with her family, and to access necessary goods and services. These procedures are also essential to prevent human rights abuses such as child labour, prostitution and trafficking.⁴

The right to life:⁵ Imposing an obligation on the states to recognise every child's right to life and ensure their adequate survival and development. Every child has the inherent right to life. The CRC recognises that children are vulnerable and need special protection and support. This right ties in with several other rights in the CRC that are essential for the child's development and survival. For example, Articles 19 and 37 protect a child's right to freedom from abuse and neglect, Article 20 guarantees protection of the child without a family and Article 39 obliges the states to ensure that children are receiving rehabilitative care and appropriate treatment for their recovery and social integration.

ⁱ Prepared by Cynthia Farid for the 'Because I am a Girl' report 2013.



The right to health: The right to the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination is also critical to the development of girls during the recovery period of a disaster.⁶ Access to health services is a necessity for their social and economic empowerment. Under the CRC, states are obligated to develop their primary healthcare facilities and services and to ensure that children have meaningful access to these services, as well as adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water. Sexual and reproductive rights are integral to the right to health. CEDAW requires the provision of healthcare services focusing on reproductive health and family planning services⁷ and recommends that state parties should ensure that adequate protection and health services are provided for women especially in difficult circumstances.⁸ The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health issued a special report calling for the immediate removal of all impeding restrictions to abortion, full access to modern contraceptive methods and complete and accurate information on sexual and reproductive health.⁹

The right to an adequate standard of living: International standards recognise the right to an adequate standard of living.¹⁰ Therefore, basic necessities including the right to nutrition, clothing and housing would be within the ambit of this fundamental right. When recovering from disasters, adolescent girls face acute obstacles in accessing safe and adequate housing. They are often rendered homeless and risk facing discrimination, violence, trafficking and abduction.

Girls who are orphaned during a disaster or who take on the role of breadwinner face additional challenges with respect to securing and enforcing their rights to land and property. Therefore, states should take measures to protect inheritance rights by ensuring that land is registered under the child's name or alternatively protect women's/mothers' right to inherit which may contribute to some extent to protecting children's inheritance rights. States should also monitor and place safeguards to ensure that guardians do not misuse their ward's property asset.

The right to education and training: Education and training for girls is a prerequisite for both social and economic empowerment, which is crucial during the recovery process after a disaster. Providing an education will prepare the foundation upon which girls can build a future for themselves and their communities. The right to education is enshrined in several international instruments including the CRC and ICESCR, which requires states to provide free and compulsory primary education and ensure the availability of different forms of secondary and vocational training that are accessible to all children without discrimination.¹¹ In addition, states should also take measures to encourage regular school attendance.¹²

The right to protection: Gender-based violence is known to increase in emergency and disaster situations.¹³ Girls who have been affected often require significant psychological, social and economic support to come to terms with what has happened to them and to build a new life. The international human rights framework provides certain rights in these situations to protect adolescent girls. These include:

- **Early and forced marriage:**¹⁴ CEDAW establishes equal rights for women regarding marriage, and requires a minimum age for marriage and the registration of marriages. In a disaster situation, non-consensual marriage, especially for those living in poverty, or unaccompanied, or widowed by the disaster, is frequently found to be a common occurrence. Often due to a lack of registration documents, the exact number of girls falling prey to this practice becomes difficult to estimate. In addition, despite being covered by a number of treaties and having most countries adhere to the minimum age requirement, enforcement of laws remain a major obstacle in the realisation of this right.



- **The right to protection from economic exploitation and work that may harm their development and wellbeing:**¹⁵ In the aftermath of a disaster, various factors may give rise to exploitative child labour practices including lack of access to schools, loss of employment and income of the family unit, poor education among parents and cultural expectations concerning the roles of children.¹⁶ Therefore, children will be especially vulnerable during these times and require protection from exploitation. Some types of labour are inherently dangerous and are likely to jeopardise the health, safety and general development of young persons. Article 32 of the CRC and the 1999 ILO Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour No. 182¹⁷ guarantee the protection of children against all forms of child labour. The girl child is at high risk of being drawn into underage labour due to prevailing gender discrimination and industries such as domestic work, sexual exploitation and pornography. Therefore, humanitarian efforts by national and international actors should aim to remove all children from exploitative labour by implementing measures that address poverty and lack of employment, and provide incentives and access to education.
- **Trafficking and sexual exploitation:** In the aftermath of disasters, and its ensuing lawlessness, girls are at increased risk of being subject to gender-based violence, which may prevent many girls from benefiting equally from relief, rescue and recovery efforts. Disaster conditions are also conducive to heightened incidences of trafficking. Trafficking violates a child's right to protection and education, and exposes children to physical threats such

as HIV infection and other chronic diseases.¹⁸ States are required to protect children from sexual abuse, exploitation, sale, prostitution and child pornography.¹⁹ There are also specific provisions and mechanisms that require states to take measures and prevent the abduction and trafficking of children.²⁰ Due to an overwhelming concern over the consequences of human trafficking on women and girls, the UN adopted a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and girls, to supplement the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime.²¹ There are also regional efforts by the Council of Europe through the introduction of new legislation seeking to control trafficking. However, enforcement of regional and international efforts remains weak.

General duties on states

The state is primarily responsible for monitoring and implementing plans to ensure that the rights of women and girls are upheld and discrimination against them prevented and addressed before, during and after a natural disaster in both public and private spheres. The obligation on states "to ensure the child such protection and care as are necessary for her wellbeing" and "to respect and ensure that all the Convention rights are enjoyed without direct or indirect discrimination" are the highest duties placed on states.²² Direct discrimination relates to an overt difference in treatment that is explicitly based on sex or other grounds that cannot be objectively justified. Indirect discrimination relates to a situation where a law, policy or programme appears neutral on its face but has a discriminatory effect when implemented. Accordingly 'the duty to respect' and ensure the enjoyment of rights requires states to repeal laws and policies which are contrary to the equality principle. In addition, states parties should also take all necessary steps to raise awareness of those rights among the population, train state authorities and officials and carry out necessary reform of domestic legislation. The state party must also introduce positive measures to empower girls which may involve gathering necessary information regarding the role of girls in society to ascertain relevant measures that are required. The obligations of the states also require identification of specific groups such as girls with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced and so on, whose status may be compounded during an emergency, thereby warranting special measures.

It is important to note that the application of

human rights law is subject to certain qualifications and limitations in post-disaster settings. For example, the states' responsibility to ensure the child's protection is not absolute but only to the extent necessary for her/his wellbeing. In the context of economic, social and cultural rights, the states' obligations under CRC are linked to available resources where they are only required to progressively realise the objectives of the treaty.²³ Thus states have discretion in determining the use of resources and consequently the standard of compliance to the treaty. Additionally, the obligation of states to use the maximum extent of available resources must be understood "within the framework of international cooperation"²⁴ which implicates a duty on other states or international actors to intervene when an affected country is resource constrained.

Dealing with separated and unaccompanied children²⁵

During emergencies, all children have a right to a family. In the disaster recovery phase, this may include those who have been separated from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver but are accompanied by other adult family members, and those who have been separated from both parents and have no other surviving or available relatives. The latter category of children is among those most vulnerable following a natural disaster. Children without parental care are at greater risk of discrimination, inadequate care, abuse and exploitation.²⁶ Children, especially girls, face serious protection concerns during and after natural disasters. The provisions and principles of the international Conventions such as the CRC, CEDAW and the relevant Optional Protocols require a consistent and systematic monitoring of these protection concerns and responding accordingly. Thus it is imperative that all humanitarian organisations and workers, whether they are state or non-state actors, are aware of the protection risks to adolescent girls.



International Legal Framework for Disaster Relief: the IDRL Guidelines

Although IHL is typically applicable to conflict situations, its general principles may be used in the context of a natural disaster by drawing on some of the similarities between them.²⁷ The significant disruptions to society and daily life from a natural disaster are analogous in several respects to the effect of armed conflict. Humanitarian law is rooted in principles of impartiality and requires that assistance be based solely on need and not on political or other considerations. Therefore it is useful in aid distribution situations, where relief agencies may be seeking access to affected civilian populations. However, in the absence of armed conflict, it is not directly applicable and therefore does not impose a legally binding mandate on states to address the harms experienced by populations in disaster areas.

The lack of a coherent and complete framework covering the various phases of a disaster prompted the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to launch the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules, and Principles (IDRL) Programme in 2001, which in turn led to the development of IDRL Guidelines, which are not legally binding but have been unanimously adopted by many states. These have significant potential for addressing the rights and needs of populations in disaster areas. IDRL covers a wide array of issues which become relevant during the various phases of a disaster, including the rules defining the obligation of the states to prevent or mitigate a disaster and to appropriately assist the affected persons, the rules regulating the relations between the disaster-affected state and other states or international organisations, liabilities, personnel, administration, and protection of human rights, including the rights of women and children. IDRL regulates the various response phases of a man-made or natural disaster management cycle,²⁸ including prevention, disaster risk reduction and mitigation, rescue or relief, early recovery²⁹ and restoration. However, it does not cover subsequent activities such as rehabilitation, or reconstruction and development, which are regulated by the general rules of international law.

Right to a remedy and some legal implications of disaster incidents around the world

Existing human rights obligations require states to take measures to mitigate the risks of natural or man-made disasters. However, as IDRL largely remains focused on rescue efforts, the status of disaster victims' rights to a remedy and reparation under international law is unclear. To give full meaning to the economic, social and cultural rights of girls as enshrined by the ICESCR, these rights ought to be capable of being 'justiciable' – i.e. protected in national courts where girls would be able to prevent and challenge violations. The right to a remedy is considered to have acquired the status of customary international law.³⁰ This right may be triggered by situations where states' negligence in managing a disaster results in violations of the rights to life, adequate housing and property, and other infringements of international human rights. Therefore, in some cases disaster victims may be able to seek recourse before domestic courts as guaranteed under international human rights law.

The **European Court of Human Rights**³¹ recently considered the question of whether deaths caused by a man-made or natural disaster can amount to a human rights violation by the state, thus obliging it to compensate the survivors. The Court's view on this question was that a failure to take preventive or mitigating measures when dealing with foreseeable disasters amounts to a violation of the right to life and therefore incurs the responsibility of the state under international law. Any negligence on the part of the state or the relevant authorities to prevent or mitigate risk when dealing with a clearly identifiable hazard will result in liability. The Committee on CRC has observed that such judicial procedures should be child-sensitive and child-friendly, and that accessible and independent legal advice is made available to children and their representatives through children's ombudspersons or national human rights commissions and other appropriate bodies. However, it must be noted that CRC currently do not have provisions to receive individual complaints from children on violation of their rights. The **Committee under the African Charter**³² on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is now able to receive such complaints, in contrast to the rest of the world. CEDAW does provide

opportunities for girls to petition about violations of their rights, but the success of these have been limited. These procedures are also not child-centric or fully comprehensive of all the rights necessary to protect girls.

The issue of accessing justice remains a challenging task in many parts of the world due to 'systemic' inadequacies of the domestic judicial system. This will limit the extent to which a disaster victim could exercise the right to a remedy. The situation in post-quake Haiti is a case in point. There, sexual violence against women is pervasive and occurs in and around formal and informal camps where disaster victims are sheltered. The number of cases reported, investigated and prosecuted is alarmingly low. In Haiti, women generally have lower access to legal aid and justice systems due to practical constraints such as low literacy rates, poverty, lack of mobility and lack of awareness of legal rights. In addition, the existing laws are also non-responsive to gender issues. For example, the crime of rape was only integrated into the Penal Code of Haiti in 2005 and the gender rights and policies still require effective mainstreaming.³³ Nevertheless, Haitians

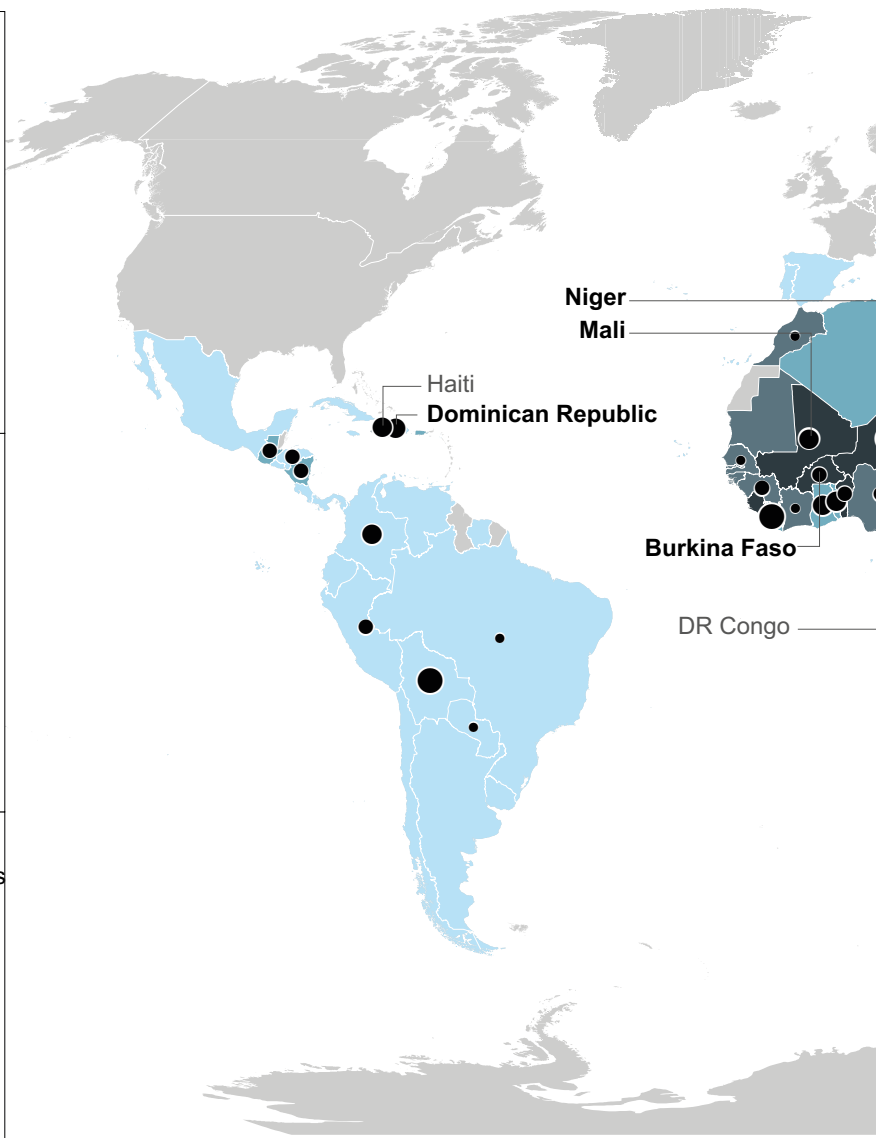
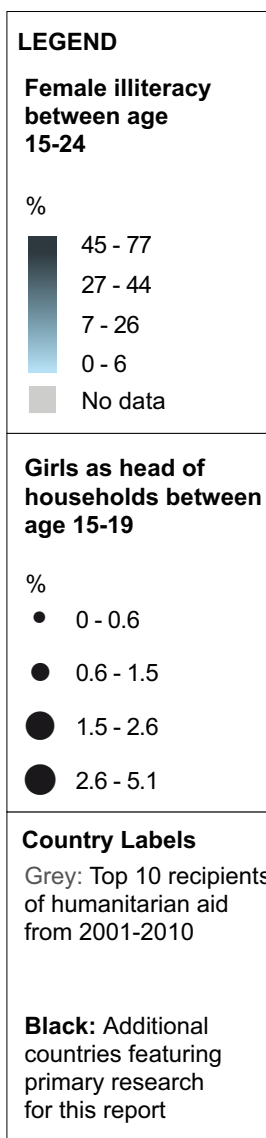
have made some progress in seeking to assert their rights through international courts. In a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the disaster victims of the 2010 earthquake, which included the residents of

five camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) who erected tents in open fields following the destruction, sought precautions against forcible eviction by the police or by private individuals aided by the police. The IACHR used its power, which has a binding effect on states, to request precautionary measures under Article 25 of its rules of procedure in an effort to enforce disaster victims' right to a remedy. The IAHCR required the state to protect individuals from imminent harm by undertaking several steps, including adopting a cessation of expulsions from the camps until a new government takes office, making sure that those already evicted are provided alternate venues with minimum sanitary and security conditions and provided the opportunity and access to remedies in court and other competent authorities. Although the Haitian government has not been responsive to this binding request, it is still a significant milestone towards victim redressability. Therefore, rights-holders such as adolescent girls could in theory look to courts to assert their rights under IHRL.



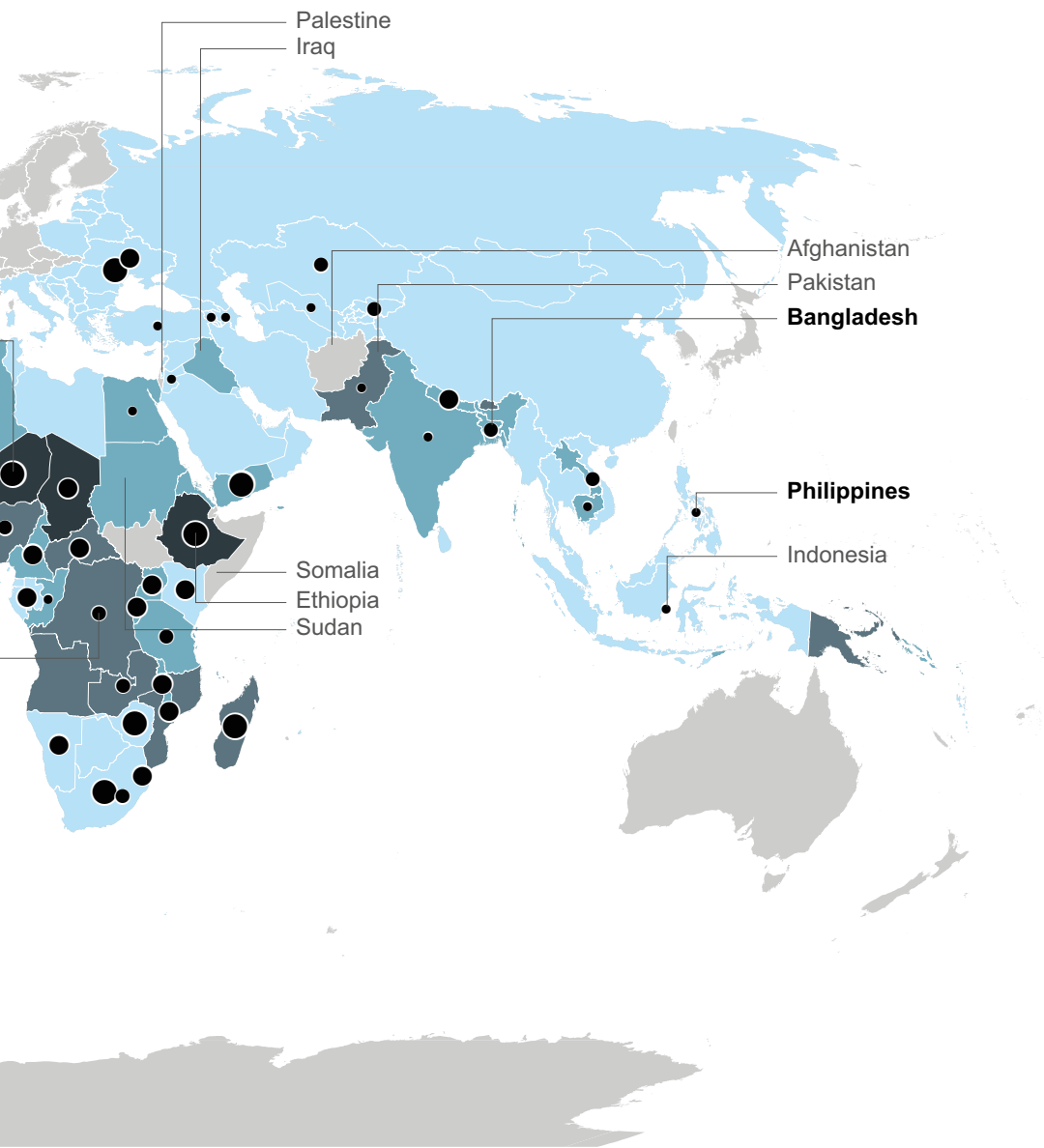


Female youth illiteracy and girls as head of h



Female Youth Illiteracy Rate, Age 15-24 (%)			
Country	%	Country	%
Sudan	16	Haiti	30
Palestine	1	DR Congo	38
Afghanistan	No data	Somalia	No data
Ethiopia	53	Indonesia	1
Iraq	19	Bangladesh	22
Pakistan	39	Philippines	2

Proportion of girls aged 15-19 as heads of households (%)	
Country	%
Sudan	No data
Palestine	No data
Afghanistan	No data
Ethiopia	3.17
Iraq	No data
Pakistan	0.52

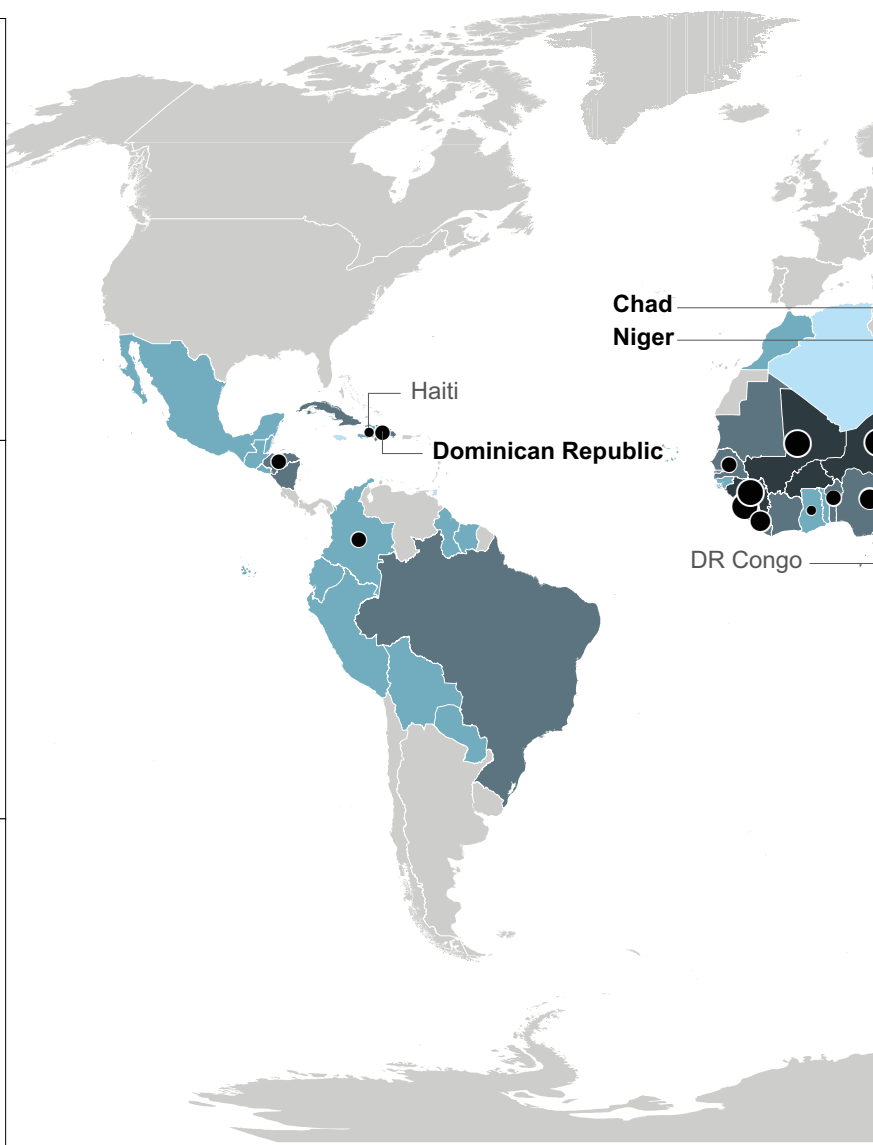


15-19 years who are head of household (%)	
Country	%
Haiti	2.12
DR Congo	1.3
Somalia	No data
Indonesia	0.44
Bangladesh	0.96
Philippines	0.49

- Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali have some of the highest illiteracy rates and some of the highest incidences of adolescent girls as head of households. The lack of priority given to funds dedicated to ongoing or slow onset crises can have a severe impact on adolescent girls' rights. Our research found that during food crises 58% of adolescent girls from Burkina Faso and Niger were regularly obliged to undertake paid work to support their family, subsequently dropping out of school.
- The data from the maps reveal a high level of female youth illiteracy in Pakistan – this reflects research undertaken in Pakistan after the floods in 2010 which found that 3 times as many girls as boys remained out of school.

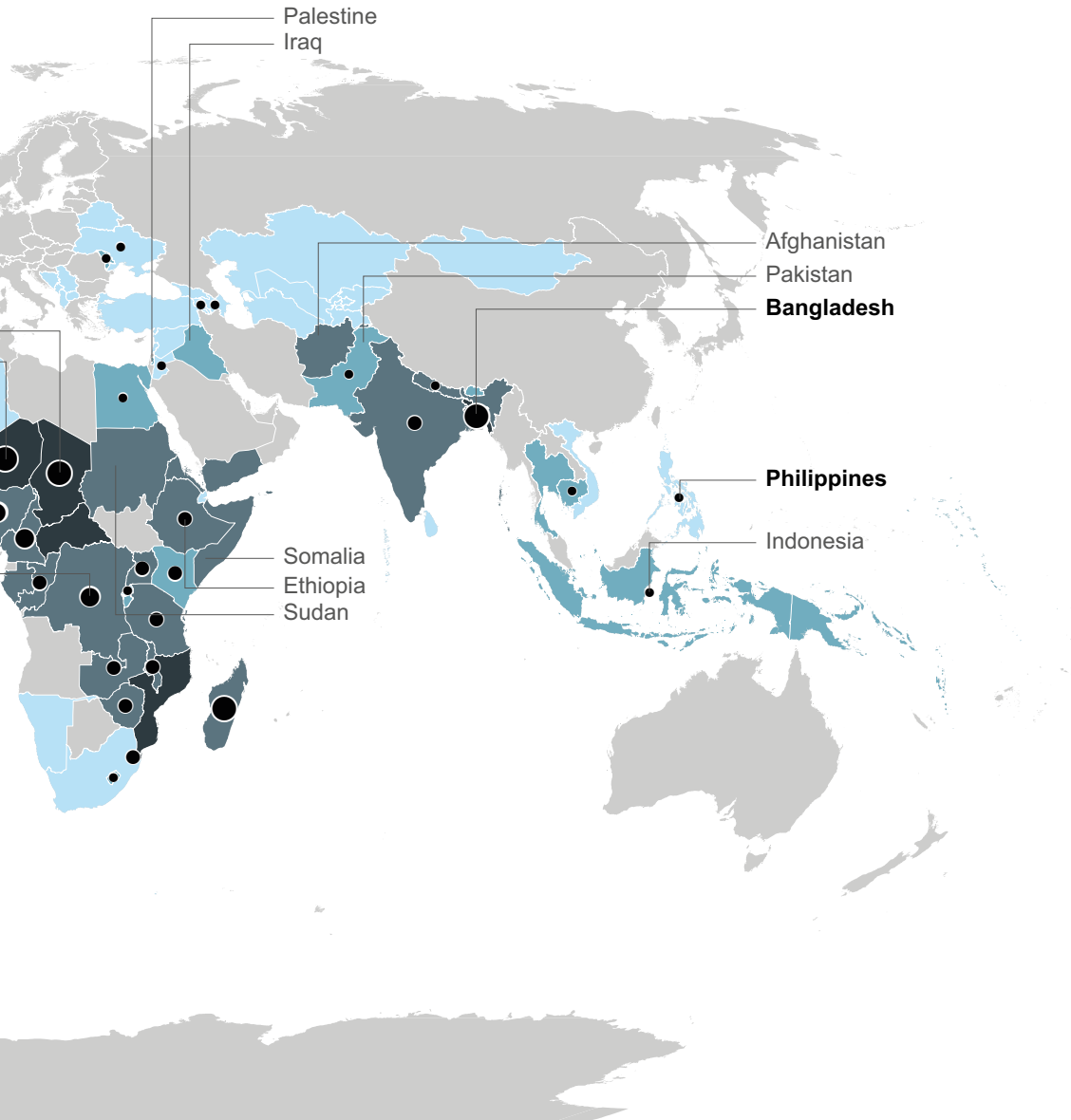
Sources: Plan International 2013, Maplecroft, 2013; UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, 2011 and Demographic Health Surveys (DHS), 2009.

Girls married before age 18 and girls who give



Proportion of young women aged 20-24 years married before the age of 18				Proportion of girls aged 15-19 gave birth by age 15			
Country	%	Country	%	Country	%	Country	%
Sudan	33	Haiti	30	Sudan	No data	Haiti	0.8
Palestine	19	DR Congo	39	Palestine	No data	DR Congo	3.4
Afghanistan	40	Somalia	45	Afghanistan	No data	Somalia	3.4
Ethiopia	41	Indonesia	22	Ethiopia	1.7	Indonesia	0.8
Iraq	17	Bangladesh	66	Iraq	No data	Bangladesh	3.4
Pakistan	24	Philippines	14	Pakistan	0.5	Philippines	0.8

Early birth by age 15



15-19 years who gave birth before age 15	
Country	%
Haiti	0.8
DR Congo	2.9
Somalia	No data
Indonesia	0.4
Bangladesh	5
Philippines	0.2

- In 2010 Bangladesh was ranked the highest ‘at risk’ country according to The Natural Disasters Risk Index. It has some of the highest rates of girls married before the age of 18 and equally some of the highest percentages of girls giving birth by the age of 15. Globally the proportion of humanitarian funding dedicated to protection, which might have an impact on these figures, is very low.
- This map highlights the very high incidence of both early marriage and adolescent births in the Sahel region. Research conducted for this report also found that there was a rise in child marriage in certain areas of the Sahel region as a result of the food crisis. This region, apart from Chad which ranks at 16, was not a key recipient of humanitarian funding for this period.

Sources: Development Initiatives 2012; FTS OCHA 2013; Plan International 2013; Maplecroft, 2013; UNICEF, 2013 and Demographic Health Surveys (DHS), 2010; IRIN (News and Analysis).

Case Studies – Promising practice



1 Haiti Adolescent Girls Network: 'Espas Pa Mwen' (My Space)^{1,2,3,4}

Project implementation period

This programme was launched in 2010 and is ongoing.

Background

In 2010, a magnitude 7 earthquake occurred in Haiti affecting an estimated 3 million people, 1.5 million of whom have been displaced to 1,300 sites around Port-au-Prince. More than 100,000 people were aided with emergency supplies including food, water, tarps and medical supplies.⁵ The earthquake exacerbated challenges faced by women and children and increased the risk of girls becoming trapped in the cycle of poverty, not finishing school and experiencing violence.⁶

The Haiti Adolescent Girls Network (HAGN) is a coalition of local Haitian grassroots organisations, local Haitian non-governmental organisations and international humanitarian organisations. The aim of the network is to build the capacity of NGOs in Haiti to encourage work with adolescent girls. In 2010 HAGN established a programme focusing on social and economic asset building through dedicated girl-only spaces (locally known as 'Espas Pa Mwen'). This initiative grew out

of concerns that, because there were few programmes targeting them, adolescent girls were increasingly unsafe, with no place to express themselves or connect with others facing similar hardships. The programme uses the spaces to inform, engage and educate adolescent girls on a range of topics, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence, leadership and financial literacy.

These girl-only spaces offer access to an otherwise unavailable education, but also a space for positive growth, life-skills building and empowerment. The programme provides mentors with appropriate training and uses participatory and interactive methods to share knowledge and information. The programme content and material is aimed at girls aged between 10-14 and 15-19.

Key participants

- Espas Pa Mwen targets girls, between the ages of 10-19, who are domestics, 'restaveks' (children who are forced into domestic labour), girls who are pregnant and have other children, those who are out of school, illiterate, heads of household, victims of sexual abuse, handicapped, and living in camps.
- To date, 1,146 girls have benefited from Espas Pa Mwen programming. In 2011, 569 girls benefited from the programme. This increased to 902 girls in 2012.

Objectives

- To select, recruit and train 80 mentors to support vulnerable girls.
- To establish girl-centred spaces for 1,000 girls by the end of the first year.
- To increase the capacity of humanitarian organisations and service providers to better meet the needs of adolescent girls through collaborative efforts.
- To offer security and safety in girl-only spaces to provide guidance, support and skills (particularly from mentors) during times of heightened risk and vulnerability.

Project activities

- Core content is delivered through interactive courses. Photography, theatre, song, dance and art are used to provide educational and supportive services to adolescent girls.
- Older girls and women were trained as qualified mentors to deliver, contribute and adapt course content in a range of areas including sexual and reproductive health, water and sanitation, leadership and violence prevention. Course content is available in Creole, French and English, providing up to 30 hours of material in each subject area.
- Trained mentors are available at all hours, acting as a bridge between vulnerable adolescent girls and society by addressing family conditions, and by improving their access to services and schools. Within the safe spaces, girls are free to discuss subjects which may be considered taboo within their homes. They are also able to discuss problems they may be experiencing at home or within their communities.

Progress to date

The earthquake left girls, who were already vulnerable, without a safe space to turn to. Many were living in tents or makeshift housing, had lost parents, were unable to go to school, and transactional sex also increased. Espas Pa Mwen was created to enable girls in post-earthquake Haiti to come together in a space where they are safe to discuss issues affecting them, and are provided with a mentor to guide them. The project builds girls' assets through the provision of topical information, on subjects such as gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights, which empowers girls and builds their self-esteem, enabling them to cope more effectively with the challenges faced in post-earthquake Haiti.

- With the help of 50 organisations, a total of 27 different Espas Pa Mwen sites have been established, resulting in 1,146 adolescent girls spending time on a weekly basis learning, interacting and playing together in a safe space.
- A total of 36 mentors have been trained and currently assist in establishing relevant and

personalised course content for information sessions held at Espas Pa Mwen.

- To date, the demand for girl-centred safe spaces outstrips the supply as those already part of the programme are keen to bring friends and family to participate.
- Many older girls and adult women have expressed their desire to pursue training to become mentors for organisations that are incorporating girl-centred programming into their work.
- The objective of establishing girl-centred spaces for 1,000 girls by the end of the first year was not achieved. However, a total of 569 girls were reached through the programme.

Good practice and lessons learned

- Post-disaster, adolescent girls experience medical, financial and social repercussions. Offering a wide range of information, skills and services has proved effective and engaging.
- The programme pays mentors a stipend, recognising and establishing girls and women as an important resource.
- The HAGN recognises the need for a collective learning environment to develop and sustain shared trust between humanitarian organisations, in turn increasing the effectiveness of relief efforts.
- Designating specific, girl-only spaces at certain times helps to define areas of safety and security in otherwise vulnerable environments.
- The involvement of adult women and older girls offers an opportunity for girls to discuss their concerns and expand their knowledge.
- Girls have expressed that having a designated safe space allows them to trust, make friends and realise that they can and deserve the right to have fun with other girls.
- Espas Pa Mwen's implementing members have adapted to the needs of the girls that they serve. Programme models and organisations must be flexible in allowing groups to come up with creative and specific local solutions to problems faced.
- Targeted recruitment through house-to-



house surveys may identify vulnerable girls who are currently less visible and unable to access the Espas Pa Mwen programme.

- Organisations have identified the need to develop projects or activities that maintain the engagement of the most vulnerable girls. Providing specific programmes that address the needs of under-served girls, for example girls who are disabled, pregnant, or engaging in transactional sex, has been difficult for some groups.
- Data is currently being collected for evaluation at Espas Pa Mwen sites.
- Group coordinators are being trained on gathering baseline information. They have participated in an exercise that identifies key assets which the HAGN intends girls to take away from the programme, including knowledge of SRHR, GBV, leadership and financial literacy. Before content is shared with the girls, baseline information on their knowledge in these areas will be gathered. Mid-way through the programme, and at the end, the girls' knowledge will be evaluated.

Recommendations for the future

- Develop partnerships with local groups to expand the reach of the programme and increase services available to adolescent girls in response to high growth and demand for Espas Pa Mwen.
- Further establish and secure strong networks of humanitarian organisations to increase levels of transparency through information sharing and collaborative relief efforts – without which the needs of adolescent girls and other vulnerable groups are likely to be overshadowed.

"This is the only place I ever feel safe... I can relax and make friends here. I learn things here that I could never learn anywhere else."

Ester, 15, member of Espas Pa Mwen⁷



2 Plan Indonesia: Child Centred DRR Project^{8,9}

Project implementation period/duration

The Child Centred Disaster Risk Reduction Project was implemented between July 2007 and December 2009. As part of the wider programme, a research study ran from 2008-10.

Background

The Child Centred Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR) programme encourages and focuses on opportunities for children to be better protected from disaster risks and for children's voices to be heard in relation to community-based resilience building. The programme actively connects children and adults at a community, district and national level. Through the process of training, assessing risks, action planning, awareness-raising and behavioural change the implementation of child-focused disaster risk reduction is encouraged. A further element of the programme is driven by the support of children's education, enabling them to learn about disaster risks and climate change through both formal and non-formal education.

Implemented in 2007, Plan Indonesia's CCDRR programme has worked in four different locations – the districts of Rembang, Sikka, Jakarta and Bogor. The project recognises that each area is affected by different disasters and consequently was initially designed to target local needs.

In 2008, as part of this wider CCDRR programme, Plan International partnered with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) to conduct an additional action research study in the districts of Sikka and Rembang. Researchers looked at how gender norms influence children's and adults' perceptions of disaster risk. They found that the belief that the views of girls and women are subordinate to the views of men and

boys was widely held. The view that girls have less capacity than boys to minimise disaster risks was also held by adult women. The project was funded by the Department for International Development and worked with girls and boys and their communities on a range of disaster risk reduction activities. It ran from 2008-10.

Key participants

- Girls and boys in the district of Sikka, East Nusa Tenggara Province; district of Rembang, Central Java province; City of Bogor, West Java Province and City of Jakarta, DKI Jakarta province.¹⁰
- Local authorities from 29 villages and 38 schools, to allow for greater commitment to working with children around issues of resilience building and to promote the sustainability of the project's interventions.

Objectives

- To improve children's understanding of DRR and climate change and their contribution to resilience building.
- To establish networks and partnerships with DRR actors at district and national level.
- To improve awareness on the importance of child participation in DRR.
- To advocate for a DRR policy which is sensitive to child rights and participation issues.
- To increase the capacity of communities to integrate child centred risk reduction programmes, encouraging the participation of girls and boys in DRR planning, implementation and evaluation.

Project activities

- Providing children with a supportive environment to take part in training and capacity-building activities so that they understand their community's hazard risks and how to address them. Engaging

participating communities, particularly children, in group discussions focused around disaster resilience and preparedness.

- Visualisation through community mapping with the aim of identifying and analysing risk-prone areas.
- Supporting DRR action planning led by girls and boys, including ideas for DRR awareness raising in their communities and for mobilising community action to tackle their vulnerability to disaster risks.
- Supporting child-led theatre and video performances to increase knowledge and foster debate on DRR issues relevant to the children and their communities. In Rembang girls used traditional Muslim poetry and music (Quasidah) to promote disaster risk reduction during a local community event.

Results

- Plan Indonesia conducted its final evaluation in 2009 to capture the changes, to assess the achievements of the programme, to document its good practices for future programme management and make recommendations for it to be replicated in other areas as part of the project's sustainability.
- 820 girls and 802 boys were directly engaged in the project activities.¹¹ Children proved to be effective at identifying and communicating risk and designing creative tools to raise awareness about disaster mitigation and preparedness in their communities.
- The programme was both engaging and effective, challenging embedded socio-cultural attitudes towards girls as well as boys in relation to their roles and contributions to disaster risk reduction.
- Girls were also supported to take action towards changing behaviours within their communities and sharing their knowledge about hazards and risks – through leading awareness-raising activities, presenting their findings at community meetings and encouraging action at household, school and community level towards better waste management, protection of ecosystems and disaster preparedness.
- Since implementation a number of communities have improved waste management practices, alongside measures to plant several hectares of



trees to protect against future floods and landslides.

- The determination of these girls to make theirs a safer future has fostered a new perspective in their local leaders.

“Parents and adults have learnt from their children’s messages that they do have a role in preserving our nature, and that managing disasters is a collaborative work between everyone in the community – including girls and boys – and us their leaders.”

Dami Marsutik, head of Woro’s village, Sikka

Good practice and lessons learned

- The participation of girls and boys in the whole management cycle of DRR is important. Involving children in disaster management will lead to greater success as children have their own unique and long-term views of risk as well as an innovative approach to risk reduction.
- Children’s capabilities in making constructive contributions to DRR decision-making at all levels, including the global debate on climate change, should be recognised. The value of children’s creativity and knowledge should be recognised and encouraged by adults.
- Establishing regular coordination with key stakeholders, including government agencies, particularly the disaster management agency and education agency, at all levels is crucial in developing ownership and long-lasting sustainability for efforts towards engaging girls and boys in DRR.¹²
- Once their capacity is increased through access to relevant DRM knowledge and skills development, both girls and boys are able to act as risk identifiers, risk communicators, and pioneers of change in their society. Securing greater access to DRR information and educational materials is key to empowering children to become more resilient to disasters. It is crucial to adjust the programme in accordance with the school calendar and to the household chores undertaken by girls and boys in order to ensure effective project implementation.
- By educating adults about children’s rights and gender equality in relation to

disasters, and by raising awareness that DRR is a collective action, adults’ roles and responsibilities in guiding and respecting both girls’ and boys’ contribution to DRR activities was improved.

Recommendations for the future

- To increase ownership of the project and ensure its sustainability, communities including children and government should be involved in planning, implementation and evaluation. Exit strategies should be formulated and developed with the beneficiaries, from the beginning of a project, in order to secure buy-in and sustainability.
- Local government should commit to supporting the implementation of child-centred DRR through changes in policy and programme objectives and resource commitment, to ensure the effective participation of both girls and boys.
- Girls and boys should be encouraged to express their views on DRR and formulate these opinions into actions, working with adults to reduce risk in the environment.¹³
- Community resilience must be seen as collaborative and inclusive work which encourages cooperation between children and adults. Therefore children’s participation must be balanced by adults’ responsibility to guide and respect children’s potential contribution and the unique views of both girls and boys.
- A pilot project approach is needed to ensure the effectiveness of implementation and management. Targeting one community and school is preferred as more focused and holistic. This will result in a model that can be validated and adjusted as necessary prior to scale-up and that can showcase the value of the unique contribution of children to DRR; as well as ensuring that the programming is sensitive to the different needs of girls and boys, whatever their ages or backgrounds.
- Child centred DRR’s coverage area should target areas with a high risk of disasters to have a significant impact.





3 UNHCR Ethiopia: Advancing the education of Somali refugee girls in Ethiopia^{i,14,15,16,17}

Project implementation period

September 2011-14

Background

Adolescent girls in Ethiopia face serious challenges to their health and wellbeing as a result of harmful traditional practices and gender inequalities; for example, one in five girls in Ethiopia is married before the age of 15 and among 15-19 year olds for one HIV-positive male there are seven positive females.^{18,19} For refugee girls living in Ethiopia the situation is even more challenging. UNHCR estimates that there are more than 11,000 refugee children of school age living in the Sheder and Aw Barre camps and there are simply not enough school places. In the Sheder camp, 50 per cent of girls and 54 per cent of boys are enrolled in primary school. In Aw Barre camp, 33 per cent of girls are enrolled and 40 per cent of boys. Rates drop substantially for secondary school for both boys (30-35 per cent) and (girls 14-15 per cent). In Sheder there are 15 male secondary schoolteachers but only two female.

Refugee adolescent girls are some of the most marginalised girls in the world.²⁰ Refugee families living in Ethiopia are not allowed to work, resulting in poverty that often means girls are unable to go to school.²¹ Fewer than 20 per cent of teenage girls were attending schools in the three refugee camps in Jijiga, which has the potential to further enforce the poverty cycle and exacerbate gender inequalities. Especially as there are high rates of child marriage for girls which families prioritise as a way of coping with their increased poverty.

In response to the extremely poor enrolment and attendance records of Somali refugee girls in the North Eastern Somali region of Ethiopia, UNHCRⁱⁱ and its partners

introduced a three-year girls' education programme beginning in September 2011. Even though education is free in the camps, families still struggle to pay for other school-related costs such as uniforms, books and supplies and, if pushed to choose, families will often educate their sons rather than their daughters.

Key participants

- A target total of 4,348 Somali refugee girls (by year three of the project). The project mainly targeted Grades 4-12, but also those aged 10 to 19 years old.
- Girls coming from the most deprived families.

Objectives

- The project aims to increase girls' school enrolment, attendance and performance across three refugee camps in the eastern part of Ethiopia's Somali region. The project also hopes to raise awareness amongst family members on the importance of girls' education.

Project activities

- Providing scholarships and school materials for girls.
- Providing awards for good performance or attendance to girls.
- Providing livelihood opportunities to girls' families as an incentive to keep girls in school.
- Visiting parents and the wider community and convincing them of the benefits and importance of educating girls.
- Distributing solar lanterns to all boys and girls in the camps in Grade 4 and above, giving them a chance to complete school work after night fall.
- The UN is helping to build separate latrines for girls and boys with hand-washing facilities and access to water at the schools.
- Once girls are in school, girls' clubs for social support and studying are implemented.
- Families with girls that would otherwise be too poor to send their daughters to school will receive business training and micro-loans for income-generating activities.
- UNHCR has been increasing the number

i Information based on the most recent data available (2012). ii With the contribution of the UN Foundation

of books into refugee camp school libraries for children, with some additional support to girls to use libraries, or borrow books to read at home.

- Hiring more female teachers to act as role models and mentors for the girls.
- Providing a dedicated girl-only space in the secondary schools, where girls have the opportunity to spend their break time and do school work. Tutorial and study time is dedicated to girls only and facilitated by teachers.

Results to date

- Since the project implementation, secondary-school enrolment rate in the three refugee camps in Jijiga has risen from 20 to 32 per cent.
- Girls' performance at school has also improved; in Sheder refugee camp, for example, all 28 of the Grade 10 girls who sat for the national examination passed.
- In addition to increasing enrolment and attendance rates, the project has also improved the performance of the girls, which will improve retention rates.

"I am not yet married and hope to be able to complete the secondary school first... My dream is to get a scholarship and go to university to study computer sciences. Can you imagine a Somali female information technologies specialist? I want to prove that it is possible. I can do it."

Hodan, 17



4 Women's Refugee Commission: 'Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls Initiative: Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda'^{22,23,24,25}

Project implementation period

The wider 'Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls' initiative was launched in 2011 and is ongoing. The pilot projects have an initial period of one year 2013-14.

Background

As part of the Women's Refugee Commission's larger protection and livelihoods portfolio, this programme seeks new ways of equipping adolescent girls, during the most critical ages from 10 to 16, with the social capital and agency to better protect themselves from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in post-crisis contexts. Women's Refugee Commission has been undertaking work on promoting effective economic opportunities for women and youth to mitigate their risk of SEA and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) for many years. The Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls project is a subset of that larger body of work and targets young adolescent girls as a new age cohort for whom direct employment is not appropriate because of their age. It looks at alternative means of empowerment to protect them through removing barriers to formal education and the provision of safe spaces where girls can build confidence and agency while gaining financial and future livelihood skills, as well as health and safety information in post-crisis contexts.

Key participants

- Through direct intervention: displaced adolescent girls aged 10 to 16 in three refugee camps in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda.
- In addition, through learning and guidance documents for the humanitarian field: displaced adolescent girls globally.

Objectives

- Reduce the vulnerability and increase the capacity of adolescent girls living in post-crisis displacement settings.
- Assess displaced adolescent girls' protection, social capital and agency-building needs and identify opportunities for addressing them.
- Test innovative models and approaches for building social capital and agency for displaced adolescent girls, and capture lessons learned.
- Document and share existing learning on building adolescent girls' agency and social capital from development contexts for application within humanitarian contexts.
- Assist practitioners in better protecting displaced adolescent girls in post-crisis contexts.

Project activities

Work with in-country partners to design and implement three projects piloting interventions based on desk review and targeting challenges identified in assessments and building displaced adolescent girls' agency and capabilities. Components include safe spaces for girls; financial literacy and other livelihood skills; mentoring; sexual and reproductive health information. Some examples of activities:

- In the Kobe refugee camp in Ethiopia, girls and their families will receive in-kind support, such as clothing, school materials and sanitary supplies, to remove barriers to school attendance. Safe spaces for girls will be created to house homework clubs, skills classes in computers, financial literacy, and health and safety as well as opportunities for socialising. Parents, teachers and other community members will participate in information sessions to increase awareness and exchange about the rights, needs and vulnerability of adolescent girls.

- In the Nyarugusu refugee camp in Tanzania, the project will focus on girls facing greatest risk either because they are mothers, live in a child-headed household or with foster parents, are survivors of GBV, or are HIV-affected. The project will create safe spaces where girls will be able to gain knowledge and skills about sexual and reproductive health and HIV, literacy, numeracy and future livelihood training, while also having the opportunity for recreation with other girls. Community gatekeepers will be involved in implementation and widespread awareness-raising regarding the needs of girls to prevent friction with the local community against a girl-focused programme.
- In the Kyaka II refugee camp in Uganda, older girls (14 to 16) who have been out of formal education for over a year and are deemed unlikely to re-enter school will receive training, mentoring and support to begin an income-generation activity. They may choose poultry rearing, agriculture or a small business, and will be paired with experienced mentors, in addition to skills training in numeracy and financial literacy. They will work in groups which will provide an opportunity to build social relationships with other girls while developing leadership skills.

Results/Progress to date

- It is expected that the initial year of the three pilots will result in incremental improvements in the lives of the participant girls, including improved access to formal education, increased life and livelihood skills as appropriate to their ages, and greater sense of empowerment and self-esteem. In addition, it is expected that the knowledge base about what interventions are successful for young adolescent girls will be expanded, both for WRC and, through developed guidance materials, for the humanitarian field as a whole.
- Three country assessment reports documenting initial research findings have been disseminated and are available online for Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda.
- As part of the wider 'Protecting and Empowering Displaced Adolescent Girls'

initiative, pilot projects will run from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 (the overall initiative started in 2011).

- School environments have been improved through the building of toilets and better access to water at the schools.
- Based on programme learning, the project aims to develop and disseminate guidance for the humanitarian sector on empowering and protecting displaced adolescent girls.
- The programme aims to measure changes in key indicators against baseline data, capturing empowerment, confidence building, financial skills, rights, and health knowledge, livelihood skills, access to education and susceptibility to forced sex, amongst others.

Lessons learned to date

Based on the experience in the development field, and the particular context of displacement, the following areas of programming are identified as good practice towards bringing about the changes sought:

- Building adolescent girls' social capital and sense of agency through training in leadership, sexual and reproductive health, safety, and other life skills; opportunities to socialise and share with other girls; and mentor relationships with trusted adults. Often this requires ensuring that there are spaces for girls where they are not only protected, but that the community perceives as acceptable.
- Keeping girls in formal education through secondary school, by removing financial and practical barriers; persuading parents and other community members of the importance of girls' education; helping girls stay safe on the way to and at school.
- Providing access to non-formal education to ensure literacy and numeracy, as well as other skills, for those girls who cannot remain in formal education.
- Enhancing girls' future livelihoods through skills training in financial literacy; access to savings mechanisms; exposure to role models; community awareness-raising about the role of girls and women.
- Working with parents, teachers, camp and community leaders and other gatekeepers so that they are sensitised to the rights and needs of adolescent girls, supporting



girl-specific programming, and ensuring the availability of necessary adolescent girl-friendly services and channels for reporting abuse – and in turn contributing to prevention of GBV and SEA.

Given the lack of an evidence base for interventions for adolescent girls in displacement settings, it will be important for the initial programmes and projects to build in meaningful outcome evaluations in order to demonstrate that such interventions are worthwhile to fund and support, and to inform subsequent programming decisions.

Good practice^{26,27}

In all three areas of implementation the programme adopts a collaborative approach with local organisations to trial resolutions suggested by refugee girls. Collectively working with local girls and organisations to target their specific needs, whilst offering support and skills building opportunities.

“I was chased out of school by my teacher because my uniform was too dirty. I didn't have soap to wash my clothes.”

Girl, 12, Tanzania

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Chapter 1

SECTION 1

Chapter 1

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SECTION 3

Where does the money go?

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Girls online

A list of links to websites, reports, research institutions, databases, campaigns and agencies working on initiatives with a particular focus on girls, young women and disasters.

Girls' and Women's Rights Organisations

Camfed is an organisation dedicated to improving access to education for girls in Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Using a community-based, holistic approach, Camfed provides long-term support, such as fees throughout a girl's schooling; offers business training and small grants to women; and aims to empower women through a partnership with Cama, an association of Camfed alumni and other African women which encourages young African women to become leaders in their own communities.

Find more information at: camfed.org

Ipas is an organisation focused on increasing women's ability to assert their sexual and reproductive rights. It works in several areas, focusing on sexual violence and youth, including advocacy, community engagement, research and training health workers in clinical and counselling skills for comprehensive abortion care. **For more information, visit:** ipas.org/en.aspx

Vital Voices is a global partnership that aims to empower women worldwide. Working in partnership with senior government, corporate and NGO executives, Vital Voices aims to train women leaders and entrepreneurs around the world who can then mentor women in their own communities, building a network of inspirational women leaders. **For more information, visit:** vitalvoices.org

Womankind Worldwide aims to promote women as a force for change in development. It works in 15 developing countries, partnering with women's rights organisations to fund projects tied to women's legal rights, healthcare and self-empowerment. **Visit the website at:** womankind.org.uk

Women for Women International is a global NGO that works with socially excluded women survivors of conflict, by providing them with financial aid, job training, rights awareness and leadership education. To learn more about the programmes and projects they run, **visit:** womenforwomen.org

The Population Council is an international non-governmental organisation conducting research into population issues worldwide. Their three main research areas include HIV and Aids; Poverty, Gender and Youth; and Reproductive Health. Through research in more than 50 countries, The Population Council works with partners to deliver solutions that lead to more effective policies, programmes, and technologies. Their publications and resources **can be found here:** popcouncil.org/publications/index.asp

Equality Now is an organisation that advocates for the human rights of women and girls around the world by raising international visibility of individual cases of abuse. They mobilise public support and use political pressure to encourage governments to enforce laws and policies that uphold the rights of women and girls. **For further resources, visit:** equalitynow.org/resources

KOFAVIV is a network of women and men who are dedicated to helping victims of sexual violence. They connect victims to healthcare, legal representation and the community – giving them a voice and path to justice in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. **See:** bit.ly/YVrTf7

Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) uses research to identify critical problems that affect displaced women, children and young people. The WRC documents best practices, proposes solutions and develops innovative tools to improve the way humanitarian assistance is delivered in refugee settings, pushing for long-term improvements and change in refugee policy practice. **Their work with adolescent girls can be found at:** bit.ly/142awlz

Mama Cash supports innovative women's initiatives worldwide with the belief that social change starts with women and girls. Since 1983, Mama Cash has awarded over €37 million to advance women's and girls' human rights, working in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean and Commonwealth Independent States. **For more information, see:** bit.ly/11E9Uf4

Central American Women's Fund (CAWF) is a foundation dedicated to mobilising resources for grassroots women's groups and providing tools, knowledge and opportunities to strengthen women's groups as organisations that defend and promote their human rights. **Visit:** fcmujeres.org/en/home.html

FRIDA: The Young Feminist Fund is an initiative that funds and strengthens the participation and leadership of young feminist activists globally. The fund is a collaborative effort between the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), The Central American Women's Fund (FCAM) and young feminist activists from different regions of the world. **View their grants programme here:** bit.ly/12aPjd7

Campaigns

10x10 channels film and social action to increase investment in girls, driving resources to girl-focused programmes by penetrating the public consciousness and creating a vast grassroots network. In March 2013, 10x10 launched 'Girl Rising', a feature film following nine girls in nine countries, demonstrating the power and strength of girls' education. **Find out more about their film and work here:** 10x10act.org **For more information on Girl Rising, visit:** girlrising.com

ActionAid (Stop Violence Against Girls in School) is a multi-country initiative working to address violence against girls in schools within Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique. The campaign aims to reduce violence against girls in schools by shaping policies and laws and ultimately empowering girls to challenge

the culture of violence in and around schools, and increase girls' enrolment. General information on the Stop Violence Against Girls in School project can be **found at:** bit.ly/12unGh0

Girl Up is the United Nations Foundation awareness-raising campaign to harness girls' energy and enthusiasm as a powerful force for change. The campaign aims to foster the opportunity for girls to become educated, healthy, safe and in a position to be the next generation of leaders. **See:** girlup.org

Making Cities Resilient: 'My city is getting ready' was launched in May 2010 by UNISDR and addresses issues of local governance and urban risk in relation to natural disasters. The campaign highlights the need for collaborative efforts from governments, the private sector, academics and everyday citizens to reduce their disaster risk. **Focus areas, declarations and campaign information can be found at:** unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/about

UNISDR – Step Up: Women and Girls The 'In'visible Force of Resilience seeks to raise awareness of the need for women and girls to be at the forefront of reducing risk and managing the world's response to natural disasters. The initiative started in 2011, leading up to the World Conference for Disaster Reduction in 2015. Themes include: children and young people, women and girls, people with disabilities and the ageing population (2014). **For more information, visit:** unisdr.org/2012/iddr/

Plan International: 'Because I am a Girl' Campaign aims to help millions of girls to secure the education, skills and support they need to transform their lives and the world around them. Plan International believe supporting girls' education is one of the best investments we can make to help end poverty. **To 'raise your hand' in support of girls' rights, visit:** bit.ly/19xy2xo



Coalitions

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is an international organisation working for women's rights, gender equality and development. It works to build alliances and influence international institutions to advance women's issues. AWID provides current and up-to-date information on women's rights in the news as well as profiling recent research and information on a multitude of topics, themes and countries. The AWID Forum is a global women's rights and development conference which brings together leaders and activists to inform and broaden understanding of gender equality. **Visit:** forum.awid.org/forum12/

NGO Working Group on Girls' Rights is an international network which aims to promote the human rights of girls at all stages of their youth, advance their inclusion and status as agents of change, as well as assisting girls to reach their full potential. **More information can be found at:** girlsrights.org

A Safe World for Women is a woman-led not-for-profit organisation working with grassroots groups to promote the rights of women and children. The organisation aims to provide a platform for global interaction as well as a news outlet documenting the rights and violence of women and children. A Safe World for Women acts as a valuable resource for academics, researchers and the global community.

Visit: asafeworldforwomen.org

Haiti Adolescent Girls Network is dedicated to the empowerment, safety, health and wellbeing of girls in Haiti. The network envisions a world where adolescent girls are free of violence, discrimination and ill health, a world where girls feel supported, heard and safe, and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. **Their website is currently pending; until then, stay updated here:** <https://www.facebook.com/haitiadolescentgirlsnetwork> and twitter.com/haitigirlsntwk

Adolescent Girls Advocacy and Leadership Initiative (AGALI) is a partnership initiative implemented by the International Health Programs of the Public Health Institute. It intends to strengthen advocacy efforts and leadership capacity to improve the economic circumstances and educational opportunities for adolescent girls and young women in Latin America and Africa. AGALI's partners have provided direct training and services to over 40,000 adolescent girls and their allies, in addition to engaging 600 grassroots organisations in girl-centred advocacy efforts. **See:** agaliprogram.org



Youth movements

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts works worldwide to provide a non-formal education through which girls can gain life skills and self-development. It reaches approximately 10 million girls through 145 member organisations. The association recently added a curriculum to end violence against girls and training on emergency preparedness. **For more information, visit:**

wagggsworld.org/en/home

YWCA is a global network empowering women around the world to enact social and economic change. It works with 25 million women and girls in 22,000 communities. YWCA has four priority areas: peace with justice; human rights; women's health and HIV/AIDS; and sustainable development. **For information on 'climate change, take action now!', visit:**

bit.ly/100F9uh

Youth Climate is a global climate change movement with the view that young people offer hope, optimism and vision. The movement actively raises awareness and encourages governments to act upon the growing evidence demonstrating the impacts of climate change. **For information on related projects and programmes, see:**

youthclimate.org/projects-and-actions/

Oxfam International Youth Partnerships (OIYP) is a global network of young people who share a vision of a just world and are committed to working for peaceful, equitable and sustainable social change within their communities. Every three years, the programme introduces another 300 young men and women, aged 18-25, from around the world to the OIYP network. Since the programme began in 2000, OIYP has worked with over 1,150 young people from 98 countries. **For resources on gender, natural disasters and forcibly displaced people, see:**

oiyp.oxfam.org.au/resources/

Foundations

The Cherie Blair Foundation works to provide entrepreneurship opportunities and access to technology for women worldwide. It provides finance, networking and business development support on the premise that economically empowered women not only have greater control over their own lives and the lives of their children, but also signal a brighter future for their communities and economies.

See: cherieblairfoundation.org

UN Foundation The Foundation's Women and Population section has been working to empower women and girls worldwide, on the premise that they are essential to eradicating poverty and achieving social justice. They place a particular focus on reproductive and sexual health, gender-based violence, climate change and increasing funding available for adolescent girl focused programming. **More information can be found at:**

bit.ly/15Mka69

United Nations Foundation and Vodafone Foundation Partnership (UN-VFP)

helps emergency relief workers respond more quickly and effectively as well as reconnecting families separated by disaster. The partnership is a public-private alliance using strategic technology programmes to strengthen the UN's humanitarian efforts worldwide. **For more information on the UN-VFP Foundation partnership and associated partners, visit:**

bit.ly/10poELI

Ford Foundation aims to encourage a collaborative approach among non-profit organisations, governments and the business sector, ensure participation by men and women from diverse communities and work with those closest to where problems are located. The Ford Foundation works by making grants or loans that build knowledge and strengthen organisations and networks.

For more information, visit:

fordfoundation.org

Multi-Laterals

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is a partnership of 41 countries and 8 international organisations, committed to helping developing countries reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and adapt to climate change. Initiatives include gender, capacity development and disaster risk insurance. **For more information, visit:** gfdrr.org

Partnerships

Girl Hub is a collaboration between the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) and Nike Foundation. Girl Hub aims to form a global network of girls' experts and advocates and link them with development programmes and policy makers to promote girls' rights.

For further information, visit: girlleffect.org/about/girl-hub/

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls acts as a platform for more than 30 international organisations working to improve the lives of adolescent girls in the developing world who are trapped in cycles of poverty. The Coalition provides a unique platform for organisations to share information, tools and resources; to find points of intersection and opportunities for collaboration, build technical capacity and to strategise on best practices. **Check out:** coalitionforadolescentgirls.org

A World at School is led by Gordon and Sarah Brown and intends to raise awareness and advocate the right of a quality education for all children. They recognise the need to amplify current efforts, support and collaborate with other organisations and highlight successes in order to achieve education targets within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). **Visit:** aworldatschool.org

World Bank Adolescent Girls Initiative was launched in 2008, as part of the World Bank Group's Gender Action Plan. The initiative aims to improve girls' employment prospects tomorrow with training and education today. It works in partnership with the governments

of Australia, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and private sector firms including Cisco, Standard Chartered Bank and Goldman Sachs. The programme is being piloted in eight low-income countries, including Haiti, Nepal and Afghanistan. **See:** go.worldbank.org/I5PX4JETM0

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is an inter-agency forum involving UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. IASC develops humanitarian policies, identifies and addresses gaps in response and advocates for effective humanitarian principles. In 2009-10 IASC developed the Gender Marker (GM) which facilitates tracking gender allocations in humanitarian projects and nurtures gender equality results. **For further information, visit:** humanitarianinfo.org/IASC/

Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) is a multi-agency initiative working to improve the accountability of humanitarian action to people affected by disasters and other crises. HAP members range from institutional donors to agencies of emergency relief and development. **For more resources, visit:** hapinternational.org/projects/research.aspx

International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is a global network of over 8,500 individuals who work together to ensure the right to education in emergencies and early recovery. INEE brings organisations and individuals together to facilitate collaboration, share experiences and engage in advocacy around the right to an education in emergencies. **Access to their resources is available through:** ineesite.org/en/resources

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership between non-governmental organisations committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to reach their full potential. **Visit:** girlsnotbrides.org

The Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-Ed) brings together corporate leaders committed to delivering quality education to all of the world's children. Led by Gordon and Sarah Brown, GBC-Ed supports international action to achieve the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on education by collaboratively working with government and other stakeholders. Their three core functions include cooperation, advocacy and research. **Find out more here:** gbc-education.org

Civil Society

Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction

is an international network of non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations committed to working to improve the lives

of people affected by disasters worldwide.

Further resources are available from:

globalnetwork-dr.org/resources.html



CBM International is an international Christian development organisation, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in some of the poorest communities worldwide. Their main aim is to facilitate an environment where all persons with disabilities can access their human rights and achieve their full potential.

For more information, visit: cbm.org/In-Action-250903.php

Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) with help from partners, volunteers and local communities, ROTA works to ensure people affected by crisis across Asia and around the world have continuous access to relevant and high-quality primary and secondary education. Operating in 10 countries, ROTA engages young people and other community members in addressing educational and development challenges.

To view their current work, visit:

reachouttoasia.org/en/projects



REACH OUT TO ASIA
أيادي الخير نحو آسيا

Member of Qatar Foundation *عضو مؤسسة قطر*

INGOs

Save the Children works in 120 countries, fighting for children's rights, lives and helping them to reach their full potential. In 2012 Save the Children responded to emergencies in 39 different countries – delivering life-saving food, water, healthcare, protection and education to children and their families. **More information on their work in emergency contexts can be found at:** savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/emergencies

Action Aid is an organisation working towards a world without poverty. They work in a range of areas: hunger, education, emergencies and conflict, women's rights and HIV and AIDS. **Publications on emergencies and conflict can be accessed here:** actionaid.org.uk/100235/emergencies__conflict.html

International Rescue Committee (IRC) responds to humanitarian crises, helping people to rebuild their lives after an emergency disaster in over 40 countries and in 22 US cities. Areas of focus include women, education, advocacy and child survival. The IRC helps facilitate 'child-friendly spaces', offering a place to play, participate in structured activities and to heal from trauma and loss while rebuilding a sense of normalcy. To date these spaces have reached over 589,000 girls. **See here for more information:** rescue.org

Research

Asia Pacific Women's Watch is a regional network of women's organisations. It works to improve women's rights by working with other NGOs, national governments and the UN.

More information can be found at:

apww-slwnogf.org

Girls Count is a global research series of reports focused on adolescent girls' empowerment. Reports released in 2012 include 'Start with a girl: a new agenda for global health', 'Girls speak: a new voice in global development' and 'Girls grow: a vital force in rural economies'. The reports are produced by the Coalition for Adolescent Girls. **To learn more about the report series, visit:** coalitionforadolescentgirls.org

Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) is a global network of children's organisations which coordinates and promotes information on child rights. It has a membership of 2,000 organisations, and its search facilities can be narrowed down by region or theme with extensive information concerning children's legal rights. **For more information concerning child rights mechanisms, see:** crin.org/docs/CRINmechs.pdf

Young Lives is an international longitudinal study of childhood poverty, following 12,000 children in Peru, India, Vietnam and Ethiopia over 15 years. These areas were chosen specifically because of their common issues, including debt burden, post-conflict reconstruction and environmental conditions such as flooding and drought. Young Lives is a collaborative research project funded by the Department for International Development (UKAID) and coordinated by the University of Oxford in collaboration with research and policy partners in the four countries. **For more information on Young Lives, take a look at:** younglives.org.uk

The G.I.R.R.L Project is a participatory action research project designed to increase knowledge for empowerment, to improve the resilience of marginalised, Black South African adolescent girls, by integrating them into DRR initiatives. **Further information is available from:** acds.co.za/index.php?page=girrl

Global Disaster Preparedness Centre (GDPC) is a collaboration between the American Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. GDPC aims to support innovative approaches and provide an environment to further learn about disaster preparedness. **Information on their programme of research can be found at:** preparecenter.org/PromotingResearch.html

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a scientific body with support from the United Nations (UN). It reviews and assesses scientific, technical and socio-economic information produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of climate change. **For publications see:** bit.ly/10GkP1e

Population Reference Bureau (PRB) provides timely information on population trends and implications throughout the US. **Powerful Partners: Adolescent Girls' Education and Delayed Childbearing** offers insight to the links between education rates and levels of child birth. **For further information, see:** prb.org/pdf07/powerfulpartners.pdf

ODI Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) is a team of independent researchers and information professionals working on humanitarian issues. It is dedicated to improving humanitarian policy and practice through analysis, dialogue and debate. **For information on their work, visit:** odi.org.uk/programmes/humanitarian-policy-group/our-work

DARA: Impact Matters aims to improve humanitarian response through innovative and result-oriented evaluations, providing tailor-made services to humanitarian actors. DARA offers real-time evaluations, strategical technical assistance and system-wide evaluations. **View their humanitarian response index here:** daraint.org/humanitarian-response-index/

International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) is an organisation which works on research, technical support for capacity building and advocacy. Its research focus includes: adolescence, HIV/AIDS, food security and nutrition, economic development, reproductive health and violence against women. Regarding adolescent girls, it works towards improving sexual and reproductive rights, combating child marriage and improving access to education. **Its many publications on these subjects can be found at:** icrw.org/publications

Harvard Humanitarian Initiative is a university-wide centre involving multiple entities within Harvard that provide expertise in public health, medicine, social science and management among other disciplines to promote evidence-based approaches to humanitarian assistance. **For current programmes and research, visit:** hhi.harvard.edu/programs-and-research

Resources and Databases

Wikigender is a pilot project initiated by the OECD, which is dedicated to indexing and sharing terms and information on gender issues, including girls' empowerment. The project aims to highlight the importance of social institutions such as norms, traditions and cultural practices that impact on women's empowerment.

For more information, visit:
wikigender.org/index.php/New_Home

Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children produces action-oriented research in order to support local, national and international communities in their work against violence against women and children. The Centre's research and publications can be **found here:**
learningtoendabuse.ca/our-work/publications

DevInfo is a database system endorsed by the United Nations Development Group that enables users to browse, upload, visualise and share socio-economic data with the intention of monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Of particular interest is their news page displaying the latest database releases and important announcements. **It can be found here:** devinfo.org/articles/news

Girls Discovered is a comprehensive, interactive resource of data relating to the welfare, health, education and opportunities of girls worldwide. It enables users to choose from over 200 datasets and view, compare and analyse their data on maps or download it as a spreadsheet. **Visit:**
girlsdiscovered.org/create_your_own_map/

Sexual Violence Prevention Network uses a social justice and health framework in order to raise awareness and share information with the ultimate goal of ending sexual violence. Its objective is to foster a network of researchers, policy makers, activists and donors to address the problem of sexual violence, **To see a list of resources available, visit:** svri.org

Young Feminist Wire is an online platform created in 2010 by the Association for Women's Rights in Development. The site offers the opportunity for young women working on gender rights and equality to connect, learn and share resources to enhance their effectiveness. **Take a look at:** yfa.awid.org



Gateway to the United Nations Systems Work on Climate Change is a one-stop portal for the general public, practitioners and those alike to access resources, publications and timely data on climate change. **Access available through:** un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/gateway/

Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) represents a tool for researchers and policy makers to determine and analyse obstacles to women's economic development. It covers a total of 160 countries and comprises an array of 60 indicators on gender discrimination. **For more information, visit:** bit.ly/12aQbyq
Another of their projects is the **SIGI** (Social Institutions and Gender Index), a composite measure of gender discrimination based on social institutions in over 100 non-OECD countries. Users may build their own gender index by changing the priority of the social institutions in the SIGI. **See:** genderindex.org





The Gender and Disaster Network (GDN) is an educational project initiated by women and men interested in gender relations in disaster contexts. GDN utilises various media sources in support of a global network of researchers and practitioners. The network documents and analyses experiences before, during and after disaster, to foster information sharing and resource building among members. **An extensive collection of resources is available from:** gdnonline.org/resources.php

ReliefWeb offers timely humanitarian information on global crises and disasters. Their main functions include collecting updates from 4,000 global information sources and providing a platform enabling humanitarian partners to analyse context and situations and make better decisions. **An interactive map documenting global disasters is available from:** reliefweb.int/disasters

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and UNICEF recently researched and published a document with guidance and support for countries in the process of integrating disaster risk reduction into their school curricula, using examples of best practice and innovative solutions. **Case studies from 30 countries are available from:** bit.ly/16eP2w0
In addition, a document on gender implications in emergencies can be found here: bit.ly/10pp44b

Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN), hosted by the ODI, is an independent forum for policy makers, practitioners and others working in the humanitarian sector to share and disseminate information, analysis and experience, offering a platform to learn from and share with one another. **Their 'Humanitarian Exchange' magazine can be found here:** odihpn.org/humanitarian-exchange-magazine

Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) offers access to resources on adolescents in emergency disasters, pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls. **See:** icds.ewebsite.com/articles/adolescent-girls.html

Ushahidi is a non-profit technology company specialising in developing free and open-source software for information collection, visualisation and interactive mapping. Ushahidi build tools for democratising information, increasing transparency and lowering barriers for individuals to share their stories. **Read their blog at:** blog.ushahidi.com

CrowdMap is owned and operated by Ushahidi. The site hosts maps created by users displaying crowdsourced information. A user may, for example, create a map to present information about local knowledge and resources, where emergency services are needed during a natural disaster or to map and monitor local elections. **Their site is currently being developed, but for further information, visit:** crowdmap.com/welcome

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) is a learning network that supports the humanitarian sector to improve humanitarian performance through learning, peer-to-peer sharing and research. **Further resources are available from:** alnep.org/resources.aspx



UN Initiatives

Stop Rape Now is a UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict uniting the work of 13 UN entities with the goal of ending sexual violence in conflict. It aims to improve coordination and accountability, amplify programming and advocacy, and support national efforts to prevent sexual violence and respond effectively to the needs of survivors. **For more information, visit:** stoprapenow.org

UN Programme on Youth is the UN's focus centre on youth. It produces a biannual World Youth Report. One of its areas of concern is girls and young women. **Information regarding its work on girls and young women can be found at:** bit.ly/19sf3V0

End Poverty 2015: The United Nations Millennium Campaign aims to support and promote awareness of the MDGs. The campaign produces publications which summarise the data and achievements of the MDGs so far, and there is a specific section dedicated to their gender/women's empowerment publications. **Information can be found at:** endpoverty2015.org

Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls is presented by UN Women and acts as a one-stop online centre which encourages and supports evidence-based programming to more efficiently and effectively design, implement, monitor and evaluate initiatives to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. The website provides step-by-step programming guidance and expert advice, including working with men and boys in 60 different languages, ensuring timely access to current information. **For more information, see:** endvawnow.org

United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) seeks to mobilise the educational resources of the world to help create a more sustainable future. It focuses on 12 key areas, including gender equality, indigenous knowledge, disaster risk reduction, sustainable urbanisation and climate change. **For more information, see:** bit.ly/13kN9XJ

Women Watch was first established as a joint UN project in 1997 to provide an internet space for global gender equality issues and to support implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. It is now managed by a taskforce of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, led by UN Women, and acts as a central

gateway to information and resources on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the United Nations system.

For more information, visit: un.org/womenwatch
The girl child is one of its critical areas of concern; **further information can be found at:** bit.ly/10y9MX1

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) aims to cooperatively consider what the international community can do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change. This includes setting specific goals, directing new funds to climate change activities in developing countries, putting the onus on developed nations to lead the way and charting climate change problems as well as solutions. **Further reports, webcasts and press releases from the April 2013 Conference in Bonn can be found:** unfccc.int/2860.php

United Nations Habitat Disaster Management Programme helps governments and local authorities rebuild in countries recovering from war or natural disasters. **You can access further information here:** unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=286

Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of 30 Articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. **See:** un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

The UN Secretary-General's Global Initiative: Education First aims to raise the political profile of education, strengthen the global movement to achieve quality education and generate additional and sufficient funding through sustained advocacy efforts. Achieving gains in education will have an impact on all the Millennium Development Goals, from lower child and maternal mortality, to better health, higher income and more environmentally friendly societies.

Gordon Brown, appointed by the Secretary-General as UN Special Envoy for Global Education, is tasked with working closely with key partners to help foster support for the Education First Initiative. His role will help bring about change, mobilise resources and generate funding by advocating with world leaders, civil society and the business community. **Learn more at:** globaleducationfirst.org/index.html

UN Agencies

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) focuses on child development, education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS, child protection and policy advocacy. **Of particular interest to girls** is the 2007 'State of the World's Children' Report – 'Women and Children: the Double Dividend of Gender Equality', the 2009 report: 'Maternal and Newborn Health', the 2010 report 'Child Rights', the 2011 report 'Adolescence – An Age of Opportunity', and the 2012 report 'Children in an Urban World'. **You can access all of these publications here:** unicef.org/sowc/

UN Commission on the Status of Women is a commission of the Economic and Social Council dedicated to gender equality and the advancement of women. The 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 4-15 March 2013. The priority theme was the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. **Details are available from:** bit.ly/YVuqWJ

UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) was created to accelerate the UN goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women, and equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. In addition, UN Women holds the entire UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress. **For more information, see their website:** unwomen.org

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) give specialised policy advice and technical assistance to affected governments, UN agencies and non-profit organisations in reactivating education systems in post-disaster situations. **See:** unesco.org/new/?id=41660

Commitments are also made to gender equality in education. The 2003-04 EFA global monitoring report, which focused on girls and education, can be found here: bit.ly/YVtE5

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's development organisation and works on the ground in 166 countries. It's yearly Human Development Report monitors development at national, regional and international levels, and can be found at: hdr.undp.org/en/reports/. Of particular interest: its Human Development Index (HDI) measures a country's development by considering education, life expectancy and income, but it also produces indices specific to gender: the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index, which can be found at: hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/gdi_gem/

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) aims to ensure that by 2015 the gender gap in primary and secondary education will have narrowed and all children complete primary education. Its 'Gender Achievement and Prospects' in Education (GAP) projects work to assess progress towards MDG 2 (universal primary education by 2015) and identify obstacles and innovations.

The GAP Report can be found at: ungei.org/gap/pdfs/unicef_gap_low_res.pdf

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) uses population data to ensure that every man, woman and child has the right to a healthy life. It produces a yearly 'State of the World's Population' report, several of which have focused on gender. Further information on adolescent girls is available from: web.unfpa.org/adolescents/girls.htm

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) was created in 1999 with the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. UNISDR fosters a collaborative relationship between UN organisations, academics, the private sector, the media and civil society organisations. **For further information see:** unisdr.org

Further to UNISDR's work is 'The Local Government Self-Assessment Tool' (LGSAT) which aims to help local governments engage with different stakeholders to map and understand gaps in disaster risk reduction and provide local-level information based upon the wider national Hyogo Framework for Action. **Further information can be accessed from:** bit.ly/10yagMR



UNHCR: The United Nations Refugee Agency is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of refugees. **The environment and climate change is a sub-focus area** as UNHCR recognises that, with no choice but to rely on natural resources, the large influx of people and related camps have the potential to permanently damage the environment. **For information on the environment, climate change and sustainability, see their website:** bit.ly/10ppyac

United Nations Environment Programme Environment for Development (UNEP) aims to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by enabling nations to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. Areas of focus include climate change, disasters and conflict. **Information on UNEP's current disaster and conflict activities is available from:** bit.ly/18Kz77s

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a collaborative and coherent response to emergencies. Their wider missions are to mobilise and coordinate effective humanitarian action, advocate the rights of people in need, promote preparedness and prevention and facilitate sustainable solutions. **See:** unocha.org

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) is part of the international emergency response system for sudden-onset emergencies. Created in 1993, UNDAC is designed to assist the UN and governments of disaster-affected countries during the first phase of a sudden-onset emergency. UNDAC also assists in the coordination of incoming international relief at national level and/or at the site of the emergency. **The UNDAC Handbook is available from:** bit.ly/10GlfVi

The United Nations Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) provides leadership in promoting and coordinating implementation of the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations. The work of the Division translates into five core functions: support to UN intergovernmental processes on sustainable development; analysis and policy development; capacity development at the country level; inter-agency coordination;

and knowledge management, communication and outreach. DSD has a disaster risk reduction sub-focus offering publications, statements and voluntary initiatives. **Available from:** bit.ly/12aQLMI

UN Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Adolescent Girls was established in 2007 to support the UN's work with governments and partners in their efforts to develop policies and programmes to reach adolescent girls. **For publications on gender issues and women's empowerment, see:** bit.ly/10ya2Fw

World Health Organisation (WHO) coordinates health within the United Nations. The organisation is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, providing technical support, evidence-based policy options and assessing health trends. **For information on humanitarian health action, visit:** who.int/hac/en/



Glossary

Child-centred Disaster Risk Reduction:

Child-centred Disaster Risk Reduction fosters the agency of children and youth, in groups and as individuals, to work towards making their lives safer and their communities more resilient to disasters. It adopts a rights-based approach combining child-focused and child-led activities with interventions aimed towards bringing about change in community, local and national duty bearers. It applies strategies such as awareness raising, capacity building, group formation, institutional development, research and influencing and advocacy across a range of arenas.¹

Child Marriage/Early and Forced

Marriage: 'Child marriage' is often used interchangeably with other terms. These include 'early and forced marriage' and 'child and forced marriage'. These terms are often used to emphasise the fact that children are not considered able – due to their age – to give their free, full and informed consent to marriage, and are often subject to marriage under coercion, duress and even violence. The minimum age of 18 is considered under international human rights law as appropriate to ensure that children are able to give their free and full consent to marry, and have the necessary maturity – physical, emotional and psychological – to enter into marriage. Marriage is a formalised, binding partnership between consenting adults. Child marriage, on the other hand, is any form of marriage, whether under civil, religious or customary law, with or without formal registration, where either one or both spouses are under 18 years old.²

Child Protection: Refers to the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children.³

Climate Change: A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades

or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.⁴

Consolidated Appeals Process: The Consolidated Appeals process brings aid organisations together to jointly plan, coordinate, implement and monitor their response to complex emergencies and natural disasters. They can appeal for funds cohesively instead of competitively, which enables people to be supported in a timely, predictable and accountable manner. A consolidated appeal comprises a common humanitarian action plan and concrete projects necessary to implement that plan.⁵

Convention on the Rights of the Child

(CRC): The first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights – for children. Adopted in 1989, the Convention sets out these rights in 54 Articles and two Optional Protocols. It spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child.⁶

Disaster: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.⁷ Disasters can be caused by natural or human factors or a combination of both. They can happen suddenly (rapid onset), or they can be chronic (slow onset).



Disaster Management: To reduce the impact of disasters, disaster management is the organisation of responsibilities and resources related to each humanitarian aspect of emergencies, especially preparedness, response and recovery.⁸

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): See page 61 of Chapter 2.

'Do no harm': The concept 'Do no harm' advises humanitarian agencies to avoid unintended negative consequences in situations in which they operate so that the humanitarian response does not put those affected in further danger, and does not reduce the capacity of communities in terms of peace-building and reconstruction. More broadly, it also stipulates that humanitarian agencies have policies for guidance during planning, monitoring and evaluation on how to use information which is sensitive and can harm the dignity or safety of people.⁹

Early Recovery: Early recovery involves a change in focus from saving lives to the restoration of livelihoods. Interventions aim to stabilise the economic, governance, human security and social equity situation.¹⁰

Early Warning System: The capabilities required to generate and distribute meaningful warning information in a timely manner to permit individuals, communities and organisations at threat from hazards to prepare and take appropriate and timely action to minimise the possibility of harm or loss.¹¹ This definition encompasses the range of factors necessary to achieve effective responses to warnings. A people-centred early warning system consists of four elements: knowledge of the risks; monitoring, analysis and forecasting of the hazards; communication or dissemination of alerts and warnings; and local capabilities to respond to the warnings received.¹²

Empowerment: Power is the ability to shape one's life and one's environment. The lack of power is one of the main barriers that prevent girls and women from realising their rights and escaping cycles of poverty. This can be overcome by a strategy of empowerment. Gender-based empowerment involves

building girls' assets (social, economic, political and personal), strengthening girls' ability to make choices about their future, and developing girls' sense of self-worth and their belief in their own ability to control their lives.¹³

Famine: Catastrophic food shortage which affects high numbers of people as a result of climatic, environmental and socio-economic factors.¹⁴ A famine is declared when the following measures of mortality, malnutrition and hunger are met: at least 20 per cent of households in an area face extreme food shortages with a limited ability to cope; acute malnutrition rates exceed 30 per cent; and the death rate exceeds two persons per day per 10,000 persons.¹⁵

Food Insecurity: Occurs when people do not have secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development, and to lead an active and healthy life. It can be chronic, seasonal or transitory.¹⁶

GenCap (IASC): refers to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) project. GenCap aims to increase the ability, at the country level, of humanitarian actors to mainstream gender equality programming, in all sectors of humanitarian response. The goal of GenCap is to make sure that the different needs and capabilities of women, men, girls and boys are given equal consideration in humanitarian action.¹⁷

Gender: The concept of gender refers to the norms, expectations and beliefs about the roles, relations and values attributed to girls and boys, women and men. These norms are socially constructed, they are neither invariable nor are they biologically determined. They change over time. They are learned from families and friends, in schools and communities, and from the media, government and religious organisations.¹⁸

Gender Discrimination: Gender discrimination describes the situation in which people are treated differently simply because they are male or female, rather

than on the basis of their individual skills or capabilities. For example, social exclusion, inability to participate in decision-making processes, and restricted access to and control of services and resources are common results of discrimination. When this discrimination is part of the social order it is called systemic gender discrimination. For instance, in some communities, families routinely choose to provide education for their sons but keep their daughters at home to help with domestic work. Systemic discrimination has social and political roots and needs to be addressed at many different levels of programming.¹⁹

Gender Equality: Gender equality means that women and men, girls and boys enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices. Gender equality does not mean that women and men, or girls and boys are the same. Women and men, girls and boys have different but related needs and priorities, face different constraints, and enjoy different opportunities. Their relative positions in society are based on standards that, while not fixed, tend to advantage men and boys and disadvantage women and girls. Consequently, they are affected in different ways by policies and programmes. A gender equality approach is about understanding these relative differences, appreciating that they are not rigid but can be changed, and then designing policies, programmes and services with these differences in mind. Ultimately, promoting gender equality means transforming the power relations between women and men, girls and boys in order to create a more just society for all.²⁰

Gender Equity: Gender equity means being fair to women and men, girls and boys. To ensure fairness, measures are put into place to address social or historical discrimination and disadvantages faced by girls relative to boys. A gender equity approach ensures equitable access to, and control of, the resources and benefits of development

through targeted measures. Scholarships for girls are one example of an equity approach that contributes to all children, boys and girls, accessing school and equally benefiting from education opportunities. Increased gender equity is only one part of a strategy that contributes to gender equality.²¹

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Gender-based violence refers to physical, sexual, psychological and sometimes economic violence inflicted on a person because of being male or female. Girls and women are most frequently the targets of gender-based violence, but it also affects boys and men, especially those who do not fit dominant male stereotypes of behaviour or appearance. Gender-based violence may refer to criminal acts of aggression committed by individuals, or to socially sanctioned violence that may even be committed by State authorities. Among these are human rights infringements such as domestic violence, trafficking of girls or boys, female genital cutting or violence against men who have sex with men.²²

Gender-Blind: An approach which lacks consideration of gender in projects, programmes or policy. It does not recognise gender as a determinant of social outcomes which impacts on policies and projects.²³ It does not consider differences between girls and boys, women and men.²⁴

Gender Mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming is the promotion of gender equality into all aspects of an organisation's work and into its systems and procedures. It is a process that addresses what an organisation does (external mainstreaming) and how an organisation works (internal mainstreaming). Gender mainstreaming means that all policies, programmes, as well as organisational and management processes are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated taking into account the different and relative needs and constraints of girls, boys, women and men with the aim of promoting gender equality. The goal of gender mainstreaming is to make sure that women, men, girls and boys realise their rights and that inequality is not perpetuated.²⁵

Gender Marker (IASC): The Gender Marker is a tool which codes, on a scale of 0-2, if a humanitarian project ensures the equal benefit of women/girls and men/boys. If it can potentially contribute to gender equality, the marker predicts whether the results will be significant or limited.²⁶

Gender Norms: Socially constructed beliefs regarding men and women's behaviour which are 'assigned' in accordance with their biological sex. These norms govern our actions and choices and may lead to gender stereotyping.

Gender Sensitivity: Recognising gender issues and women's different perceptions and interests which arise from different social positioning and gender roles.²⁷ A gender-sensitive practice acknowledges the different experiences, expectations, pressures, inequalities and needs of women, men, transgender and intersex people. It also accounts for people's gender identity and sexual preferences, as well as numerous other factors that interact with gender to impact people's wellbeing.²⁸

Gender Stereotypes: Gender stereotypes are socially constructed and unquestioned beliefs about the different characteristics, roles and relations of women and men that are seen as true and unchangeable. Gender stereotypes are reproduced and re-enforced through processes such as the education and upbringing of girls and boys, as well as the influence of media. In many societies girls are taught to be responsive, emotional, subservient and indecisive while boys learn to be assertive, fearless and independent. Gender stereotyping occurs when such characteristics are persistently attributed to the roles and identities of males and females in society. Gender stereotyping shapes people's attitudes, behaviours and decisions. It locks girls and boys into behavioural patterns that prevent them from developing to their full potential and realising their rights. Gender stereotyping can lead to the social exclusion of those who do not fit the stereotype.²⁹

Humanitarian Aid: Aid and actions intended to save lives, reduce suffering and uphold and safeguard human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies.³⁰



Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: A 10-year strategy to increase the world's safety against natural hazards. It details what is required from different actions and sectors to minimise disaster losses. The aim of the HFA is to significantly reduce disaster losses by 2015 by increasing the resilience of communities and nations to disasters.³¹

Infant Mortality: The estimated number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births.³²

Internally Displaced Person (IDP): An internally displaced person has remained in their home country and has not crossed an international border, in comparison to a refugee. IDPs are legally protected by their government, and under human rights and international humanitarian law, IDPs retain their rights and protection as citizens.³³

Literacy: The ability to read and write with understanding a simple statement related to one's daily life. This includes a continuum of reading and writing skills, and often basic arithmetic skills (numeracy).³⁴

Literacy Rate: The percentage of population of a given age range who can both read and write, with understanding, a short simple statement on their everyday life.³⁵

Masculinities: Refers to the socially constructed perceptions of being a man and implies that there are many different and changing definitions of manhood and how men are expected to behave.³⁶

Maternal Mortality Rate: The number of maternal deaths in a given period per 100,000 women of reproductive age during the same time period.³⁷

Mitigation: The reduction or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.³⁸ Although full prevention of the adverse impacts of hazards is often not possible, the extent and severity can be reduced by numerous measures such

as public awareness and environmental policies.³⁹ Mitigation is defined differently with regards to climate change policy, where it is used as the term for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that are the source of climate change.⁴⁰

Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitoring is the assessment of the performance of a programme over time, which entails the ongoing collection and review of data. Evaluation complements monitoring using more in-depth assessments of the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of a programme at a given point in time.⁴¹

Natural Hazard: A phenomenon or natural process that can result in loss of life, injury or other health impacts, damage to property, loss of services and livelihoods, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage. The term describes actual hazard events and hazard conditions which are latent that may lead to future events.⁴²

Needs-assessment: An assessment of the degree and impact of the damage caused by a disaster (the needs) and the ability of the affected population to meet its immediate survival needs (degree of vulnerability). This involves the identification of needs which require external intervention and gaps which need filling.⁴³

Non-food items: Non-food items differ between culture and context; they include basic lifesaving items such as blankets, sleeping mats and plastic sheeting to provide protection against rain, sun, wind and cold weather.⁴⁴

Non-formal Education: Organised and sustained educational activities that give access to structured learning and can take place within and outside of educational institutions.^{45,46} Non-formal education can include basic education, life skills, work skills and general culture. Non-formal education programmes can differ in duration.⁴⁷

Out-of-school Children: Children in the official school-age range who are not enrolled in school.⁴⁸

Patriarchy: Refers to historical power imbalances and cultural practices and systems that confer power and offer men and boys more social and material benefits than women and girls.⁴⁹

Preparedness: The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.⁵⁰ This is conducted within disaster risk management and intends to increase the capacities needed to manage emergencies efficiently and transit from response to sustained recovery in an orderly manner.⁵¹

Psychosocial Support: Processes and actions that encourage people's wellbeing in their social world, such as the provision of support by friends, family and the wider community.⁵² In emergencies, effective psychosocial support can assist people in coping, leading normal lives and stop distress and suffering becoming severe.⁵³

Rapid-onset Disaster: Rapid-onset disasters arise after hazards which emerge suddenly and whose occurrence cannot be predicted far in advance, including, for example, earthquakes, cyclones and floods.⁵⁴

Reconstruction: Post-disaster reconstruction follows emergency relief work and aims to restore people's lives more permanently, including rebuilding infrastructure and livelihoods.⁵⁵

Recovery: The restoration, and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.⁵⁶

Refugee: As decreed under the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is someone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."⁵⁷

Resilience: Resilience refers to the capacity of an individual, household, population group or system to anticipate, absorb, and recover from hazards and/or effects of climate change and other shocks and stresses without compromising (and potentially enhancing) its long-term prospects. Resilience is not a fixed end state, but is a dynamic set of conditions and processes. Underpinning resilience is the need for better analysis of risk at different spatial and temporal levels, and for analysis to be monitored and updated to inform and enhance programming.⁵⁸

Response: Predominantly focusing on immediate and short-term needs, disaster response is the delivery of public assistance and emergency services during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, lessen health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of affected people.⁵⁹

Risk Assessment: Risk is defined as the probability of harmful consequences – casualties, damaged property, lost livelihoods, disrupted economic activity, and damage to the environment – resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions. Risk assessment is a process to determine the nature and extent of such risk, by analysing hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm exposed people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend. A comprehensive risk assessment not only evaluates the magnitude and likelihood of potential losses but also provides full understanding of the causes and impact of those losses.⁶⁰

Sanitation: The provision of services and facilities to safely dispose of human urine and faeces, and ensuring hygienic conditions via services including rubbish collection and the disposal of wastewater.⁶¹

Sex: Refers to the biological characteristics, which define humans as male or female. This should not be confused with gender, which

is a social attribution.⁶² Sexual characteristics are biologically determined, and remain the same throughout time and across societies. Gender attributes are shaped by social relations, change over time and may be different in different societies.⁶³

Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD): Data which is collected by a person's sex and age group. It can be gathered using qualitative and quantitative methods.⁶⁴

Sexual Violence: Refers to any sexual act, effort to obtain a sexual act, unwelcome sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person irrespective of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.⁶⁵



Strategic Gender Interests: Refer to structural, generally not material, changes in society in relation to gender inequalities and subordination.⁶⁶

Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.⁶⁷

Transactional Sex: The exchange of goods or services, including cash, transport and accommodation, for sex.⁶⁸

Transformative Agenda (IASC): Refers to an agreed set of recommendations, the goal of which is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian response system and address shortcomings. It includes a number of actions which aim to transform how the humanitarian community responds to emergencies.⁶⁹

Vocational Training: Designed mainly to prepare pupils for entry into a particular occupation or trade (or class of occupations or trades).⁷⁰

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About Plan International



Plan is one of the oldest and largest international development agencies in the world. Founded in 1937 to provide relief to children caught up in the Spanish Civil War, we celebrated our 75th anniversary in 2012. We are present in a total of 69 countries, and work in 50 programme countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas. Plan's work assists more than 90,000 communities covering a population of 84 million children. We make long-term commitments to children in poverty and assist as many as possible, by working in partnerships and alliance with them, their families, communities, civil society and government, building productive relationships and enabling their voices to be heard and recognised in issues that affect them. Plan is independent, with no religious, political or governmental affiliations.

Plan has a vision: a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity. Today, hundreds of millions of children remain without their rights. We believe this is totally unacceptable.

Plan's strategy to 2015 has one goal: to reach as many children as possible, particularly those who are excluded or marginalised, with high-quality programmes that will deliver long-lasting benefits.

plan-international.org



Temporary school in Haiti.

PLAN/LEE CELANO