REPORT

WOMEN AND GIRLS IN EMERGENCIES

care
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About the report

CARE is committed to working on gender equality and women's empowerment through its humanitarian response. *'Gender in Emergencies'* is CARE's overall approach to working on gender equality in emergencies. This involves understanding and meeting the specific needs of women, men, boys, and girls while working in ways that contribute to gender equality.

This report focuses specifically on women and girls in emergencies, because the specific needs of women and girls continue to be poorly addressed in humanitarian funding and response.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
GBV	Gender-based Violence
HLP	Housing, Land, and Property
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD-DAC	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
SAFPAC	Supporting Access to Family Planning and Post-Abortion Care
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN Women	United Nations Women
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

1.INTRODUCTION

Discriminatory gender norms and social structures are the foundations of gender inequality, explaining why females are rendered more vulnerable than males in many aspects of life. In times of crisis, when familial and community structures and institutions are disrupted or destroyed, gender norms may be impacted and gender inequality increased. This report looks at six areas, each of which impact gender norms and women's ability to survive, cope, and recover from natural disasters and conflicts:

- Gender-based violence in emergencies
- Maternal and reproductive health in emergencies
- Women's economic and social rights in emergencies
- Women's voice and participation in emergencies
- Women's leadership in peace-building and humanitarian operations.
- Funding and evidence gaps for women in emergencies

It is important to note that all six areas - although ranging from the household to the global level - are interlinked, and supporting women in emergency settings goes beyond the emergency itself. Accordingly, many solutions do not lie in the emergency response itself, but in a focus on long-term efforts towards gender equality. Women and girls are at the heart of the transition from crisis to stability at the family-, community and national-level. Investing in women's empowerment and in their capacity to participate and lead in disaster preparedness, risk reduction and contingency planning, and developing their skills and employment opportunities, can provide the foundation for families to have sustainable sources of income, making them better able to survive and cope with crises. A focus on gender equality and women's participation thus has the potential to bind together efforts in the nexus between humanitarian assistance and long-term development.

1.1. Methodology

This report collects and summarizes new data and evidence from reports and research on women and girls' specific vulnerabilities in natural disasters and conflicts. It shows that disasters disproportionally affect women and girls and offers insight into the underlying reasons why.

Despite that this is already agreed upon across UN agencies, and development-, and humanitarian organisations, there is a consistent lack of data proving the concrete impact of crises on women and girls' lives. In many contexts, the challenge in collecting data is affected by significant cultural or religious barriers to admitting, confronting, or even discussing discrimination and violence against women and girls. However, data is essential to help quantify and qualify problems, inform policies and design effective programmes, and to raise the funds needed to address gender inequality. This report therefor aims to address the existing information gap regarding women and girls in emergencies and its consequences. These include insufficient gender programming and funding, resulting in humanitarian responses where humanitarian actors fail to address the specific needs of women.

The report aims to encourage international and national humanitarian implementing agencies, donors and donor governments, and governments affected by disasters to incorporate a larger focus on gender and women in both policy and the allocation of resources.

The report does not wish to argue that men and boys are not vulnerable or affected by disasters, nor does it seek to argue that males should not be included in programming and humanitarian action. The report does however argue that gender analysis should play a bigger part in the humanitarian effort to understand social structures and gender norms affecting the specific vulnerabilities of women, girls, boys, and men in order to accommodate these specific needs in humanitarian responses and to decrease gender equality.

2. WOMEN AND GIRLS IN EMERGENCIES

The effects of humanitarian crises, including natural disasters and violent conflicts, are distributed unequally between genders due to existing discriminatory structures and practices. Studies further show that the degree to which a disaster affects people correlates with their access to resources, capabilities, and opportunities which systematically make certain groups more vulnerable to the impact of disasters, in particular women and girls (Neumayer & Plümer 2007). Evidence points to social norms and gender roles, together with the socio-economic status of women, as being determining factors in women's ability to survive (Ibid.). When societies with existing discriminatory gender structures are subject to a disaster, these become even more explicit.

Biological and physiological factors may also play a role in men and women's ability to survive a natural disaster. Generally, men and boys are physically stronger than women and girls and are therefore better equipped to withstand the impact of a sudden-onset disaster. A report on the impact on women of the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami recorded that in Indonesia, close to 80 per cent of all those who died were female (FAO.org). Explanations for this large disparity identified women and girls' common inability to swim and men's relatively more typical ability to climb trees as factors. However, these skills, which can prove essential in survival situations, are partly learned and are therefore not only a matter of physiological differences but social too.

In many countries, women are the main caregivers and the ones protecting children, the elderly, and sick family members. They are therefore confined to their homes more so than men, and cannot evacuate in times of emergency as easily (Oxfam International 2005). Moreover, there are also contexts where women are confined to their home and/or must be accompanied by a male relative when leaving their home. In addition, due to women's roles as caregivers, women in some societies eat last and least, which makes them more vulnerable in times of drought when food is scarce (CARE International 2016). It is clear, therefore, that while biological and physiological traits affect a person's ability to survive an emergency, social norms play a significantly larger role. Furthermore, men are more likely to access and allocate assistance and resources given to families affected by disasters. Women's ability to survive a crisis is also affected by damage to their economic livelihood. Tasks to secure basic survival items such as water, food, and wood fall on women, which in addition to their tasks of caring and nurturing for their family, making it almost impossible for women to do income-generating activities, leaving them even more vulnerable. When resources become scarcer, the part of the population suffering from discrimination beforehand will be hit even harder.

When law and order break down, or social support and safety systems such as the extended family or village groups fail, women and girls are at greater risk of violence and discrimination. In humanitarian settings, the risk of gender-based violence and exclusion from life-saving services and decision-making processes increase drastically for women. This is due to discriminatory social norms, such as food hierarchies and limited mobility (UN Women 2017).

In situations of emergency and displacement the need to protect women, adolescent girls, and young girls is crucial as they face additional obstacles in their efforts to lead safe, healthy, and dignified lives due to increases in rates of gender-based violence, limited access to basic services

like water, sanitation, healthcare and education, and constrained economic and livelihood opportunities. Accordingly, humanitarians must take action on multiple levels before, during, and after emergencies to support women's access to assistance and protection so that they are less vulnerable to emergencies and their impacts.

Men and boys in emergencies

There is no doubt that women and girls are extremely vulnerable in times of emergency. However, it is important to note that men and boys also experience specific vulnerabilities in times of disasters.

In situations of armed conflict, boys are at an increased risk of being taken as child soldiers and of sexual violence. Very little research has been done on violence against men and boys and research on this topic in disaster settings is almost non-existent. Additional attention should be given to this as men and boys face particular difficulties in admitting that they have been victims of gender-based violence (IFRC 2015). The All Survivors Project is one of the few organisations that has taken up this challenge and provides research and documents cases of abuses made against man and boys.

A CARE report from 2017 highlights different vulnerabilities experienced by refugee men and boys in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and Greece. These include difficulties accessing shared accommodation, increased risk of addiction to drugs or alcohol, pressure to send remittances back to their relatives affecting their ability to meet their own basic needs, and loss of gender identity as the primary financial provider and protector for their family can also cause psychological damage (CARE UK 2017).

2. 1 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN EMERGENCIES

More than 70 per cent of women in crisis situations have experienced one or more types of gender-based violence (UN Women 2017a) in comparison to 35 per cent of women globally (WHO 2013). Gender-based violence thus increases during crises, making women twice as likely to experience violence.

Gender-based violence is rooted in and reproduces unequal social, economic, cultural, and political power relations between males and females. These inequalities are present throughout the world; in some places, culture is used to justify gender inequality and violence by evoking traditional cultural beliefs about how women should be treated (API). This can for instance be seen through increases in female genital mutilation and child marriages during times of crisis. However, gender-based violence, and especially violence against women, also increases in societies where violence is not justified by culture or social norms. For example, during the weekend of the Canterbury earthquake in April 2010 in New Zealand, police reported a 53 per cent increase in callouts for domestic violence (IFRC 2015). Nonetheless, there is a general lack of data on natural disasters, in particular regarding 'developed' countries, so to say that gender-based violence increases especially increases in developing or conservative countries as a result of humanitarian disasters would be wrong. It can however be argued, that the more conservative the society, the higher the risk of gender-based violence is.

Definition: Gender-based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private (ISAC 2015).

Gender-based violence shall be understood to encompass, but not limited to:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battery, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse of children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking of women and forced prostitution.
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state and institutions, wherever it occurs (HRW 2003).

Gender-based violence has consequences for all areas of women's lives, causing injury and death and affecting their sexual, reproductive, and mental health. As a direct result of emergencies, gender-based violence increases:

- Opportunistic sexual violence caused by breakdown in the social order, systematic sexual violence committed by armed groups (UNFPA 2011).
- Trafficking of women and children (UNFPA 2011).
- Harmful traditional and cultural practises such as female genital mutilation and child marriages (UNFPA 2011).
- Sexual violence in displacement camps, when women and girls have to access toilets, bathing areas, or search for water and firewood in unsafe areas (UN 2015).
- Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by authorities and aid workers. Women and girls in particular are extremely vulnerable to SEA as the power inequalities between beneficiaries and humanitarian workers is high (UNFPA 2011).
- Intimate partner violence triggered by stress, trauma, poverty, and food insecurity, and exacerbated by alcohol or drug use (UNFPA 2011).

At least one in five female refugees and internally displaced people have been subject to sexual violence, a number that is most likely greatly underestimated, taking the risk of social stigmatisation and danger of reporting such experiences into account (OCHA 2016a). Moreover, only one in ten women on a global scale come forward to report any type of violence perpetrated against them (UNFPA 2016).

In Syria, where the ongoing conflict has destroyed most of the country, 67 per cent of women reported receiving some form of "punishment" from their husbands (OCHA 2016). Gender-based violence was already widespread in South Sudan prior to the start of the conflict in December 2013, but it has increased fivefold in recent years. (OCHA 2016). An analysis done by CARE in South Sudan in 2016 showed that increased socio-economic stress caused by food insecurity had led to an increase in the frequency of intimate partner violence within households (CARE South Sudan 2016).

In October 2017, close to 500,000 refugees from Myanmar who had arrived into Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh were in urgent need of medical and psychological assistance to deal with the trauma resulting from either witnessing or experiencing gender-based violence, including rape and trafficking. The UN estimated that 92 per cent of those in need of assistance for gender-based violence were female. Furthermore 58 per cent were under the age of 18 (CARE Canada 2017).

In times of emergency and crisis, child marriages also tend to increase due to multiple factors, including economic reasons and to 'protect' girls from the increase risks of sexual violence, including rape. However, in some communities, traditions and norms contribute to a high rate of child marriages even in normal situations. One in three girls in the developing world is married before the age of 18[1] . Child marriages have severe consequences for the lives and health of girls and women. Child marriage creates an environment that increases young brides' vulnerability to physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse.

In Yemen, during the conflict and subsequent food insecurity, child marriage rates have since 2013 increased from 32 per cent to 52 per cent in recent years as dowries have plummeted and families use early marriage as a coping mechanism (UN Women 2017a). In South Sudan, high levels of conflict and instability, coupled with poverty and low levels of literacy and gender gaps in education, have also increased the likelihood of child marriages, which in 2016 included 52 per cent of girls under 18 years. Many South Sudanese families also marry their daughters in exchange for a 'bride price' or other resources such as cattle (Girls not Brides 2017).

The devastating conditions brought on by the Syrian crisis have led some families to resort to child marriage. In times of uncertainty, child marriage often increases, as families find themselves in difficult situations as their livelihoods, homes, and families become threatened. For many parents, marrying their daughters is a way to cope with economic suffering or a way to protect her from the threat of sexual violence (Girls not Brides 2017). In 2011, the percentage of registered Syrian marriages taking place involving a girl aged 15-17 was 12 per cent. In 2013, this number rose to 25 per cent and to just under 32 per cent in the first quarter of 2014 (CARE UK 2015).

Furthermore, girls entering into marriage at an early age are very unlikely to finish or even attend school. The link between education and the prevalence of child marriage is

[1] *Child marriage prevalence is the percentage of women between 20-24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 18 years old (UNICEF State of the World's Children, 2016)*

particularly evident in Niger, where 81 per cent of women aged 20-24 with no education and 63 per cent with only primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 17 per cent of women with secondary education or higher (Girls not Brides 2017).

Gender-based violence is a complex issue that requires a multi-sector and multi-agency response and addressing it in times of humanitarian crises is especially difficult. Applying a gender analysis and integrating gender across all of the UN humanitarian sectors, including Camp coordination and Camp management, Education, Food Security & Livelihoods, Health including sexual and reproductive health (SRH), Nutrition, Protection (including Child Protection, Gender-based violence and Housing, Land & Property), Shelter & Settlements and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) is essential. Moreover, empowering women and adolescent girls through participation in assessment, planning, and decision-making processes in each state of an emergency, including preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation, is crucial to make them agents in their own lives. A failure to address the root causes of gender-based violence prior to a humanitarian crisis makes it more difficult to do so during or in its aftermath.

It also makes it almost certain that the level of violence will increase. Failure to deal with and focus on gender-based violence in emergency responses weakens women's and girls' resilience and health later on, and presents a greater barrier to recovery (UNFPA 2015).

MARY AKUJOS STORY

Mary Akujo is not like other teenagers. She lives in a refugee camp in Northern Uganda together with her two younger brothers for whom she is responsible. Their parents have been killed, and all three children carry with them difficult memories of violence.

Life in the refugee camp is still relatively new for Mary Akujo. It all started in 2017, when she was just 15 years old, and armed soldiers attacked her village in her home country, South Sudan. The soldiers came to spread fear by raping all the women and the girls that they could find.

Mary Akujo's grandmother was taking care of the three children when it happened. She reacted fast and ran with her grandchildren to the bush where they hid out for seven days.

Fleeing from fear and violence

Mary Akujo's grandmother was too old to flee herself, but she convinced a group of women to take Mary and her younger brothers with them to Uganda. However, the flight to Uganda was no less safe. Mary recalls what happened one day when she and a few other girls were fetching water and they met a group of men:

"They began to run towards us immediately. We ran as fast as we could. Some of us cried, others screamed. I remember my heart pounding in my chest. I was so afraid."

All the girls knew what would happen to them if the men caught up with them. Luckily, the other women in the group heard their screams and managed to help the girls, before the men could rape them. Mary Akujo was left with an ingrained fear of men and of walking around alone.

In the refugee camp in Northern Uganda, Mary received help and counselling from CARE, and today she is no longer afraid of men or of walking around by herself.

She has become a volunteer for CARE, talking about and informing other girls and women of gender based violence. Mary Akujo's brothers are in school, and she plans to start school as well. Her dream is to become a social worker.

2. 2 MATERNAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN EMERGENCIES

Every day, women and adolescent girls die from complications in pregnancy and childbirth, 507 out of 830 maternal deaths on a global scale are in emergencies and fragile situations (UN Women 2017a), meaning that 60 per cent of preventable maternal deaths take place in settings of conflict, displacement and natural disasters (UN Women 2017). The probability of a woman dying from complications of pregnancy or childbirth is 1 in 4900 in developed countries, 1 in 180 in developing countries, and 1 in 54 in countries categorised as 'fragile states' (WHO 2017). The exceptionally high number of maternal deaths in fragile states highlights the impact of breakdowns in health systems of these countries (WHO 2017). In humanitarian settings, sexual and reproductive health issues are often overlooked as many humanitarian organisations prioritise access to clean water, food and shelter. However, a lack of health services is the leading cause of death and illness among women of childbearing age (UNFPA.org). Limited access to healthcare during and after a crisis also increases mortality and malnutrition rates, particularly for mothers and infants. After the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, it was estimated that two million women and girls of reproductive age had been affected by the crisis, including around 126,000 pregnant women. With disruption to normal health services, it was estimated that 1,500 women per month would have difficulty accessing reproductive health services and consequently face life-threatening complications (UN Women 2017a).

A woman's social, economic and physical status is highly linked to her ability to exercise her reproductive rights. During displacement, adolescent girls are in an increased danger of being exposed or coerced into sex or forced marriage, which can result in pregnancy. The risk of girls dying as a result of early pregnancy and childbirth is twice as high for girls aged 15-19 and five times as high for girls aged 10-14 compared to women in their twenties (UNFPA 2016). A study done in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake found that the pregnancy rate was three times higher in the camps compared to the average urban rate before the crisis, with approximately 66 per cent of the pregnancies being unwanted or unplanned (UNFPA 2015).

Reducing the number of maternal deaths, unintended pregnancies, and transmission of HIV requires a larger focus on the needs for sexual and reproductive health initiatives and family planning in humanitarian actions.

2.3 WOMEN'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS IN EMERGENCIES

Livelihoods

Globally, due to discriminating social norms causing considerable differences in access to employment and pay, more women live in poverty than men (UN Women 2016). In 2016, there were 700 million fewer working-age women than men in paid employment. At the same time, women undertake about three times more unpaid work than men (UN Women 2016). The large differences in income-generating activities between men and women, both before, during, and after an emergency means that women are often less able to cope with and rebuild, as their economic foundation is much weaker than men's.

In Yemen, up to 30 per cent of internally displaced households are female-headed, compared to an estimated nine per cent before the current crisis (UN Women 2017). Female-headed households are among the most vulnerable due to their lower social-economic status, they are also often isolated as cultural and safety concerns restrict them from being able to circulate in the communities where they have been displaced. Female-headed households are thus often poorer and more vulnerable than houses with a male head. Findings based on a quantitative survey showed that female respondents expected a 57.7 per cent decrease in the likelihood of gaining access to financial means, including household savings, income from work, selling of households assets, community loans, donations or community support, and support from extended family in times of crisis (CARE Sudan 2017).

As a result of the 2004 tsunami in Asia many men lost their boats, forcing them to migrate. As a result of this, women also lost their source of income, as many of them traditionally process the fish caught by men (FAO.org). With male household members absent, cases of sexual violence increased, discouraging women from seeking alternative employment (FAO.org). When women and families are left behind, they are often rendered increasingly vulnerable due to the already unequal distribution and access to economic resources. Women's lack of access to resources increases their risk of engaging in poorly paid work or transactional sex in order to survive (UN Women 2017).

Since 2014, over 100,000 women and girls fleeing violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria have found shelter in camps across the border in Niger. However, women often find themselves trapped in a cycle of poverty, as they often have no assets of their own. A report by UN Women found that 70 per cent of female refugees lack access to income-generating activities because humanitarian assistance rarely prioritises employment opportunities for women (UN Women 2017b).

Only 9 per cent of landholders in conflict and post-conflict countries are women, compared with 19 per cent globally (UN Security Council 2015). In South Sudan and Afghanistan, displaced women are often unable to assert their housing, land, and property (HLP) rights despite strong constitutional guarantees of equality and non-discrimination. In some cases refugee and returnee women are evicted from family homes after divorce, their land is sold by family members, they miss out on shelter when it is allocated to male heads of households, and returning widows are denied inherited land. Most importantly, they often have little or no ability to do anything about it due to their low social status and lack of economic resources (NRC 2017). Furthermore, norms embedded within social, political and economic structures are often affected by patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted gender stereotypes that maintain gender inequality, limiting the extent to which women's rights are realised in practice.

The humanitarian community also creates barriers to women's access to justice for HLP rights and humanitarian assistance by registering refugee registration cards and humanitarian assistance in the name of male heads of households (NRC 2017). In Gaza, refugee registration cards are held in the name of the head of the household, which is usually male. As the registration cards are used to access humanitarian assistance, this has direct effects on women's lives as they are completely reliant on the male head of the household (NRC 2017). In Pakistan, a country with recurring natural disasters, many women do not possess national identity cards as they have not been permitted to register – therefore leaving them without proof of identity to access emergency aid (CARE International 2016).

Research suggests that there is a correlation between women's property ownership and gender equality. Despite the recognition of women's rights as an important factor in creating gender equality and that HLP rights are essential for women to secure shelter and livelihoods in post-crises settings, women's socio-economic rights, including HLP rights, are often a neglected aspect of women's vulnerability in humanitarian recovery work.

Education

Of the 65 million internally displaced people and 22 million refugees globally in 2017, around half are under the age of 18 (UNHCR 2017). Children in countries affected by conflict are two and a half times more likely to be out of school than children in countries free from conflict (Global Partnership for Education 2017). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that in 2016, 61 per cent of refugees of primary school age attend schooland only 23 per cent of refugee adolescents attend secondary school (UNHCR 2016). In times of emergency, most families experience economic crisis due to loss of income and property. When resources are depleted and there are both direct and indirect costs associated with sending children to school, including education fees and loss of income from working children, many families prioritise the education of their boys. Girls are deprived of education due to barriers such as lower social status, early marriage, chores, school safety, and sanitation (CARE International 2016a), all of which are multiplied during disasters and conflict.

Refugee girls are particularly disadvantaged; for every ten refugee boys in primary school, there are fewer than eight refugee girls. At secondary school level, fewer than seven refugee girls for every ten refugee boys are in school (UNHCR). Conflict and disasters deprive millions of children the right to education as schools are often damaged or destroyed. More than one-third of countries hosting refugees do not recognize the right to education, resulting in entire generations being left behind (Global Partnership for Education 2017).

Education can be a life-saving resource and depriving girls of the fundamental right to education can have long-term consequences (UNFPA). In Malawi, 45 per cent of adolescent girls with no education become pregnant, but with a secondary education, the number drops to 4 per cent (CARE International 2016b). One additional school year can also increase a woman's earnings by 10-20 per cent (CARE International 2016a). Moreover, countries with twice the level of educational gender inequality have twice the probability of conflict than countries with higher gender equality in education (INEE 2017).

2.4 WOMEN'S VOICE AND PARTICIPATION IN EMERGENCIES

Crises as a result of drought and famine often hit women's livelihoods hardest, in part because they tend to work in informal sectors and take on about three times as much unpaid work, such as household work, than men (UN Women 2016). Social norms, as well as gender stereotypes, affect all aspects of people's lives as well as their odds of surviving and coping with disasters and conflict. Conflict and drought-based emergencies are often characterised by resource-scarcity and when they occur together, reinforce one another. Control and access to resources becomes a crucial dynamic in emergencies, often to the disadvantage of women as they have little or no access to these resources, affecting their ability to recover from emergencies. The disadvantage of women and girls affects all aspects of their lives, including their access to health and education and their lack of rights, often manifesting in gender-based violence. All of these aspects are interlinked and affect one another. Empowering women and girls by increasing their access and control over resources can therefore play an important role in their ability to take care of themselves and their families (Action Aid 2009).

Gender dynamics are often neglected in planning processes and addressing fundamental power imbalances within crisis-affected populations. It is, however, in times of crisis that an opportunity is presented to create a change in gender relations and norms as traditional societies and structures are challenged. According to a report by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 2014, there is evidence that women in Afghanistan are increasingly claiming their rights, potentially in response to the rising number of widows and female-headed households resulting from the conflict and recurrent disasters (NRC 2014). Another sign of change is the growing number of women who are reluctant to step back into their traditional roles as they become more directly involved in farming and raising livestock. Women's exposure to different cultural values during exile has meant that they are more likely to challenge restrictive gender roles on return. Afghan women who were refugees in Iran for many years struggle to adopt and adhere to conservative notions of social behaviour and economic dependence upon their return and reintegration, particularly in rural areas. Shifting gender dynamics in times of crisis can thus provide an opportunity to promote women's and girls' capacities to affect change and build more stable and resilient societies – both during and in the aftermath of crises.

Challenging traditional gender roles and including women in community disaster preparedness processes plays an important part in strengthening women's ability to cope and recover from crises. Despite and because of the obstacles affecting women, adolescents, and girls in crises, such as their ability to self-rescue and their role as caregivers, they play critical roles in crisis preparedness, response and recovery, including as first responders, community organisers and peace-builders. By supporting women as active participants and leaders in communities, it is more likely that their distinct needs will be met, including protection from gender-based violence. Therefore, female partnership and leadership in humanitarian action are important steps towards protection and empowerment (CARE Danmark 2017).

2.5 WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN PEACE-BUILDING AND HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

According to UN Women, just 11 per cent (17 out of 664) of peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2000, prior to the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, had at least one reference to women. Since the adoption of resolution 1325, 27 per cent of peace agreements have referenced women. In 2015, seven out of ten peace agreements signed included a specific focus on gender (UN Women). However, women only made up nine per cent of negotiators in formal peace processes, despite 15 years of a global commitment to women's participation in peace building, between 1992 and 2011 (Action Aid 2016).

Historically women have to a large extend been excluded from peace making processes as peace processes have focussed on bringing the combatants to the negotiating table, whom are rarely women. Peace arrangements increasingly go beyond negotiating cease-fires and dividing territory, incorporating elements that lay the foundations for peace and shape the structure of society. However, peacebuilding priorities are often determined behind closed doors, in political settlements mostly led by national and international male elites who often fail to include those who did not take up arms or those who were working for peace, including non-traditional actors such as women (O'Rielly et. al. 2015). Women's activism and contributions are consistently undervalued, gender-based violence remains widespread, and 'women's issues' continue to be treated as marginal to the main peacebuilding agenda. One of the most significant barriers to women's leadership in humanitarian responses is a lack of funds to support gender-responsive humanitarian action and local women's rights organisations (Action Aid 2016).

In 2015, the research project *"Broadening Participation Project"* considered the participation of a variety of distinct groups across negotiations in 40 case studies, 28 of which included women's groups. The research pointed towards that when women's groups were able to strongly influence negotiations or push for a peace deal, an agreement was almost always reached with the exception of only one case. Even where women's groups only had moderate influence, an agreement was reached in the majority of cases. However, when women's groups were not involved at all, or had a low influence on the process, the chance of reaching an agreement was considerably lower. When women are incorporated into peace agreements, they do not only affect the success rate but also enable women to take charge and push social norms and legislation to their advantage. In Burundi, women succeeded in inserting requirements on freedom of marriage and the right to choose one's partner into their peace agreement. In Guatemala, women's groups worked to introduce commitments to new legislation that would classify sexual harassment as a criminal offence, as well as establishing an office for indigenous women's rights (O'Rielly et. al. 2015).

If gender equality and protection of women in times of emergency is to happen, there is not only a need for the right programmes. There is also a need for broader institutional change where women are included at all levels of humanitarian response.

2.6 FUNDING AND EVIDENCE GAPS FOR WOMEN IN EMERGENCIES

Funding

In 2017, the total requirement for funds in order to help the 105.1 million crisis-affected people across 38 countries was $24 billion, an increase from an estimated requirement of $22.2 billion to help 92.8 million people. The actual amount of funding only reached $12.6 billion, leaving a gap of $11.4 billion, meaning that only 52 per cent of the UN-coordinated response plans were actually funded (UNOCHA 2017). UNOCHA estimates that in 2018, 135.7 million people will be in need of humanitarian aid in 25 countries and that 90.9 million will receive aid (UNOCHA 2017a).

Despite the large number of women and girls affected by humanitarian crises, and the fact that they are in greater risk of violence and discrimination, this is not reflected in the level of funding or programming. Even though there is a strong rhetorical focus on integrating gender equality into humanitarian response, a review of humanitarian programmes showed that:

- In 2017, less than 0.1 per cent of humanitarian funding went towards gender-based violence (FTS 2017), a shockingly low percentage taking into account that 70 per cent of women in humanitarian settings have experienced one or several types of violence.
- In 2017, less than 0.1 per cent of humanitarian funding went towards housing, land and property (FTS 2017).
- In 2015, just one per cent of all humanitarian funding went to women's groups or women's ministries (UN Women 2017).
- In 2014, less than one per cent of all aid to fragile states targeted gender equality significantly (UN Women).
- In 2014, only four per cent of projects in UN interagency appeals targeted women and girls (UN Women 2017).
- Between 2011 and 2014, less than two per cent of all humanitarian programmes recorded in the Financial Tracking System (FTS) of the UNOCHA Office, had the explicit goal of advancing gender equality or targeted actions towards women and girls (Action Aid 2016) [2].

This does not mean, however, that additional funding is focused on men or not on women at all. Nonetheless, data clearly indicates that there is a lack of sufficient funding dedicated to policy commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment, including gender-based violence (Action Aid 2016).

Evidence

Despite agreement across UN agencies, development, and humanitarian organisations that women and girls are more affected by humanitarian crisis than men and boys, there is an inherent lack of data proving the concrete impact of crisis on women and girls' lives. In many contexts, the challenge in collecting data is affected by significant cultural or religious barriers to admitting, confronting or even discussing discrimination and violence against women and girls. However, data is essential to help quantify and qualify problems, inform policies and design effective

[2] *The Financial Tracking System stopped being reviewed in 2014 by Gencap. This makes comparison difficult after 2014.*

programmes, and to raise the funds needed to address gender inequality (UNFPA 2013). For instance, gathering data on gender-based violence - regardless of the social or cultural context – is impacted by the inherent sensitivities and ethical considerations in collecting the data itself, as well as the unwillingness of those with power to expose the extent of violence (UNFPA 2013). A lack of adherence to core ethical and safety guidelines in documenting gender-based violence not only puts women and girls at greater risk of abuse, but also increases the likelihood of retaliation against those actors who are trying to help. Furthermore, in contexts of conflict where violence may be particularly politicised and where data may reveal a pattern of abuse by armed actors/parties to the conflict, gathering data is especially complicated (UNFPA 2013).

JANNAT ARAS STORY

Jannat Ara fled her home country of Myanmar after a crisis broke out in 2017, which has led to almost 700,000 people fleeing the country. Jannat Ara, her husband and their 10-month infant had to run to save their lives during an attack on their village by the military, but she lost track of her husband while they were running. She has now sought refuge in a camp in Bangladesh and is alone with her infant, Noor Safa. She does not know where her husband is, nor what the future brings for her and her baby.

Many women and girls arrive in the camp alone with just their children like Jannat Ara and Noor Safa. Often, their husbands are lost or have been killed. Many women and girls also bear memories of trauma themselves. Ninety-two per cent of people in the camp in need of assistance for gender-based violence are female. Of those, more than half are under 18 years old.

Child marriages are common

The girls are often bejeweled and dressed up in order to attract potential husbands. Child marriage is very common, with most girls getting married between 12 and 16 years old. It is not unusual to meet an 18-year-old girl with two or three children. The custom of child marriage is meant to protect girls from rape and assault and to start them having children as soon as possible.

As the camps are just getting started and the initial priorities are shelter, sanitation and food, only few children attend school. However, CARE Bangladesh has created 'Women Friendly Spaces' in the camp where men are not allowed. Here, women and girls can gather for games and share stories of trauma.

3.CONCLUSION

Across all of the six areas: gender-based violence, maternal and reproductive health, women's economic and social rights, women's voice and participation, women's leadership in peace-building and humanitarian operations, and funding and evidence gaps for women and girls in emergencies, women and girls are affected disproportionally by conflict and disasters due to a number of compounding factors. Social norms and gender roles often restrict women's ability to participate in decision-making processes, affecting the degree to which their specific needs are taken into consideration. When women's needs are not taken into consideration in for example displacement settings, the risk of experiencing gender-based violence increases for women, causing health complications and further affecting women's ability to participate in humanitarian response and recovery. The lower social status of women and girls also affects their right to education. The lower the level of education an adolescent girl has, the greater the possibility that she will marry early, increasing her risk of early pregnancy and intimate partner violence, which in turn affects her opportunity to participate in decision-making and social change.

In situations of emergency and displacement, the need to protect women, adolescent girls, and young girls is crucial as they face additional obstacles in their efforts to lead safe, healthy, and dignified lives due to increased rates of gender-based violence, limited access to basic services like water, sanitation, healthcare and education, and constrained economic and livelihood opportunities. Accordingly, humanitarians must take action on multiple levels before, during, and after emergencies to support women's access to assistance and protection so that they are less vulnerable to emergencies and their impacts.

Women and girls are at the heart of the transition from crisis to stability at the family, community and national level. Women and women's groups play an important role in making humanitarian and development work succeed. Investment in women's empowerment, their capacity to lead in crisis, and development of skills and employment opportunities can provide families with sustainable sources of income and livelihoods. Gender equality and women's empowerment cut across all contexts and have the potential to bind together efforts in the nexus between humanitarian assistance and long-term development. Investing in and supporting women and girls through gender equality programming in development and humanitarian action are critical in addressing the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls. However, the international humanitarian community continues to underfund and exclude women from emergency response planning, conflict resolution, and peace-building processes.

This report thus paints an overall picture of human rights violations and widespread discrimination against women in emergency settings, including how the international community continuously, despite acknowledging that women are extremely vulnerable, neglects to uphold their humanitarian mandate by failing to protect women and girls.

4.RECOMMENDATIONS

To save lives, protect women and girls in times of crisis, and to ensure that women and girls have equal access to humanitarian assistance, women's leadership and participation in humanitarian action needs to be strengthened across decision-making, implementation and accountability of humanitarian assistance and protection efforts. Furthermore, empowering women through participation in climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and emergency preparedness planning is important to create gender equality and strengthen women's positions and ability to survive when disaster strikes.

It is important that all levels and agents in humanitarian responses, from implementation to donor levels, become more focused on gender inequalities and explicitly work towards including gender aspects and analysis into all levels of the response, both in terms of dedicated funding, programming, and execution.

Recommendation for all actors in humanitarian response including implementation agencies, donors, and governments

- Appoint female staff at all levels and encourage implementing partners to do so. For implementing partners provided with multi-year funding, undertake gender audits of their organisational culture and human resource management from a gender perspective and set milestones for strengthening their level of female staffing and gender sensitivity at all levels.
- Include a stand-alone gender equality goal, which seeks to end abuses of women's rights, practically supports women's agency and leadership, and tackles the underlying causes of gender inequality, including discriminatory attitudes and social norms.
- Promote robust and coherent accountability across humanitarian funding for addressing women's participation, gender-based violence, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender sensitivity in humanitarian action, and long-term development.

Recommendation for international and national humanitarian implementing agencies

Strengthened accountability across humanitarian activities

- Collect reliable, consistent, and comprehensive data, disaggregated by gender and age, to provide a detailed understanding of the needs and risks of those affected by disaster and conflict, including refugees and internally displaced people, as well as the impact of emergency assistance.
- Apply gender marker or similar tools to all programmes and projects to ensure that gender concerns are integrated into all humanitarian and development efforts.
- Incorporate gender analysis, such as CARE's Rapid Gender Analysis, in needs assessments and ensure women are part of data collection, analysis and response decision-making to ensure that humanitarian response is targeted to women's diverse needs.
- Apply a gender analysis and integrate gender across all of the UN humanitarian sectors, including Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Education, Food Security & Livelihoods, Heath (including sexual and reproductive health), Nutrition, Protection (including Child Protection, GBV and Housing, Land & Property), Shelter & Settlements and Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH).

Address violence against women and girls

- Dedicate funding towards gender-based violence prevention and mitigation. In order to help women and children experiencing violence, it is necessary to create safe houses, women's shelters, as well as appropriate complaint and response mechanisms.
- Empower women and adolescent girls through participation in assessment, planning, and decision-making processes in each stage of an emergency, including preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation, making them agents in their own lives.
- Social norms and values should be addressed by challenging and changing men and boys' perception of masculinity, women, and violence. Working with men and boys to challenge gender inequality issues and social norms that condone violence against women, as well as supporting them to become agents of change in their own communities, are steps towards reducing violence against women and girls.

Maternal and reproductive health in emergencies

- Health risk assessments should be incorporated into early warning systems and disaster preparedness planning to ensure that sufficient focus is given to the sexual and reproductive health needs of vulnerable groups such as women and children.
- Provide contraceptives and family planning, including long-acting reversible contraceptives to refugees, internally displaced persons, and conflict-affected resident populations.
- Incorporate sexual and reproductive health into multi-sectoral and health emergency risk management policies and plans at national and local levels.

Women's economic and social rights in emergencies

- Livelihood programmes targeting women should be an essential part of all humanitarian efforts, including recovery efforts for sudden-onset disasters and in displacement settings, for example through income-generating activities.
- Identification cards should also be given to women - they are not to be included as additional members on their father or husband's refugee cards.
- Humanitarian and development actors should consult and involve a diverse range of women in their house, land, and property rights programming and should support the empowerment of women in leadership and decision-making positions relating to housing, land, and property issues, such as membership of land commissions.
- Develop girls' leadership, skills and participation in class and build local capacity for participatory school management.

Women's voice and participation in emergencies

- Empower women and adolescent girls through participation in assessment, planning, and decision-making processes in each stage of an emergency, including preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation, making them agents in their own lives.
- Include women in all aspects of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience strengthening programmes, including active participation in trainings and decision-making processes to strengthen their resilience and ability to handle a changing climate.
- Work towards strengthening the participation of women from crisis-affected communities and local women's groups.

Women's leadership in peace-building and humanitarian operations

- Include more women and women's civil society groups in peace-building negotiations.

Funding and evidence on women in emergencies

- More consistent evidence and data on women and their specific challenges is needed in order to inform programmes and efforts.
- Better monitoring and evaluation systems would make it easier to gather data that can prove vital in providing the evidence base for lessons learned and for replication.
- More funding should be earmarked for women's and gender equality activities in humanitarian efforts.

Recommendations for donors and donor governments

- Increase political and financial support to local women's groups to participate in prevention, humanitarian action, disaster risk reduction, peace and conflict decision-making processes.
- Provide increased and dedicated funding to displaced women-led civil society organisations and support policy reforms to enable displaced women to organise themselves and register civil society organisations.
- Increase funding and policy support to ensure access to life saving and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services.
- Increase funding towards issues of gender-based violence, including reporting mechanisms and support for victims, as well as for changing gender relations and social norms condoning violence, for instance by using education and dialogue.
- More funding should be earmarked for women's and gender equality activities in humanitarian efforts.

Recommendations for governments affected by natural disasters and conflict

- Expand women's access to legal and safe livelihood opportunities that leverage their capacity to sustain and protect themselves and their families.
- Give attention to gender-based violence risks in disaster management laws, policies and plans, as appropriate. Following disasters, take adequate steps to prohibit gender-based violence by establishing effective law enforcement mechanisms and procedures, including relevant criminal laws.
- Put measures in place to ensure that people living in temporary shelters after disasters are safe.

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