



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Messages in Humanitarian Actions for HCTT



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Developed by the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group
Chaired by Department of Women Affairs, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
and Co-chaired by UN Women

The following advocacy messages are developed based on the **IASC Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) in Humanitarian Action** and its **Accountability Framework** and it considers lessons learned from recent emerging gender impacts of flood, cyclone and the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal is to mobilize Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), Bangladesh to ensure these gendered measures are reflected in emergency response initiatives. The GiHA Working Group stands ready to support this process.

BACKGROUND

Crises do not affect everyone equally. Women, children, aged people, persons with disabilities, and socially disadvantaged groups are more vulnerable to different risks and disasters. Although Bangladesh has managed to reduce human mortality rates significantly over the past few years, protection of women and children remains a challenge. They are seldom included in planning and decision-making processes of humanitarian and disaster risk reduction programmes. Thus, their specific needs and views are usually not reflected plans that are adopted in pre, during and post-disaster situations. In recent years, the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) working group has taken several leadership initiatives **to promote gender responsiveness and women's leadership in Disaster Risk Management (DRM)**.

GENDERED IMPACTS

- Women and girls adopt negative coping mechanisms in the aftermath such as reduced meals, selling productive assets, taking loans, resorting to child marriage
- Existing shelters are seldom gender, age, and diversity friendly. Safety measures for women, girls from displaced community remain a concern in the shelters; and gender-based violence, and child exploitation increase and become compounded by loss of habitat, income, savings, school closures, etc.
- The existing referral system is not adequate to connect all women, girls, and other at-risk groups to appropriate multi-sector Gender based violence (GBV) prevention and response services in a timely and safe manner
- Evidence indicates limited or no access to routine health services for pregnant women as well as pre- and post-natal health care or contraceptives, mental health, and psychosocial support to cope with impacts of disaster related losses. Provisions for clinical management of rape is also unavailable during disaster
- The informal sectors, where most of the women are engaged for livelihoods are most affected; thus, disasters increase the gender gap in livelihoods
- Representation and leadership of women and girls in decision making processes regarding disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning is almost non-existent.

ADVOCACY MESSAGES

The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), Bangladesh commits to:

1.

Collect, analyze, and use disaggregated data and analysis on gender, age and diversity and equally consult with women, girls, and marginalized groups, including during assessments and in the overall response monitoring.

2.

Enhance coordination amongst different clusters to integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEEWG) considerations in all assessments, Rapid Gender Analysis, Humanitarian Needs Overview, Strategic Response Plan, Humanitarian Response Plan and appeals with appropriate budgets, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

3.

Ensure adequate levels of humanitarian financing to fully resource GEEWG programming for both mainstreamed and targeted action, including support to women's rights organizations.

4.

Support women's economic empowerment through livelihood recovery strategies and skill development interventions (including cash-based programmes) which are accessible, women friendly and minimize risk to women and girl. Adopt strategy that recognize, reduce, redistribute the unpaid care and household responsibilities assigned to women and girls.

5.

Strengthen the leadership and meaningful representation of women and girls, excluded groups and women led organizations in all decision-making processes related to emergency preparedness and response

6.

Prevent, mitigate, and responds to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse through putting necessary gender mainstreaming measures that addresses harmful societal practices

7.

Collaborate and engage with Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, as well as national and local women's rights organizations, gender diverse and other marginalized groups for better coordination, mutual learning, and impact on GEEWG in humanitarian actions, including need assessment and response planning.

8.

Ensure that the IASC Gender and Age Marker is applied in all appeals and funding mechanisms.

9.

Promote equal and balanced numbers of women and men in human resources assigned for management and implementation of humanitarian response.

10.

Include strategic gender issues in HCTT advocacy and communication materials, as well as in the agenda of HCTT meetings and other humanitarian coordination forums.