

# ***Gender Issues in Disaster Response***

## ***Phase One Report***

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## DEFINITIONS

- ❑ **Gender** is not synonymous with 'sex' or women, nor does it refer only to women. Gender is understood to be a result of socially rather than biologically determined characteristics. According to the International Federation's gender policy '*gender refers to the roles, responsibilities, needs, interests and capacities of both men and women*'.
- ❑ **Gender analysis** refers to an examination of social processes which considers the roles played by women and men in relation to; the sexual division of labour, productive and reproductive roles and access to and control over resources and benefits, as well as exploring the differential impacts of interventions on men and women. Gender analysis can be used at all stages of the project cycle.
- ❑ **Disaster** is defined as "*a calamitous event resulting in a loss of life, great human suffering and distress and large-scale material damage*" (Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief).
- ❑ **Disaster response** is understood to relate to all decisions and actions undertaken through the emergency and post-emergency phases of a disaster.
- ❑ **Participation** is defined as the inclusion of poor and powerless men and women in decision-making, implementation, benefit sharing and evaluation. In practice, participation spans a spectrum from *means* (instrumental) to *end* (political). Its methods, such as PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal), comprise a set of approaches and tools that enable poor men and women to participate in their own development.
- ❑ **International Federation** is used to refer to the grouping of all the National Societies as well as the Federation Secretariat and its Delegations;
- ❑ **Federation Secretariat** refers to the International Federation Secretariat, based in Geneva;
- ❑ **Participating National Societies (PNS)** refers to donor National Societies.

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### **Introduction**

This report sets out the findings of Phase One of a research study on whether the use of sex-disaggregated data is a feasible and useful means to enhance the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' *disaster response*. The research has been commissioned by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and is managed by the British Red Cross (IPADD).

### **Context, Purpose and Method**

The research aims to contribute to the *continuation of a dialogue* on gender issues and disaster management within the International Federation and to engage as wide a group of stakeholders as possible in a relevant and effective debate. The method of approach has been to combine internal and external interviews with a desk study in order to explore the Federation Secretariat's *formal* and *informal* information systems from a gender perspective.

The research is being carried out in the context of the recent adoption of the International Federation's gender policy by the General Assembly in 1999, which reflects growing international consensus on the importance of adopting gender-sensitive approaches in disaster management.

### **Gender Analysis and Disaster Response: In Theory**

From a gender perspective, there are two faces to disasters: the *problem* and the *opportunity* for change. Studies shows that whilst disasters generally accentuate existing gender inequalities, they also have the potential to alter the sexual division of labour, mainly through changes in household composition, thus presenting opportunities for change - for better or for worse.

Women are, generally, the dominant beneficiary group in disaster situations. Disaster response must go beyond a focus on their immediate needs and vulnerabilities and address issues surrounding their subordinate position, by working with women's capacities and taking a longer term developmental perspective.

### **Gender Analysis and Disaster Response: In Practice**

Translating policy into practice has been a slow process. Examination of the literature shows that to the extent that 'gender' issues are considered in disaster response, the focus is on women as vulnerable groups (e.g. female headed households, lactating mothers, and pregnant women) and on meeting women's *practical* rather than *strategic* needs. Hence, whilst it may have become 'good practice' to pay attention to issues such as women's health care needs and role in food distribution, disaster response, to date, has displayed a lack of awareness of social relations.

Initial enquiry into the gender mainstreaming activities of humanitarian agencies, shows that good practice is the exception rather the norm. 'Gender policy evaporation'<sup>1</sup> seems to be prevalent in the face of the constraining effects of disasters and the lack of standardisation of procedures, which so often characterises disaster response. It seems that agencies are all grappling with the methodological challenges of institutionalising gender within the context of, often weak, organisational procedures and cultures. Most recognise that it is the personal commitment and beliefs of their own staff, which will drive through the process of change.

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<sup>1</sup> phrase coined by Longwe, in the context of the gap between gender equality policies and implementation

### **Situating the Federation Secretariat's Performance**

Examination of the Federation Secretariat's *formal* policies, procedures, guidelines and operational and reporting tools revealed that the level of integration of gender issues is extremely limited. Whilst the recent inclusion of *clauses stating its commitment to Sphere* is supportive of the integration of gender sensitive approaches, such 'statement of commitment' is not considered to be a sufficiently strong driver for changing the gender status quo. The evidence suggests that other agencies have gone further in integrating the collection of gender specific information into their *formal* information systems.

In relation to *informal information systems*, consultation with Federation personnel show that the majority of those consulted had a good understanding of the meaning of *gender* and of its relevance to disaster response interventions. However, to a large extent, these experiences translated into a view of gender analysis as a *means* rather than as a *goal* (end), and were focused on meeting women's *practical* rather than *strategic* needs. This understanding is representative of the overall perception of gender and disaster response, within the humanitarian industry as a whole.

Overall, whilst the Federation Secretariat's lack of gender mainstreaming is by no means a special case, the evidence suggests that it appears to be lagging behind other agencies in terms of undertaking specific measures. In particular, the inclusion of gender specialists in technical teams and the requirement for gender analysis to appear on project proposals and reporting formats appear to be common denominators of good practice adopted elsewhere.

### **Changing the 'Gender Status Quo'**

In terms of changing the 'gender status quo', it is clear from the findings of the internal and external consultation process, that *people* rather than *policies and procedures* were considered to be the key drivers of change. This is supported by research findings reported elsewhere. In this context it is essential to identify and work with key stakeholders. It is also essential that staff be supported through the provision of practical tools that can help them meet the methodological challenges of 'how to do' gender analysis in disaster response.

However, whilst *people*, not *policies and procedures* are identified as the main driver of change, this does not exempt organisations from the requirement to up-grade their formal channels of communications, as well as their mechanisms for accountability, learning and measuring results.

In relation to '*where to start*', a key theme developed in this report is that disaster response in its emergency phase is very different from disaster response in its non-emergency phase in terms of the constraining influences of a) the *pressure of time* and b) *access to and availability of information*. These two factors limit the potential for improving the quality of the information collected and the methods used. The Federation's formal procedures, guidelines, operational and reporting tools should reflect this reality. The analysis in this report identified the key tools used at different stages of the Appeal process and assessed the extent to which each is limited by the pressures of time and information constraints. This analysis could be used as basis for starting a process of incremental change in relation to increasing the (gender related) information requirements of tools used in the later stages of disaster response.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations include measures which specifically support the collection of gender disaggregated data, as well as those which tackle broader issues relating to organisational composition, personal attitudes and overall awareness of gender inequalities and gender good practice approaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS	DESCRIPTION
1. INCLUDE A 'SOCIAL ANALYSIS/GENDER' PERSON IN ASSESSMENT TEAMS	At the Federation level, FACT (and other assessment) teams should include gender specialists. At National Society level gender could be integrated into the function of the social welfare officer.
2. ENSURE THAT THE REVISED APPEAL IS BASED ON RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT	Under the new two-step Appeal process, the revised Appeal should support the collection of better quality information, including the collection of gender-disaggregated data and the use of participatory methods. Responsibility should be given to the Women and Development Unit to 'gender audit' assessment checklists and other tools used at this stage.
3. DEVELOP EASY-TO-USE RELEVANT TOOLS FOR USE BY KEY STAKE-HOLDERS	There is a need to adapt and develop 'easy to use tools' to support the whole range of stake-holders (operational managers, desk officers, operational managers, evaluation personnel, ERUs), in their tasks across the project cycle. There is <b>no need to re-invent the wheel</b> . There is a host of existing tools/resources that can be customised to the Federation's needs. On the whole these correspond to i) displaced persons ii) camps iii) as well as specific sectoral interventions. Ownership needs to be assigned for driving this process forward. A participatory approach should be used to identify stakeholders' needs.
4. GENDER AUDIT INFORMATION COLLECTION TOOLS AND REPORTING FORMATS	<b>Do not reinvent the wheel.</b> There is a host of good practice guidance/frameworks on the integration of gender across all stages of the project planning cycle. Consideration of the place in the Appeal process and the limitations of time and information are important in ensuring that recommendations on improving the integration of gender are feasible.
5. RE-ORIENT THE FOCUS OF THE WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT' UNIT – AND CHANGE ITS NAME.	Change the role and name of the Women and Development Unit so as to support the process of mainstreaming gender approaches within the Secretariat and to reflect the shift in focus away from 'women' and towards power relations between men and women.

RECOMMENDATIONS	DESCRIPTION
6. TRAINING	Develop a separate training programme on gender (this is already being planned by WAD and HR) but also integrate gender across all other training programmes. For example, gender could be integrated into the case-based training exercises of the ERU training courses. The Annual Training Programme would be the first port of call: priorities could be assigned according to which of the key stakeholders comprised the target audience.
7. RECRUITMENT	A temporary working group was set up in 1998 to review targets and progress in this area. This work is a priority. Gender-sensitive recruitment practices should not only seek to redress the balance of men and women at senior levels within the Secretariat, but should also put in place measures to ensure that those being recruited display the characteristics of 'new professionals' and have a sensitivity to gender and social issues.
8. UP-GRADE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND MECHANISMS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY	Despite findings underlining the 'primacy of the personal' it is essential that organisations support their staff through the production of coherent and consistent policies and procedures and the introduction of mechanisms of accountability.
9. USING 'MULTIPLIERS'	<p>Up-date other key dissemination mechanisms to increase overall awareness of gender inequalities and gender-sensitive approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partnerships in profile:</b> a section could usefully be included on social context/social issues and the countries' ranking on the gender index could be included alongside the other indicators. The section on Human Resources, which breaks down the number of volunteers versus professional staff, could usefully disaggregate this data further by men and women;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Characteristics of a well-functioning National Society;</b> there is a general endorsement in the literature of the view that listening to women and translating it into action depends on "<i>organisations being already in place which are gender sensitive</i>". The section on Constituency could be extended beyond non-discrimination to include gender make-up.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Country Profiles:</b> facts on gender issues and inclusion of a section on social analysis would be valuable additions to these documents.</li> </ul>
10. ENSURE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CAPACITY BUILDING WITH NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND DISASTER RESPONSE	There appears to be a gap between the methods and approaches used to train or build capacity in disaster response in the National Societies and how the Federation Secretariat itself does disaster response. Notwithstanding the decentralized nature of these programmes, all evidence points to the fact that the implementation of any policy - and in this case gender - depends on the coherence and consistency of approach. This should be improved.

## **1.0      *CONTEXT AND PURPOSE***

### **1.1      *Introduction***

This report sets out the initial findings of the first phase of the study on whether the use of sex-disaggregated data is a feasible and useful means to enhance the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' *disaster response*. The research has been commissioned by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and is managed by the British Red Cross (IPADD). The research has been undertaken during the period June-July 2000.

### **1.2      *The Organisational Context***

At the time of writing this report, the Federation Secretariat is finalising a process of organisational re-structuring that will come into effect from the 31st August 2000. Two key objectives have shaped the thinking behind the new organisational structure. The first is the need for the Federation Secretariat to provide a faster response time to *sudden on-set* disasters. This is being achieved by separating the task of initial disaster response from that of on going programme management. Under the new structure, the *Disaster Management and Co-ordination* Department will be responsible for the emergency phase of the operation, whilst the *Programme Co-ordination* Department will handle the post-emergency phase. The second key objective is to develop a structure that will support the Federation Secretariat's aim of becoming a knowledge sharing, rather than an operational organisational.

These changes have significant implications both in terms of how the Federation Secretariat 'does' disaster response and in determining the potential for gender issues to become crosscutting within the organisation. The timing of this research, coinciding as it does with a period of reflection, assessment and positive change, presents an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of gender issues within the Federation Secretariat and to secure positive action.

### **1.3      *The Origins of the Terms of Reference***

The origins of this research programme are found in both the *policy* developments and *practical* research programmes of the Federation Secretariat.

First, this research is being carried out in the context of the recent adoption of the International Federation's *gender policy* by the General Assembly in 1999, which seeks to ensure that gender and social differences are considered in the four core areas set out in Strategy 2010 - of which *disaster response* is just one. Its commitments (see BOX 1.1) provide a comprehensive framework for gender mainstreaming within the International Federation.

Secondly, this research programme forms part of a significant body of research on gender, undertaken by the Women and Development Unit of the Federation Secretariat, which covers three main areas: *the institutional level within the Secretariat*; *capacity building* with the *National Societies*; and *knowledge brokering*, through the provision of operational tools and by facilitating the dissemination of good practice. To date the main focus of the Unit's activities has been on supporting National Societies, many of which are engaged in pioneering initiatives aimed at gender mainstreaming (see BOX 1.2).

In terms of framing the Terms of Reference for this current research programme, two pieces of work, "*Dealing with Diversity: Gender in Disaster-related Work of the Federation*" (BRCS, IPADD, 1997) and its follow-up case-study "*Disasters and Gender Issues: Bangladesh Floods (1998)*" have been particularly influential. Specifically, the aim



of this current research programme is to propose concrete measures on how to implement the recommendations of these two reports in relation to the collection of sex disaggregated data.

Overall, it is important that this current research programme is viewed as a *continuation of a process of dialogue* on gender, aimed at furthering the dissemination of knowledge on gender issues within the International Federation.

**BOX 1.1 THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION'S GENDER POLICY**

**THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION'S GENDER POLICY**

**Commitments to:**

- ☐ Establish institutional procedures which ensure that the needs of boys, girls, men and women are all met equitably
- ☐ Formulate measures to ensure that gender specific vulnerabilities and capacities of men and women are identified and addressed
- ☐ *Ensure that data on beneficiaries is disaggregated by sex for needs assessment and programming planning and gender analysis is integrated into programme design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation*
- ☐ Design strategies for capacity-building in gender mainstreaming as part of Institutional Development programmes with special attention to staff training on gender analysis skills
- ☐ Ensure that reporting and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming are put in place

**Senior Management (NS and Federation) is specifically responsible for:**

- ☐ Increasing gender awareness of staff vis a vis the differences between vulnerable men and women in their project management activities
- ☐ Conducting a systematic review of the institution's procedures to put in place gender analysis as part of the programming and general improving of systems
- ☐ Enabling a gender balance in the different levels of the structure and to involve more women in the decision-making process
- ☐ Ensuring equal opportunities among staff and volunteers for recruitment, promotion, benefits etc.

<http://www.ifrc.org/who/policy/gender.asp>

**BOX 1.2 THE 'WOMAN AND DEVELOPMENT' UNIT**

**ACTIVITIES OF THE 'WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT' UNIT**

**International Federation:**

- ☐ Drafting Gender Policy
- ☐ Publishing a quarterly newsletter '*New Horizons*': *Gender Perspectives in Red Cross and Red Crescent Work*

**Federation Secretariat:**

- ☐ Participating in the Federation Secretariat's internal working group on the Position of Women within the Secretariat and Delegations

**Regional Delegations:**

- ☐ Providing support to the establishment of gender focal points which have responsibility for reviewing programmes from a gender perspective
- ☐ Supporting regional gender programmes in West Africa and the Southern Cone of Americas

**National Societies:**

- ☐ Co-ordination of 4 regional working groups on gender for the preparation of regional conferences
- ☐ Providing support to Gender Training Projects (e.g. Ethiopia and Nepal)
- ☐ Supporting Regional Plans on Gender and the establishment of Gender Focal Points
- ☐ Publication of Training Tools (e.g. the report of the sub-regional gender training workshop held in Uganda is an excellent document which would be of interest to a wide group of NS's)
- ☐ Workshops (e.g. for NS of Middle East and North Africa on how to operationalise the gender policy)
- ☐ Provision of scholarships for gender training (e.g. Masters in Gender and Development)

**Research:**

- ☐ Dealing with Diversity: Review of Federation Procedures and Case Examples of Bangladesh and Philippines
- ☐ Gender Evaluation of Hurricane Mitch

**Case Studies as Practical Tools:**

- ☐ Recruitment of Female Volunteers to Respond to Disasters - Bangladesh Red Crescent
- ☐ Impacts on Men and Women in the Post-Disaster Rehabilitation Phase in the Philippines

**BOX 1.3 SUPPORTING NATIONAL SOCIETIES****INTEGRATION OF A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN AMERICA'S SOUTHERN CONE REGION****Participants:**

- ☐ 7 National Societies (NS) of Chile, Paraguay and Bolivia
- ☐ Regional Delegation (RD)

**Objectives:**

- ☐ To increase awareness, establish, sensitise and train gender focal points in the RD and NS
- ☐ To analyse the participation of men and women in the RD and NS's to ensure equal opportunities among female and male staff members and volunteers
- ☐ To introduce a system for considering gender as a factor of vulnerability and capacity in the design, implementation and evaluation of programme and activities

**Activities:**

- ☐ Elaboration of material tools for gender sensitisation and training, as case studies, role play, text analysis
- ☐ To establish a network between focal points for the exchange of information, experiences and working tools
- ☐ To carry out a training workshop with 2 participants from each NS (a technician and a member of governance) with the aim of identifying focal points in each NS who will be part of forming a regional group for gender in the Southern Cone and an RD focal point
- ☐ Analysis of NS structure
- ☐ To include gender as a component in every training workshop to be organised by the RD
- ☐ To organise gender awareness workshops in all NSs for NS staff.
- ☐ To conduct an analysis of NS development and relief programme in order to understand the situation of men and women as beneficiaries and as volunteers

**Expected Results:**

- ☐ Establishment of a gender focal point
- ☐ Increased awareness of personnel
- ☐ Collection and use of sex disaggregated data to be used as basis of gender regional strategy

**Identified Constraints:<sup>1</sup>**

- ☐ Misunderstanding of gender on focusing only on women
- ☐ Lack of interest/perception of relevance; 'gender is not a problem'
- ☐ Lack of 'buy-in': NS governing bodies don't favour the implementation of a gender perspective
- ☐ Lack of project continuity
- ☐ Cultural barriers, customs and 'life-lasting' behaviours of people involved in projects

<sup>1</sup> Identified by the National Societies/Regional Delegation

#### **1.4 The Purpose of the Terms of Reference**

The *overall aim* of the research programme, which is to be carried out in three stages, is to consider whether the use of sex-disaggregated data is a feasible and useful means to enhance the Federation's *assessment, planning* and *monitoring* of disaster responses. In addition, where appropriate, it aims to identify other steps that can be taken by the Federation with a view to mainstreaming gender in disaster response.

The specific aim of *Phase One* of the research is to undertake a mapping exercise in order to:

- ❑ Provide an overview of the current debate on gender issues in disaster relief - in particular any significant changes in humanitarian policy and practice. Where possible situate the Federation within this debate;
- ❑ Consider current and planned Federation approaches, guidelines and practice for assessment, planning and monitoring of relief operations
  - ❑ Review FACT, ERU's, Delegate Handbook, Sphere Manual, appeal and report guidelines and disaster reviews with a view to identifying a gender perspective in assessment, planning and monitoring systems;
  - ❑ Review a sample of appeals and reports and comment on what information is currently requested and provided from the field from a gender perspective;
- ❑ Identify internal stake-holders;
- ❑ Provide inputs into the Terms of Reference for Phase Two.

#### **1.5 Report Audience**

As discussed above, this research programme represents the *continuation of a 'dialogue'* focusing on illustrating how gender is relevant to the disaster management work of the Federation. To be meaningful, this 'dialogue' should involve as wide a group of stakeholders as possible in a relevant and effective debate.

#### **1.6 Method of Approach**

The method of approach to this phase of the research study has involved the following elements:

- ❑ *review of internal policies, procedures, guidelines, manuals, operational tools and reporting formats;*
- ❑ *review of internal gender reviews/reports/case studies,*
- ❑ *face to-face and telephone interviews with International Federation staff – Secretariat, Delegations and Participating National Societies (PNS);*
- ❑ *literature review of gender and disaster response: theory and practice;*
- ❑ *telephone interviews with personnel of other agencies engaged in disaster response.*

## **1.7 Report Structure**

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- *Section 2.0* provides an introduction to gender and disaster response; theory and practice;
- *Section 3.0* provides a gender review of the International Federation's formal and informal information systems;
- *Section 4.0* 'situates' the International Federation in view of the evidence and sets out the key barriers and opportunities for changing the gender status quo;
- *Section 5.0* sets out the overall conclusions;
- *Section 6.0* provides a series of recommendations.

A discussion paper, *Phase Two Terms of Reference: Preliminary Thoughts*, which seeks to set out some of the issues pertinent to defining the TOR of the second phase of this research study, is attached at the end of this report.

## 2.0 GENDER AND DISASTER RESPONSE: A LOOK AT THE LITERATURE

### 2.1 In Theory...

From a gender perspective, there are two faces to disasters: the *problem* and the *opportunity* for change. Disasters can either accentuate existing gender inequalities or present opportunities (good or bad) for a change of gender roles.

The literature on gender and disaster response is vast and, for the purposes of this research, can usefully be discussed under the following broad headings:

- ❑ From 'women in development to 'gender in disaster response';
- ❑ Gender-sensitive approaches and participatory methods;
- ❑ Gender analysis and different types of disaster;
- ❑ Institutionalising gender;
- ❑ Practical frameworks.

#### 2.1.1 From Women in Development (WID) to Gender in Disaster Response

The origins of gender lie in the developmental literature and specifically the '*Women in Development*' (WID) movement, which was pioneering in the 1970s, placing, for the first time, women's productive capacities at the centre of economic planning. Before then, development interventions were gender blind, taking the experiences of men and generalising them for the whole population. Since WID, the debate has moved on and the focus on *women* has shifted to a focus on *gender*, the socially constructed relations between men and women with resulting consequences for roles, responsibilities, vulnerabilities and capabilities. The history of *gender* and its key concepts are introduced in BOX 2.1.

Disasters have short-term, as well as long-term, impacts, both of which must be addressed by disaster response programmes. It is recognition of this false dichotomy of 'development' and 'disaster response' that provides the link between gender analysis and disaster response. If disaster response is to be truly developmental, then not only must take gender issues into account, but using gender analysis can help illuminate the linkages between short-term relief and long-term 'developmental' outcomes.

Overall, the integration of gender analysis in disaster response interventions, is judged to have been slow as a result of a number of factors, including:

- ❑ inherent short-termism which inhibits the take-up of good practice;
- ❑ perceptions that the imperative of a fast response precludes 'time-consuming and additional' gender analysis;
- ❑ lack of understanding of the central relevance of gender analysis to disaster response.

To the extent that 'gender' issues are considered, the focus is on women as vulnerable groups (e.g. female headed households, lactating mothers, and pregnant women). Using the concepts introduced in BOX 2.1, this translates into a focus on meeting women's *practical* rather than *strategic* needs. Hence, whilst it may have become 'good practice' to pay attention to issues such as women's health care needs and role in food distribution, disaster

**BOX 2.1: FROM WID TO GAD****FROM WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT ...TO GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT****History:**

Gender's origins lie 'in Women in Development' (WID), which in the 1970s was pioneering in shifting the focus of enquiry away from women in the domestic sphere, to women and their productive role, ensuring that women's productive capacity was taken into account in the planning of development projects. However, WID has been criticised for being marginalising - leading to a plethora of women's organisations, departments, programmes and projects. Gender was born out of recognition of the limitations of 'WID' and of the need to focus on the socially constructed relations between men and women.

**Challenge:**

Today's key challenge is to 'get gender out of the ghetto' and into the mainstream of - not only policy - but also operations. This means tackling and transforming organisational culture and challenging professional and attitudinal norms.

**Cornerstones:**

- ❑ **Gender Division of Labour:** (also called the sexual division of labour). A gender sensitive approach to planning focuses on how the tasks of production and reproduction (childcare, preparation of food) are divided up. This concept has been developed further into the **triple role**, which recognises women's productive, *reproductive* and *community* activities.
- ❑ **The Household:** the household is the most commonly used unit of analysis in planning. It is also the primary site of gender relations. It is concern over the distribution of resources within the household (theories of malevolent versus benevolent household heads/ bargaining and conflict over household resources) which have led to the requirement to look inside the household and to collect disaggregated data (particularly pertinent in polygamous societies where the notion of the nuclear household does not apply).

**Other Concepts:**

- ❑ **Practical Needs:** catering for women's needs, as defined by their socially accepted roles in society. Meeting these needs does not challenge the gender divisions of labour, or women's subordinate position in society; provision of security and reproductive health care in disaster response, are all examples of meeting practical needs.
- ❑ **Strategic Needs:** meeting the needs of women that will help transform women's subordinate relationships with men. Access to resources (e.g. literacy/education/credit/leadership skills) and alleviation of the burden of reproductive work are example of meeting strategic needs.

response, to date, displays a lack of awareness of social relations. A truly gender-sensitive approach would not only address *practical* needs, but also seek to strengthen men and women's capacities and coping strategies.

**2.1.2 Gender Sensitive Approaches and Participatory Methods**

There are a number of parallels between the introduction of participatory methods and gender sensitive approaches in disaster response interventions.

First, they share common goals. Both seek to provide the antidote to technocratic, 'blue-print', top-down interventions, focusing instead on *empowerment* and helping men and women gain control over their own lives. Such approaches are crucial in the context of responding to the disempowering effects of natural and political disasters.

Secondly, the armoury of participatory methods, which span the project cycle and range from *PRA* (Participatory Rural Assessment) to *Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation* and *Participatory Impact Assessment*, support gender analysis. All involve stakeholder analysis and focus on listening to, and including, men and women. The use of participatory methods in disaster response can help to identify women's vulnerabilities (needs), as well as their roles, responsibilities and capacities.

Thirdly the introduction of participatory and gender sensitive methods in disaster response interventions face a range of common constraints:

- ☐ time pressures – ‘no time to listen’;
- ☐ a multitude of biases (seasonal, male, visible, cultural);
- ☐ challenging the powerful and ‘putting the last first’;
- ☐ transforming cultural and organisational norms.

Finally, there are parallels in terms of the means/end relationship. In disaster response, and indeed in development interventions, examples of *political* participation (participation as a goal - an ‘end’) are rare, as participatory methods are mainly used instrumentally, as a *means to an end*. The same is true of gender-sensitive approaches.

### 2.1.3 Different Types of Disaster and Gender Issues

Disasters vary in scale, predictability (sudden or slow on-set), their duration (protracted, complex) and their nature. To date, much of the literature relating to gender issues and disaster response focuses on *gender issues and conflict* or *gender issues and population movement*. Less has been written in relation to gender impacts and use of gender analysis in sudden on-set, natural disasters, although there is an extensive literature on integrating gender-sensitive approaches into sectoral interventions (healthcare/WATSAN/nutrition etc).

The two examples provided below illustrate that, despite different characteristics, the impacts of conflict related and natural disasters are similar. In both cases, a gender analysis reveals that existing gender inequalities were exacerbated and that there were changes in household composition and, thereby, the gender division of labour.

#### BOX 2.2 GENDER BY DISASTER TYPE

##### GENDER AND (CONFLICT RELATED) POPULATION MOVEMENT

###### Characteristics:

- ☐ Rape and violence against women as a systematic weapon of war
- ☐ Men (combatant or civilian) are more likely to be killed or physically attacked

###### Impacts:

- ☐ Breakdown of social norms
- ☐ Changes in the gender division of labour
- ☐ Changes in household composition
- ☐ Health impacts on mainly women (AIDS)
- ☐ Abused women may be ostracised by their communities
- ☐ Growing violence amongst men

##### GENDER AND NATURAL DISASTERS

###### Characteristics:

- ☐ Women ‘at home’ so most likely to be affected

###### Impacts:

- ☐ Lower health status accentuated by disaster
- ☐ Reproductive needs increased health vulnerabilities
- ☐ Increase in the incidence of female-headed households as men seek work elsewhere (some do not return)
- ☐ Incidents of violence against women, particularly where the man is absent

Source: International Federation: Disasters and Gender Issues: Bangladesh Floods, 1999.



#### 2.1.4 Institutionalising Gender

The focus on institutionalising gender stems from recognition of the fact that "*most organisations have found that it is not possible to address gender and other diversity issues within their programmes if they are not addressed within their own organisations*" (BRCS, 1998,). This represents a significant challenge given that "*institutions ensure the production, reinforcement and reproduction of social relations and thereby social differences and inequality*" (March, C. 1996, pp 64).

There is a vast literature on institutionalising gender, much of which focuses on two key questions:

- ❑ The extent to which an institution have the capacity to undertake gender analysis across its activities (*informal and formal* policies, quality of organisational standards and procedures, organisational culture);
- ❑ The profile (skills, attitudes, age, background, gender mix) of men and women in decision-making positions (i.e. the stakeholders).

In assessing performance to date, it is clear that the main focus has been on visible, top-down activities such as the generation of policies and guidelines, rather than the more invisible, transformative processes of changing organisational culture. The latter constitutes the key challenge.

#### 2.1.5 Practical Frameworks

'Doing' gender analysis in disaster response requires the use of practical frameworks. *TABLE 3.1* provides examples of frameworks that have been developed or adapted for gender analysis and gender sensitive planning in the context of disaster response, which are used by other agencies. Whilst in principle these frameworks are all underpinned by participatory methods, in practice, as a result of the constraining factors identified above (see 2.1.2), these may be used without the consultation of programme beneficiaries (Byrne, B. 1995). These frameworks all involve looking inside the household and collecting gender-disaggregated data.

TABLE 2.1: PRACTICAL FRAMEWORKS IN USE BY OTHER DISASTER RESPONSE AGENCIES

TOOL	DESCRIPTION	DPrepar.	Assessm	Planning	Monitor.	Eval
<b>VULNERABILITY CAPACITY ANALYSIS (VCA)</b>	VCA, which is an important framework used extensively throughout the International Federation, divides vulnerabilities and capacities into 3 categories: <i>physical; social</i> (marginalised and excluded); and <i>psychological</i> for which data can be collected for men and for women. This analysis can be applied throughout the project cycle – for planning and assessing interventions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>POP (PEOPLE ORIENTATED PLANNING)</b>	A participatory method developed by UNHCR and used in refugee situations. It examines 3 elements: <i>the refugee profile; the activities of women and men; and their access to and use of resources</i> before and during the crisis.		✓			
<b>THE HARVARD METHOD</b>	A matrix for collecting data at the community and household level. Four elements. <i>male and female activity analysis; and access and control profile; analysis of influencing factors; and check-list of questions</i> across the project cycle	✓	✓	✓		
<b>LONGWE HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (EMPOWERMENT)</b>	This framework is focused on empowerment and is a political framework ( <i>participation and gender as ends not means</i> ). Identified by ACORD as the most effective framework for assessing impact. Focuses on improving women's position in relation to (in order): <i>welfare, access to resources, conscientisation, participation and control</i> . Thus gaining gender equality in control of resources is dependent on attaining the first 4 levels.		✓		✓	✓
<b>THE GENDER ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK</b>	Developed by UNIFEM. Assesses the likely impact of a particular intervention on men, women and children with regard to: <i>time, labour, culture and the household</i> .		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>THE MOSER FRAMEWORK: PLANNING TABLE</b>	This matrix seeks to determine: the intended and actual impacts on i) women's <i>triple roles</i> ( <i>reproductive, productive and community</i> ) and ii) needs ( <i>practical and strategic</i> )	✓	✓	✓		

TOOL	DESCRIPTION	DPrepar.	Assessm	Planning	Monitor.	Eval
<u>COMMON SENSE</u>	<p>... where time is short and <i>information</i> uncertain:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't make the assumption that everybody's needs are the same;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recognise that women may be more invisible and that efforts may be required to seek out their views;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Seek information from all. Look beyond the community leaders;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of what men and women do – their socially defined roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>(adapted from Templar, G, 1998)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 2.2 And In Practice

The most recent development as regards the integration of gender sensitive approaches in humanitarian practice, is the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee's* policy statement for the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance (31<sup>st</sup> May 1999) (which covers<sup>1</sup> the Federation's activities in relation to complex emergencies and the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP)). This policy provides a statement of commitment to action that sets a standard for its members.

### BOX 2.3: IASC POLICY STATEMENT ON GENDER

#### IASC POLICY STATEMENT ON GENDER

##### PRINCIPLES:

- ☐ Gender equality and the equal protection of human rights of women and men
- ☐ Equal representation of women and men in peace mediation and decision-making at all levels and stages of humanitarian assistance
- ☐ Integration of a gender perspective and participation of women's organisations in capacity-building in response as well as in the rehabilitation and recovery phase

##### PRACTICE:

- ☐ formulate specific strategies for ensuring that gender issues are brought into the mainstream of activities within the ISAC areas of responsibility. Priority areas are assessment and strategic planning for humanitarian crisis; the consolidated appeals process, principled approach to emergencies; and participation of women in the planning, designing and monitoring of all aspects of emergency programmes
- ☐ Ensure that data is disaggregated by sex and age and include a gender perspective in analysis of information. Produce gender sensitive operational studies, best practices, guidelines and checklists for programming, as well as the establishment of instruments and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation such as gender-impact methodologies, in order to incorporate gender analysis techniques in institutional tools and procedures
- ☐ Develop capacity for systematic gender mainstreaming in programmes, policies, actions and training
- ☐ Ensure reporting and accountability mechanisms for activities and results in gender mainstreaming such as incentives, performance evaluations, MOUs, budget allocation analysis actions for redressing staff imbalance.

To the extent that it is new and applies to the major humanitarian agencies (the UN), the IASC's gender mainstreaming policy provides a useful benchmark - gender mainstreaming within the humanitarian industry as a whole, is clearly in its early stages.

In relation to the practices of *individual agencies*, initial enquiry illustrates that most have undertaken specific measures aimed at integrating gender sensitive approaches into their disaster response mechanisms. *TABLE 3.1* provides an overview of the types of measures being employed, whilst *BOXES 2.4 - 2.6* provided more detailed information on the practices of 3 agencies:

<sup>1</sup> - The International Federation is a standing invitee – not sure to what extent it does govern activities

- ☐ *World Food Programme (WFP)* which is specifically governed by the IASC policy and which has been highly active, in developing top-down approaches to operationalising gender;
- ☐ *Oxfam* which produces high quality research on gender policy and which has a reputation for leading the field amongst NGOs in operationalising gender; and
- ☐ *Action Aid* which is a highly decentralised organisation.

This albeit partial enquiry, shows that whilst examples of good practice exist, they are at best ad hoc. Even Oxfam, which has a reputation for being at the fore of mainstreaming gender in disaster response, concedes that it suffers from 'policy evaporation'<sup>2</sup> in the face of the constraints of disasters and the lack of standardisation and discipline which characterises disaster response procedures (see Section 2.1.4). In summary, the evidence indicates that:

- ☐ There are no examples of agencies that have comprehensively mainstreamed gender across all its activities;
- ☐ Most agencies have undertaken positive changes at the institutional level as incremental steps to implement gender policies;
- ☐ There are no examples of agencies systematically gathering gender disaggregated data for needs assessment and programming planning and integrating gender analysis into all stages of programme interventions;
- ☐ A number of agencies use reporting formats as a way to drive the collection of disaggregated data across the project cycle in their assessment, planning and reporting. WFP gender audits all its documentation/guidelines/reporting formats;
- ☐ Agencies were unable to provide information on what information is collected and what methods are used in the field. This points to the need for a field-based 'bottom-up' approach;
- ☐ There are few examples of agencies formally evaluating the benefits of their gender measures. WFP and ACORD provide two exceptions;
- ☐ For many, the introduction of gender sensitive approaches to project/planning fits comfortably with their up-take of participatory approaches. In particular 'listening to women' is evolving as good practice;
- ☐ Some agencies considered that the type of disaster, sudden on-set, protracted or chronic, was a major factor in determining the extent to which gender-sensitive approaches or participatory methods could be used;
- ☐ Agencies on the whole considered that *people* rather than *written guidelines and procedures* are key. Oxfam and ECHO both underlined the importance of the attitudes and priorities of personnel, in governing behaviour, especially in organisational contexts where standardisation is low;
- ☐ All agencies face the common challenge of working through local partners and balancing the desire to influence with commitments to devolved decision-making and respect of local cultures.

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<sup>2</sup> phrase coined by Longwe, and refers to the gap between gender equality policies and implementation

**BOX 2.4: OXFAM: OPERATIONALISING GENDER POLICY**

**OXFAM: OPERATIONALISING GENDER  
KEY ELEMENTS**

- ✓
- ☐ Use gender specialists in emergency support teams. In the future they will be responsible for capacity-building so as to inject specialist thinking into core staff, as well as providing the missing link between practice and policy
- ☐ Use participatory approaches
- ☐ Use standard check-lists
- ☐ Promote Sphere standards
- ☐ Invest in core staff rather than written procedures and training outsiders. This has led to a weakness of standardisation in relation to documentation and procedures
- ✗
- ☐ routinely and systematically collect disaggregated data

*Source: telephone interview*

**BOX 2.5: ACTION AID: OPERATIONALISING GENDER POLICY**

**ACTION AID: OPERATIONALISING GENDER  
KEY ELEMENTS**

- ☐ Have drafted a policy to mainstream gender issues in development and disaster response work in the near future
- ☐ Emergency policy takes account of gender
- ☐ Recommend that emergency assessments be done with gender focal persons in country programmes
- ☐ Recommend that gender focal persons make inputs into emergency plans
- ☐ Use of participatory methods depend on the type of disaster - slow on-set, rapid onset, protracted armed conflict
- ☐ Participatory methods used in emergency training workshops
- ☐ Use Vulnerability and Capability Analysis as a gender analysis framework
- ☐ *Accountability, Learning and Planning System* requires appraisals to include baseline gender disaggregated data
- ☐ Collect disaggregated data during needs *assessment* and *planning* and in country programmes (impact of disasters on men and women, the needs of men and women)

*Source: telephone interview/written questionnaire*

**BOX 2.6: WFP OPERATIONALISING GENDER POLICY****WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME: OPERATIONALISING GENDER  
KEY ELEMENTS**

- ☐ Set target regarding % of expenditure to be allocated in countries with a high gender gap (strategic planning)
- ☐ Have undertaken a mid-term review of their activities on mainstreaming gender to date
- ☐ Have instigated a quota system – all hiring managers need to achieve 50% of women in posts
- ☐ Have instigated a performance monitoring system which sets gender sensitive objectives
- ☐ Have reviewed progress against Beijing targets: qualitative and quantitative
- ☐ Have set up Gender Focal Points in the regions and have incorporated gender in the job descriptions of staff members in each country office giving them responsibility for 'gender auditing other activities'
- ☐ Have gender staff in Regional offices: 2 people full-time on gender building capacity and linking up with locally relevant partners
- ☐ Write gender issues into the Memorandums of Understanding with local partners
- ☐ Have an evaluation office, which is gender sensitive: all terms of reference go past the gender team
- ☐ Have gender personnel in HQ responsible for gender auditing all documentation: TOR, programme plans, reporting formats, evaluation reports etc.

**Disaster Response:**

- ☐ Disaster response teams includes a member who can address gender issues
- ☐ Have integrated gender issues in the new Programme Design Manual which is now on the web (intranet) for easy access and up-dating
- ☐ Have designed a tool-kit on participation. WFP consider gender and participation to be mutually reinforcing
- ☐ Do use gender conditionality; e.g. making funds to Afghanistan conditional on the inclusion of men and women
- ☐ Do practice results-based management and have defined quantitative and qualitative gender indicators



- ☐ Don't routinely and systematically collect gender disaggregated data

*Source: telephone interview/written questionnaire*

TABLE 2.2: OPERATIONALISING GENDER: AN AGENCY OVERVIEW

AGENCY	Gender Policy	Specific Gender Policy for Disaster Response	Request Gender Disagg. Data in Project Reporting	Gender Specialists In Technical Teams	Regional Gender Focal Points/ Persons	Promoting Sphere	Assigning of Gender Roles to Non-Specialist Staff	Gender Specific Training	Gender Integrated Across Training Progs	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ACORD	✓		✓							ACORD has set up a Gender Committee, which includes a Board Member and undertakes a two yearly gender audit of programmes (quantitative and qualitative)
ACTION AID (UK)	✗	✗		✓	✓	✓				
CAFOD	✓	✓	✓			✓				Gender is considered in the design, appraisal and reporting on projects. For grant approval for emergency projects there is a requirement to complete a section on gender considerations and projects are asked to state which level of Longwe's Hierarchy of Needs (see TABLE 2.1) is addressed. Projects are also asked to identify the HIV focus. Local partners are asked if they have a gender policy.
OXFAM	✓					✓				
SCF	✓					✓				



AGENCY	Gender Policy	Specific Gender Policy for Disaster Response	Request Gender Disagg. Data in Project Reporting	Gender Specialists in Technical Teams	Regional Gender Focal Points/ Persons	Promoting Sphere	Assigning of Gender Roles to Non-Specialist Staff	Gender Specific Training	Gender Integrated Across Training Progs	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
UNHCR		✓ (For refugee women)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	UNHCR's focus is on Refugee Women. It has produced guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women and best practice case studies. UNHCR also designed and initiated training in <i>People Orientated Planning (POP)</i> (see TABLE 2.1) which provides the basis for its gender training.
WFP	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	