OXFAM MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GENDER IN EMERGENCIES

PURPOSE OF THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

These standards were originally developed for Oxfam staff to ensure a consistent approach to promoting gender equality in humanitarian preparedness and response programming. They are provided here as a tool for humanitarian programme practitioners and as part of our commitment to transparency, sharing good practice and improving quality across the sector. These standards should be referred to throughout the project cycle to inform planning, programme design and implementation, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning.

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH INTERNAL PRACTICES

Minimum Standard 1: Ensure allocation of appropriate financial and human resources for the promotion of gender equality.

Minimum Standard 2: Ensure workplace policies and procedures are in place and socialized amongst staff and partners to ensure gender equality in the workplace. These are to include anti-sexual harassment HR policies.

Minimum Standard 3: Ensure accountability of senior management for promoting gender equality.

Minimum Standard 4: Develop staff, partner and senior management capacity through inductions, trainings and reflections.

GENDER ANALYSIS THROUGH THE PROJECT CYCLE

Minimum Standard 5: Gender analysis to be included in contingency plans, and linked with existing gender-focused development programmes.

Minimum Standard 6: In consultation with other stakeholders, collect, analyze and report on gender differences using sex and age disaggregated data (and other factors where possible/relevant) starting from onset and throughout the project cycle taking into account issues of safety and accessibility.

Minimum Standard 7: In consultation with women, men, boys and girls, design culturally appropriate gender-sensitive programmes that address the needs and safety requirements of the most vulnerable and redress gender-specific injustices. The programme design should incorporate a gender strategy, as well as policy and advocacy elements.

Minimum Standard 8: Programming is intertwined with gender-related sustainable development objectives for the country including disaster risk reduction (DRR).

Minimum Standard 9: Gender analysis informs the development of monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) frameworks and the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Minimum Standard 10: Gender analysis informs the development and implementation of accountability and learning systems.

PARTICIPATION, DIGNITY AND EMPOWERMENT

Minimum Standard 11: Ensure access and participation that is equal and safe, and meaningful participation by specific gender groups in humanitarian sectoral programme activities throughout the

project cycle, including distributions, training and livelihood opportunities.

Minimum Standard 12: In consultation with women and girls, actively promote their dignity and empowerment in programme design and implementation.

Minimum Standard 13: Develop programmes that ensure women's and girl's rights are being redressed in emergencies and ensure men's and boys' support (not just consultation) making them allies in this work.

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) AND PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA)

Minimum Standard 14: Implement and monitor interventions to ensure safe programming in all situations, in consultation with women, girls, men and boys.

Minimum Standard 15: Advocate where possible for gender-responsive policies and practices with communities and local authorities.

Minimum Standard 16: Protect beneficiaries from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by staff and partners.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO MEET THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

> These **Key Actions** may be applied in different ways depending on the context and ways of working of affiliates/partners. Not all will be applicable for everyone all the time. The use of **P** (preparedness), **Res** (response), **Rec** (recovery), **T** (transition), or **ALL** indicates at which stage/s of the emergency response key actions should be undertaken.

MS 1: Allocation of Financial and Human Resources for Gender Equality

Key Actions

❑ Undertake gender budgeting to ensure funding for targeted activities and resources for women and girls, as well as operational support for the delivery of effective programming. **ALL**

❑ Ensure a gender balance in teams, including in senior positions, and keep all staffing data disaggregated by sex for easy monitoring. **ALL**

❑ Recruit staff based on experience, understanding and commitment to gender equality. **ALL**

❑ Ensure clarity for staff about their responsibilities on gender and include gender objectives in performance management. **ALL**

❑ Ensure technical gender support through dedicated gender expertise or combined senior posts. **ALL**

❑ Select partners based on experience, understanding and commitment to gender equality. **ALL**

MS 2: Workplace Policies and Procedures to Promote Gender Equality

Key Actions

❑ Review and develop (where absent) affiliate workplace policies and procedures to ensure gender equality and a gender sensitive organizational culture in the workplace. Ensure they include HR policies to provide security and safety to all staff, and prevent sexual harassment. **ALL**

❑ Review partner workplace policies and procedures to ensure gender equality and a gender sensitive organizational culture in the workplace (should include HR policies to provide security and safety to all staff, and prevent sexual harassment). Work with partners to address gaps. **ALL**

❑ Ensure socialization of workplace policies and practices amongst all staff (international and national) and partner staff. **ALL**

MS 3: Accountability of Senior Management

Key Actions

❑ Recruit senior management based on experience, understanding and commitment to gender equality. **ALL**

❑ Include gender capacity of senior staff of partner organizations as criteria for selection **ALL**

❑ Include the promotion of gender equality in the Terms of Reference for senior staff and monitor performance against this. **ALL**

❑ Determine capacity development needs of senior management and address where needed. **ALL**

❑ Ensure sufficient resources and support for senior management. **ALL**

❑   Senior management to ensure technical and social interventions are set together and are complimentary. **ALL**

MS 4: Development of Human Resource Capacity

Key Actions

❑   Hold mandatory inductions on gender covering the Minimum Standards for staff (both national and international) at all levels and partners. **ALL**

❑   At all inductions participants should sign a simple document saying they have been inducted on the Minimum Standards and will 'strive to implement' them. **ALL**

❑   Designate a person to be responsible for ensuring that gender is included in inductions. **ALL**

❑   Provide induction packs with written materials including the Minimum Standards. **ALL**

❑   Gender training should be delivered to relief register members, HQ staff, development programme staff and existing partner staff as part of preparedness. **P**

❑   Include session on gender analysis and how to use assessment forms in gender training. **ALL**

❑   Tailor training to the context and ensure it is practical relevant, inclusive and appropriately pitched. **ALL**

❑   Conduct trainings regularly to account for staff turnover (Oxfam and partner), changes in policy, and development of new resources. **ALL**

❑   Evaluate training sessions and use feedback to improve future delivery and design refresher sessions. **ALL**

❑   Provide informal support as well as formal trainings, such as shadowing, coaching, mentoring etc. **ALL**

❑   Hold regular reflections on gender issues with partners and staff, and record lessons and share broadly. **ALL**

MS 5: Gender Analysis and Contingency Planning

Key Actions

❑   In consultation with existing gender-focused development programmes obtain quantitative and qualitative, gender-disaggregated baseline information on gender differences, needs and priorities. **P**

❑   Consider the impact on gender dynamics of different disaster scenarios identified in the risk analysis, and also the planning implications. **P**

❑   Identify and map in-country gender resources available through existing networks and within the Oxfam confederation and its partners, explore ways to mobilize in the event of an emergency and budget for resources needed. **P**

❑   Where possible, identify humanitarian partners who have specific gender expertise before an emergency. **P**

❑   Ensure 'rapid assessment' and 'in-depth assessment' forms include a section on the gender impacts of the emergency and highlight the importance of collecting sex and age disaggregated data and deploying a gender-balanced team. **P**

MS 6: Sex and Age Disaggregated Data

Key Actions

❏ Use language that differentiates target groups in all project documentation. **ALL**

❏ Determine other relevant factors besides sex and age in each context. **ALL**

❏ Ensure collection of sex and age disaggregated data as well as other factors where relevant. **ALL**

❏ Ensure collected data is analyzed and presented in an accessible and user-friendly format so it can guide programme planning. **ALL**

❏ Ensure disaggregated data collection throughout the project cycle from assessment and implementation, to monitoring and evaluation. **ALL**

MS 7: Gender Analysis and Programme Design

Key Actions

❏ Ensure gender-balanced, and, if possible, age balanced, facilitators and interpreters. **P, Res**

❏ Use a range of participatory methodologies to consult with women, men, girls and boys separately and together. **ALL**

❏ Hold consultations at a time and in a place most convenient and comfortable for participants. **P, Res**

❏ Include a variety of women, men, girls and boys in the consultations specific to each context (e.g. ethnic groups, religious groups). **P, Res**

❏ Use gender analysis to collect information on vulnerabilities and gender-specific injustices specific to each context. Determine safety requirements of vulnerable groups and identify strategies to address gender-specific injustices. **P, Res**

❏ Based on findings, develop a gender strategy, an advocacy strategy, and inform policy. **P, Res**

MS 8: Gender Analysis, DRR and Longer Term Strategic Gender Needs

Key Actions

❏ Ensure technical programmes work to address inequalities between men and women. **P**, **Res, Rec, T**

❏ Use information from the gender analysis to inform DRR programming. **Res, Rec, T**

❏ Use information from the gender analysis to advocate for influencing institutional, administrative, and legal obstacles to achieving gender equality. **Res, Rec, T**

❏ Work towards co-ordinating all gender components with local authorities/government departments with a view to accountability and capacity development. **Res, Rec, T**

MS 9: Gender Analysis and MEAL

Key Actions

❏ MEAL frameworks are in place to monitor the integration of gender considerations based on gender analysis. **ALL**

❏ Monitoring to commence at onset of emergency. **ALL**

❏ Monitoring to integrate indicators (including technical indicators) sensitive to gender and to include gender-disaggregated data. **ALL**

❑ Include a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators and of output/process and outcome/impact indicators. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Include indicators to monitor budget distribution, and use and benefits to different segments of the community. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Include qualitative and participatory research methods in evaluations to assess the impact and effectiveness of gender considerations. **Res, Rec, T**

MS 10: Gender Analysis and MEAL – accountability and learning

Key Actions

❑ Ensure accountability and learning mechanisms are included in MEAL frameworks. **ALL**

❑ Share results of evaluations with men and women in the target community and seek their input on solutions where impact is determined to be negative. Based on input from participants, take measures to correct any negative impacts. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Consult with men and women, and any other relevant groups in the context (e.g. religious or ethnic minorities), to assess the social and cultural context and develop safe and effective feedback strategies for all. **ALL**

❑ Promote these mechanisms among the broader community, ensuring appropriate and inclusive communication strategies. **ALL**

❑ Promote these mechanisms among staff and partners ensuring they know their role in disseminating information on feedback mechanisms and capturing and responding to feedback. **ALL**

❑ Respond promptly to feedback received, adapt, and evolve in response. Explain to stakeholders the changes made and/or why change was not possible. **ALL**

❑ Monitor feedback mechanisms throughout the duration of the programme. **ALL**

❑ Document key lessons learned and recommendations from evaluations. **ALL**

❑ Share learning informally with partners, staff and communities at regular meetings, during mentoring, and at field visits. **ALL**

❑ Share learning formally with other members of the confederation, partners, staff, communities at workshops, trainings, reflections, Lessons learned from formal monitoring and evaluation exercises can be documented and reports shared. **ALL**

MS 11: Ensuring Access and Participation for All

Key Actions

❑ Provide equal access to, and participation in, training, employment and capacity building opportunities, to an equal number of men and women. Be mindful that equal access and participation must be in proportion to the population breakdown. **ALL**

❑ To inform design in the initial stages of a response, consult with women and men to identify barriers, obstacles and risks to a) equal and safe access and participation and b) meaningful participation. Develop strategies with beneficiaries to overcome them. **Res, Rec. T**

❑ Regularly monitor to ensure safe and equal access and participation throughout the project cycle to identify any emerging barriers, obstacles and risks encountered and develop strategies to overcome them. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Regularly monitor how women/girls participate throughout the project cycle and ensure that it is done in a meaningful way that guarantees women have access to decision-making positions. **Res, Rec, T**

- ❏ Ensure sufficient resources to support strategies to enhance equal and safe access and participation of women, men, girls and boys, and meaningful participation of women and girls in programme activities. **ALL**

- ❏ Work with and support women's organizations to promote access and participation of female beneficiaries. **ALL**

- ❏ Ensure advocacy plans include lobbying for women's participation in peace building and post conflict reconstruction. **Rec, T**

MS 12: Dignity and Empowerment of Women and Girls

Key Actions

- ❏ Provide culturally appropriate sanitary materials[1], underwear, and clothing as determined through consultation with women and girls and distribute these in sensitive ways. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ Provide appropriate washing facilities for menstruating women as determined through consultation with them. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ Provide special attention to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and people with young children. In consultation with them determine their needs. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ In line with Sphere standards[2], simple clean delivery kits for home use should be made available to all visibly pregnant women, in settings where no other agency is doing so. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ Ensure women and girls have privacy and can safely use WASH facilities and temporary shelters by consulting with them. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ Ensure women are paid equally with men in Cash for Work programs and have the opportunity to engage in non-traditional roles in EFSVL projects. **Res, Rec**

- ❏ Advocate for and promote women's control over assets and property. **ALL**

- ❏ Work with women individually to develop their capacity (skills and self-confidence) and support them in taking initiative, developing solutions and making decisions. **Res, Rec, T**

- ❏ Work with and support women's organizations in their advocacy for change and facilitate networking and solidarity. **ALL**

- ❏ Identify and highlight risks associated with empowerment and develop amelioration strategies. **ALL**

- ❏ Work with men and boys to understand the justice of, and to support women's rights in emergencies. (For more information on working with men and boys to promote gender justice see MS 11). **ALL**

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[1] In some cultures women do not use commercially available disposable pads and tampons and may prefer reusable cloth.

[2] Under Essential Health Services – Sexual and Reproductive Health, Standard 1: People have access to the priority reproductive health services of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) at the onset of an emergency and comprehensive RH as the situation stabilizes, p.325

MS 13: Men and Boys as Allies in the Promotion of Gender Equality

Key Actions

❑ Identify how the rights of women and girls are compromised. **ALL**

❑ Sensitize male staff (affiliate and partner) to the benefits of gender equality approaches. **ALL**

❑ Work with male beneficiaries (and others e.g. government staff, community organizations) to understand the justice and benefits of, and to support women's rights in emergencies. **ALL**

❑ Do not alienate men and boys. **ALL**

MS 14: Safe Programming

Key Actions

❑ Identify and network with key GBV/protection stakeholders **ALL**

❑ Conduct coordinated rapid situational analysis to gather context specific information on GBV. **ALL**

❑ Develop capacity and confidence of staff and partners to identify potential GBV risks in emergency settings and to work with all beneficiaries to develop strategies to manage them using the IASC GBV guidelines. **ALL**

❑ Ensure the gender balance of staff/partners deployed to the field is in proportion to the target population. **ALL**

❑ Hold effective consultations with women, men, girls and boys and any identified vulnerable groups as part of the design phase to ensure comprehensive understanding of specific risks posed in each context and to develop community based prevention strategies. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Establish and define safe mechanisms to allow people to report any GBV or risky situations. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Conduct frequent monitoring of interventions in a way that will encourage accurate feedback to ensure safety and accessibility. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Provide information and referral to survivors about availability of response services (medical, psychosocial, legal/justice where they exist). Obtain feedback on quality of service and build up directory of quality service providers. **Res, Rec, T**

❑ Where services do not exist or are poorly resourced, advocate for their establishment or support in a way that will be empowering for survivors. **Res, Rec, T**

MS 15: Advocacy for Gender Responsive Policies and Practices

Key Actions

❑ Join and/or develop networks on GBV/protection and with key stakeholders in the community and among local authorities. **ALL**

❑ Advocate for best practice response service provision from government and non-government agencies. **ALL**

❑ Advocate for gender sensitive legal reform and access to justice. **ALL**

❑ Advocate for supportive community responses. **ALL**

MS 16: Protection of Beneficiaries from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Key Actions

- ❑ Recruit staff in a manner that discourages SEA. **ALL**

- ❑ Discuss PSEA policies and strategies with partners as part of the partner selection process. **ALL**

- ❑ Ensure staff and partners have read and have been inducted on any PSEA policies in place. **ALL**

- ❑ Reserve budget lines for training and awareness raising on SEA prevention and reporting procedures. **ALL**

- ❑ Ensure complaints mechanisms for staff, partners and beneficiaries are in place and have been communicated effectively. **ALL**

- ❑ Include reference to PSEA policy in all contracts/agreements (with staff, partners, and contractors) including prohibited behaviour, procedures for monitoring, reporting and investigation. **ALL**

- ❑ Include a clear outline of responsibilities for preventing and responding to SEA in job descriptions of relevant staff (e.g. HR officer, Country Representative, Programme Manager). **ALL**

- ❑ Clearly mention PSEA strategies in project documentation e.g. risk matrices and logical frameworks. **ALL**

- ❑ Monitor and review PSEA policy implementation and revise the policy contents if required. **ALL**

- ❑ Investigate available referral services for survivors and refer where available and appropriate. **ALL**

- ❑ Join existing/advocate for establishment of SEA focal group networks as forums to share information, coordinate activities and support SEA focal points. **ALL**

KEY TERMS

Empowerment is the process of gaining control over the self, over the ideology and resources which determine power. Women's empowerment is the process through which women (individually and collectively) become aware of how power structures operate in their lives and gain the confidence to challenge the resulting gender inequalities.

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men, and girls and boys, as well as the relations among women and among men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed, learned, and changeable over time. Sex, in contrast, refers to the physical differences between males and females that are determined by biology.

Gender-disaggregated data is the collection of data on males and females separately in relation to all aspects of their functioning – ethnicity, class, caste, age, location, etc.

Gender equality refers to the situation in which women and men enjoy equal status, conditions and responsibilities, and have equal opportunities for realizing their full human rights and potential and can benefit equally from the results – regardless of being born male or female. Gender equality encompasses equality in social relations and equal access to, and control over, resources by women and men.

Gender equity is considered part of the process of achieving gender equality and refers to fairness of treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment (or treatment that is different but considered equivalent) in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender justice is the goal of full equality and equity between women and men in all spheres of life; resulting in women jointly, and on an equal basis with men, defining and shaping the policies, structures and decisions that affect their lives and society as a whole, based on their own interests and priorities. Gender justice requires a gender perspective on the definition and application of civil, political, economic and social rights.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy which aims to bring about gender equality and advance women's rights by taking account of gender equality concerns and building gender capacity and accountability in all aspects of an organization's policies and activities (including policy and programme development and implementation; advocacy; organizational culture and resource allocation), thereby contributing to a profound organizational transformation.

Practical and strategic gender needs. Practical needs are related to daily activities and responsibilities. They are linked to helping women and men with the roles they are given by society. Strategic needs are related to changing the relationships, roles and responsibilities of women and men in society. These are usually long term and non-material, such as increased participation in decision making and legislation for equal rights.

Transformative leadership is a social change strategy that focuses on providing an enabling environment for the actualization of the leadership potential of individuals; influencing others to bring about fundamental change and facilitating the empowerment of others. It includes every act of leadership identified in all arenas, including the home, and formal and informal environments.

OXFAM

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organizations networked together in 94 countries, as part of a global movement for change, to build a future free from the injustice of poverty. Please write to any of the agencies for further information, or visit www.oxfam.org.