



Empower Women and Girls (Transformation 3D) and Gender as a Cross-Cutting Issue

Analytical Paper on WHS Self-Reporting

This paper was prepared by:¹

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Executive Summary

The United Nations Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) states clearly and succinctly: "The Summit confirmed that gender equality, the fulfillment of women's and girls' human rights and their empowerment in political, humanitarian, and development spheres is a universal responsibility...they are pivotal to sustaining conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and building resilient communities".² Multiple stakeholders made commitments at the WHS in support of this responsibility and vision. In the aggregate, their self-reports reflect the comprehensive programmatic approach that is required to promote gender equality and empower and protect women and girls in every phase of humanitarian action—from preparedness to recovery. The reports also capture the need for better ways of working to achieve these goals. This includes engagement with crisis-affected women and girls as full partners in planning and decision-making, quality gender analyses, collection and use of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD), application of gender markers and increased support for national and local women's organizations in humanitarian action.

It is evident in these first reports that through the WHS commitments process and complementary initiatives, a much more promising foundation is in place for this body of work. At the same time, it will take an intensive effort by all partners to institutionalize the required changes and develop the partnerships that will help translate good intentions into tangible actions. It will also take sustained support from donors to cement the gains that have been made and help close the gaps that still leave so many crisis-affected women and girls unsupported and unprotected.

Background

Stakeholders that pledged commitments at the WHS were invited to report on their progress over the remainder of the calendar year. Of the over 1000 reports on transformations filed, 63 were categorized under transformation 3D—Empower and protect women and girls. Another 71 reports addressed gender as a cross-cutting issue across the 24 transformations of the Agenda for Humanity.

¹ This paper was authored by Anne Mitaru, ActionAid; Joan Timoney, Women's Refugee Commission; and Arpita Varghese and Jakob Lund, UN Women, using stakeholder self-reports on progress towards achieving WHS commitments available on the Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformations (PACT). The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Secretariat.

² Please see http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/71/353



Areas that received most prominence in reports under transformation 3D were sexual reproductive health rights, gender-based violence, gender responsive programming, women in leadership, and financing. In their reporting on gender as a cross-cutting issue, stakeholders focused on the promotion of gender equality in humanitarian action, which is inextricably linked with transformation 3D - the empowerment and protection of women and girls. The achievements, challenges and methods for measuring progress were therefore quite similar in both sets of report, so the authors have chosen to present a combined analysis in this paper.³

Most significant progress made across reporting

Notwithstanding the short reporting period and the broad nature of many commitments, there are encouraging patterns that lay the foundation for continued progress on gender as a cross-cutting issue and on the empowerment and protection of women and girls in humanitarian settings. Achievements highlighted in the self-reports have been grouped into the four categories below.

Policies and Strategies

Stakeholders reported on new or updated institutional policies, guidance and tools they have put in place to promote gender equality in their humanitarian programming and funding decisions. They indicated that the programs they support or implement must include a gender analysis and capture SADD. Some donors indicated that they will only fund programs to which a gender and age marker has been applied.

“Ensuring the rights of women and girls is the same as upholding humanity in our work.”

Japan CSO Coalition for Disaster Risk Reduction (JCC-DRR)

Stakeholders highlighted their engagement in global processes and initiatives that will help advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Member States pointed to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and implementation and updating of their national action plans. There were references to commitments under the Every Women, Every Child initiative, the multi-stakeholder Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Knowing that the engagement of development actors is increasingly needed in humanitarian response, it was encouraging to see an organization like Cordaid, which has worked on women’s leadership and reproductive health in development contexts, report that it is now extending its work to displacement and humanitarian contexts.

Capacity Strengthening

The reports reflect multiple efforts to strengthen the gender-responsive quality of humanitarian response via capacity-building workshops and the deployment of technical experts. For example, Ireland and Spain supported surge-type deployments of experts in gender/protection and health respectively in 2016. Ukraine trained fifty representatives of women’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and the situation for internally displaced people in eastern Ukraine. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) teamed up for a regional capacity building workshop on sexual and reproductive rights in Senegal. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) trained 301 people in nine countries to help

³ This paper was prepared based on data that was extracted from PACT on 1 May 2017.

IOM teams, national authorities and local actors better anticipate, recognize and address the protection concerns of women and girls in camps and camp-like settings.

Program Activities

The accomplishments reported by stakeholders cut across areas of work that are essential to promoting gender equality and the protection and empowerment of women and girls.

In the area of reproductive health, for example, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) indicated that in its operations, the number of deliveries performed at health facilities rose from 68 percent in 2014 to 86 percent in 2016. Various stakeholders reported on efforts to better prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV). The United Kingdom found that its investment in a four-year GBV program in South Sudan resulted by the end of 2016 in 100 percent of identified survivors receiving case management. Habitat for Humanity reported that it partnered with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to roll out PASSA Youth, a project to target the engagement of girls and young women in safe shelter awareness. To help ensure more opportunities for women, Turkish NGO YUVA provided kindergarten services for 1000 children in 2016 so their mothers or caregivers could attend trainings and other services.

The importance of investing in women's groups in disaster risk reduction was evident in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti where thirty women trained by ActionAid, together with four local partners and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), helped lead the emergency response.

Recognizing the key role of women in preventing and ending conflict, some stakeholders reported on leveraging political leadership to promote the inclusion of women and women's groups in decision-making and peace processes. Sweden, for example, established a network of female mediators and a mechanism for political dialogue and peace processes in order to be more proactive in peacebuilding processes.

Funding

Perhaps because of the short reporting period and the timing of submissions, only a handful of stakeholders provided funding details in their reports. For example, Ireland and the United Kingdom reported on their contributions to the Global Acceleration Instrument.⁴ New Zealand detailed their core contributions to the International Planned Parenthood Federation, UNFPA and UN Women. Spain did the same for its funding to the Global Acceleration Instrument, UN Action Against Sexual Violence and the Peace Operation Training Institute. UN Women allocated 28 percent of its humanitarian funding to supporting women's civil society and national women's organizations and ministries.

A gender-sensitive response in a new crisis should begin with the initial Flash Appeal. Thanks to the joint efforts of ActionAid, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNFPA and UN Women, a stand-alone gender objective was included in the Flash Appeal for the response to Hurricane Matthew in Haiti in 2016 —the first major disaster after the WHS. This is an encouraging development that should be replicated in other appeals.

⁴ The Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) on Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action is a flexible and rapid financing mechanism that supports quality interventions to enhance the capacity to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, seize key peacebuilding opportunities, and encourage the sustainability and national ownership of investments.

Research and Learning

There is still a good deal to learn about the most effective approaches to promoting gender equality and protecting and empowering women and girls across humanitarian settings. Various studies, reports and other publications were produced by a range of stakeholders. For example, IOM developed a toolkit: *Good Shelter Programming: Tools to Reduce the Risk of Gender-based Violence in Shelters*. OHCHR conducted a mapping study on the relationship between gender equality, women's rights and preventing violent extremism. The Women's Refugee Commission published: *I'm Here: Steps and Tools to Reach Adolescent Girls in Crises: Updates and Learning from Implementation in Six Countries*. Drawing on research-based evidence from Jordan and the Philippines, CARE International published *She is a Humanitarian*, which shows how humanitarian responses are more effective when women and women's organizations play a key role.

The main barriers/ challenges to progress

Given the uneven implementation of effective protection, empowerment and gender equality programming, it is not surprising that areas of progress and ongoing challenges often overlap in stakeholder reports.

Funding constraints remain a major impediment to sustained progress. The particular needs of women and girls often go unaddressed, and the risk of GBV and exploitation rises. Yet the protection sector remains chronically and often disproportionately underfunded⁵ in relation to sectors perceived to be more life-saving, and this affects staffing, programming and resources for protection and for work on sexual and reproductive health issues. On a related note, stakeholders referred to a growing pushback in some quarters to prohibit or limit funding for comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare which will have a far reaching impact on the health of women and girls. More broadly, several respondents noted the difficulty of working on issues where cultural norms and beliefs hinder efforts to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

"When humanitarian action does not take into account the difference ways in which emergencies affect women, girls, boys and men, it results in unequal access to humanitarian relief; increased rates of sexual and gender based violence; and inadequate engagement of women, men, girls and boys in program design and delivery."

Australia

Local women's organizations continue to have difficulties accessing humanitarian funding and engaging in humanitarian processes. A national NGO based in India raised a concern heard repeatedly at the WHS – that most global processes remain dominated by powerful actors who still do not adequately engage frontline organizations, but continue to make decisions on their behalf. This organization referred to a "trust deficit" in the relationship.

Another common challenge cited by stakeholders is the limited evidence base in which to ground effective programming, including non-existent or weak gender analyses and poor collection of SADD. Despite findings indicating that the use of SADD and gender analysis are among the most effective ways to promote gender equality in humanitarian action,⁶ their application remains limited.⁷ As noted by Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe, there is significant need for better collection and use

⁵ As an example, only 5 percent of funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) from 2006-2017 was allocated to protection/human rights/rule of law. See <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/cerf-worldwide/funding-sector/funding-sector-2006-2017>

⁶ Please see: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/humanitarian-action/facts-and-figures#notes>

⁷ Please see ACAPS' report entitled, [Meeting information needs? A review of ten years of multisector coordinated needs assessment reports](#) (January 2016). This report found that SADD is often missing. Around 40 percent of coordinated needs assessments did not provide SADD for any sector; 20 percent provided disaggregated data for only one sector.

of SADD in every stage of the response--from needs analysis to program design to reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

Only nine out of 71 reports on addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue shared achievements towards the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities. Similarly, only two of 71 reports targeted the needs, inclusion, and empowerment of sexual minorities. Challenges and discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities and by members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex (LGBTI) community in humanitarian settings are compounded by virtue of their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or disability. Humanitarian response which does not specifically address their needs and enable their participation, self-representation, and leadership across all sectors in humanitarian action will inadvertently perpetuate existing discrimination and disempowerment.

Insufficient capacity and gender expertise continue to hinder the robust delivery of gender-sensitive humanitarian action. Several stakeholders wanted to deploy gender experts and incorporate gender into their programming, but were held back by the limited pool of humanitarian actors with gender training.

Measuring progress

While stakeholders identified various challenges in measuring progress, most indicated they do have some systems in place to report on their progress, with many referring to internal organizational mechanisms, tools and benchmarks. A good number of stakeholders are also leveraging their engagement with other multi-stakeholder processes to measure progress against commonly agreed indicators, such as those found in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Global Acceleration Instrument, Charter for Change, the Grand Bargain and many more.

“The humanitarian system still primarily sees women and girls as victims and treats women and girls as passive beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance. This has to change.”

CARE International

Australia and New Zealand provided a noteworthy example of regional cooperation around monitoring and evaluation. They are developing a new monitoring and evaluation framework for humanitarian responses to rapid-onset disasters in the Pacific, and the framework emphasizes the importance of ensuring all data collected is disaggregated by sex, age and ability.

CARE International is in the process of developing a localization marker which will be instrumental to inform reporting on their progress on localization of gender-responsive humanitarian action.

Highlights of good practice

- The International Rescue Committee has set goals for gender equality in four areas and developed an annual gender equality scorecard with metrics and indicators that measure change in those areas. The findings are updated and presented to the organization’s leadership on a quarterly basis. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also reviews its gender marker results on a quarterly basis and provides reports to senior

managers to monitor and track gender investments. It has developed a system of external random assessments to ensure the accuracy of the ratings.

- Various stakeholders such as the Netherlands, Spain, European Union, World Food Programme, Malteser International and Trocaire reported the use of or a commitment to apply IASC, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) or other gender and age markers to allocate funding or assess to what extent humanitarian action integrates gender and/or age considerations.
- The Women's Refugee Commission published a report entitled *Working to Improve our Own Futures*. This report is an example of good practice to advance the consideration of gender in humanitarian action as it outlines evidence-based strategies for the inclusion and leadership of women with disabilities in humanitarian response. This evidence can be used in future programming and to inform high-level policy discussions.

Recommendations

To meet the promise of the Agenda of the Humanity and leave no one behind, all those engaged in humanitarian action must prioritize the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment and protection of all women and girls, including those who may be marginalized because of disability, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity and other factors. The challenge is to move from pledges and good policies to action on the ground. Stakeholders must support women and girls as agents of change, decision-makers and leaders. Programming must be inclusive, build on skills and capacities, and strengthen resilience. Many more stakeholders must make measurable commitments in these areas.

There are three actions that are particularly critical to moving this full body of work forward. All stakeholders must:

1. **Implement inter-agency standards and guidance on gender in humanitarian action and on the prevention and response to GBV consistently and comprehensively.** Operational humanitarian actors should integrate these across all program areas from the start of an emergency, and donors should only fund initiatives that do so.
2. **Collect sex and age disaggregated data, implement quality gender analyses and apply a gender marker.** These actions are well recognized as essential to an equitable and effective response, and must become standard operating procedure at every phase of humanitarian action.⁸
3. **Mobilize flexible, multi-year funding to support targeted programming, mainstreaming efforts and capacity-building.** States and other donors should provide such assistance through their bilateral funding mechanisms and through their participation in such initiatives as the Global Acceleration Instrument. Signatories to the Grand Bargain should ensure that reforms through that process are gender-responsive.

⁸Please see Gender Equality in the 2015 Strategic Response Plan (October 2015).

About this paper

All stakeholders who made commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in support of advancing the Agenda for Humanity were invited to self-report on their progress in 2016 through the Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT) (agendaforhumanity.org). The information provided through the self-reporting is publicly available and forms the basis, along with other relevant analysis, of the annual synthesis report. The annual synthesis report will be prepared by OCHA and will highlight trends in progress, achievements and gaps that need more attention as stakeholders collectively work toward advancing the 24 transformations in the Agenda for Humanity. In keeping with the multi-stakeholder spirit of the WHS, OCHA invited partners to prepare short analytical papers that analyze and assess self-reporting in the PACT, or provide an update on progress on initiatives launched at the Summit. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Secretariat.

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