

# CONFLICT, PEACE-BUILDING, DISARMAMENT, SECURITY

## i) Humanitarian Assistance

### **Gender Division of Labour**

Refugee and other emergency situations are generally characterised by displacement, persecution, violence and deaths. Social and economic roles and responsibilities, and societies often break down as a result. During times of armed conflict and the collapse of communities, the roles of women remain crucial. Alongside men, they work to preserve or re-establish social order.

Women, adolescent girls and children constitute 80% of the world's refugees and displaced persons (Platform For Action 1995: para 136). Women continue to care for their children, the elderly and injured combatants despite the chaos of disaster or flight, and the social disruption which follows. The displaced family depends heavily on the ability of women to adapt, to continue to be able to cook, clean, fetch water and care for children even though resources are scarce and the needs are much greater. (Bonnerjea: 10)

UNHCR's policy and guidelines and the Beijing Platform for Action all highlight the importance of recognising women's multiple roles in any humanitarian assistance programme, particularly their economic roles of income-earners and food producers, as well as their household maintenance, religious, political and cultural activities. These documents also acknowledge that planners from government, non-government and multilateral agencies alike still frequently overlook women's needs and roles, and the changes in their roles created by their displaced situations (UNHCR 1990: 5; UNHCR 1991: 10; Platform For Action 1995: para 147a).

### ***Access and Control of Resources and Benefits***

It is often assumed that a man is the head of the household even though two-thirds of refugee/displaced households are headed by women (Bhatt 1995: 4). Where registration of refugees and displaced people is made in the name of the male head of household, this results in an exclusion of women from project administration, from control over the distribution of basic goods and services, from literacy, small enterprise and other training opportunities, and from access to credit, extension or employment services. As communities are re-built measures need to be taken to ensure women are fully included and will equally benefit from food, water, health and shelter provided. Women also need to be resourced for reintegration and resettlement and a return to normal life.

Lack of separate registration of women in emergency situations makes them particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation in order to receive basic goods and services. In refugee and displaced persons camps, camp layout, facilities and administration need to be designed with women and children's security needs in mind, to reduce women's vulnerability to harassment and attack from others in the camp or with access to it. Travel to latrines, food distribution sites, washing areas and fuel collection sites needs to be safe for women. Lack of separate registration for women also means that they may be disadvantaged when refugee status is determined and when assessments are made regarding repatriation or resettlement. If men abandon their families, or are forced to leave because of enlistment by insurgents or because of other forms of persecution, women and children may be left without legal standing and without any assistance (UNHCR 1991: 38 - 40).

### ***Factors and Trends***

All refugees need protection from forced repatriation, military attacks and prolonged detention. While entire communities suffer the effects of armed conflict or natural disasters, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society. The impact of violence against women and violation of human rights can be experienced by women of all ages. Women who have suffered from natural disasters or armed conflicts in most cases display strength, endurance and resourcefulness. Humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and resettlement programmes need to ensure that women are fully involved in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all short-term and long-term assistance provided (Platform For Action 1995: para 147a).

### **Guiding Questions for Identification and Preparation of Activities and Policies**

- *These questions are to be used as a guide only. It is not expected that every question will be relevant to all humanitarian assistance activities.*
- *The questions are designed to assist activity managers with their assessment and appraisal of humanitarian assistance activities.*
- *The questions are also designed to assist contractors to incorporate gender perspectives into humanitarian assistance activity preparation and design.*

<b>Key Areas of Concern</b>	<b>Guiding Questions</b>
<i>Project Objectives and Target Group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do project objectives explicitly refer to the immediate and longer-term assistance needs of both women and men?</li> <li>• What is the demographic composition of the refugee population?</li> <li>• Do project objectives take account of the changes in the population profile? (<i>eg. the change in population profile from the death of men and boys in conflict</i>)</li> <li>• Do project activities take into account the resources and potential of both women and men?</li> </ul>
<i>Gender Division of Labour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have women's productive, reproductive and community service and management/political roles prior to the crisis/displacement been considered?</li> <li>• Do women's traditional roles still apply?</li> <li>• Have changes in women's roles and workload been considered? (<i>eg. women may have an extra burden as a result of becoming a single head of the household.</i>)</li> </ul>
<i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Resources and benefits in general</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who will have access and control of the goods and services distributed?</li> <li>• Is control and access of the goods and services consistent with the gender division of labour prior to the crisis/displacement? (<i>eg. if inputs are provided for agricultural rehabilitation, are both men and women targeted according to their agricultural activities and needs</i>)</li> <li>• Does the project design identify appropriate measures to ensure that women and girls have equal access to all goods and services? (<i>e.g., are women directly involved in the distribution of these goods and services</i>)</li> </ul>
<i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Water Supply</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the water site accessible to women?</li> <li>• Do the distribution mechanisms and maintenance of water ensure access by women?</li> <li>• Do women have access to resources for collecting/carrying water, and do these meet women's needs?</li> <li>• Do women have access and control over containers and storage facilities?</li> <li>• Are the washing and bathing facilities accessible to women, and do they meet their needs for privacy?</li> </ul>
<i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Food Distribution</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the distribution of food allow access and control by women? (<i>are women directly involved in distributing food</i>)</li> <li>• Does the food supplied meet the family's nutritional needs? (<i>if not, equal distribution within the family cannot be assumed</i>)</li> <li>• Does food distribution offer specific protection problems for women? (<i>e.g. can women be put in the situation of having to offer sexual favours in exchange for food</i>)</li> </ul>
<i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provision of Shelter</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the siting and design of the shelter fit in with women's needs and those of her family?</li> <li>• Is there sufficient space, privacy and security for the family?</li> <li>• Is the shelter secure for women?</li> <li>• Does the shelter provide the necessary privacy according to social and cultural norms?</li> <li>• Does the shelter allow for safe access for women to bathing, washing and sanitation facilities?</li> </ul>
<i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Health Care</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do women have equal access to health services?</li> <li>• Are the health services responsive to women's needs?</li> <li>• Are women health workers involved so that women can consult directly about health needs?</li> <li>• Are medical support and counselling services provided for victims of violence, rape and other trauma?</li> <li>• Have refugee women been consulted in designing health programmes?</li> </ul>

<p><i>Access and Control of Resources and Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Longer-term rehabilitation</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will both women and men participate in skills-training, income-generation and vocational and technical training activities and programmes? If they do not yet exist, will they be provided?</li> <li>• Are women and men to be provided with information regarding their rights?</li> <li>• Do women and men have equal access to information and opportunities for participation in rehabilitation programmes? (<i>resettlement, repatriation, reintegration</i>)</li> <li>• Are women and men to be provided with counselling and rehabilitation services for victims of (gender-based ) violence and other trauma?</li> <li>• Will equal access to education materials and schooling be provided to boys and girls?</li> <li>• Will measures be taken to ensure equal access for women and men to procedures for being categorised as a refugee?</li> <li>• Will any new skills acquired by women while they are displaced be applicable when they return to their home land or are resettled?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Social, Cultural, Religious, Economic, Demographic, Political Factors and Trends</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has consideration been given to how social, cultural, religious, and economic factors influence gender relations in humanitarian relief and longer-term rehabilitation activities?</li> <li>• Have these factors been taken into account in the design of project activities?</li> <li>• Will the distribution of project benefits affect gender relations?</li> <li>• How are women and men received by the country of asylum?</li> <li>• Are there any local customs in the country of asylum regarding the role of women that may affect the safety or legal status of refugee women?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Participation and Consultation Strategies</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are women involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of assistance services and protection measures? (for both short-term emergency and longer-term rehabilitation or resettlement programmes)</li> <li>• Have appropriate strategies been identified to ensure that both men and women participate in and benefit from humanitarian assistance?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Women's Social Status and Role as Decision Makers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have steps been taken to involve women in conflict resolution training and negotiation processes?</li> <li>• Have effective steps been taken to protect women from violence and human rights abuses and to investigate allegations of abuse?</li> <li>• Are there strategies in place to raise public awareness of the contribution made by refugee women to their countries of resettlement?</li> <li>• Will human rights and leadership training be provided to women?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Counterpart Agency Capacity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the counterpart agency recognise the importance of considering and providing for women's needs and human rights in short-term humanitarian assistance and long-term rehabilitation programmes ?</li> <li>• Are there male and female staff assigned to programme delivery and monitoring?</li> <li>• Has human rights and gender awareness training been provided to key staff, including training on addressing gender violence?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Project Monitoring</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that sex disaggregated data is collected on who receives all goods, services and training opportunities provided in the project?</li> <li>• Are there plans to establish participatory monitoring procedures which involve both women and men?</li> <li>• Will human rights violations be monitored and dealt with seriously and appropriately?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Project Resources</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are project resources sufficient to monitor the distribution of benefits and impacts?</li> <li>• Have project resources been devoted to counterpart training where necessary?</li> </ul>