

Gender and Protection Checklist | Protection

Why does gender and social inclusion matter in protection activities?

- During disasters, women, girls, boys and men face a broad range of protection challenges which can affect them differently. Protection refers to the prevention of and response to exploitation, abuse, violence and injury to others.
- All people have a right to safety and freedom from exploitation and abuse, so it is important to make sure that everyone, including vulnerable people, are protected from harm. Vulnerable people may include women, girls and boys, people with disability and older people.
- Understanding the needs of vulnerable people and targeting them for protection measures helps the whole community recover faster from disasters and build resilience.

Assessment

- Consult directly with vulnerable people in all protection assessment processes to make sure their concerns and needs are heard, e.g. encourage women, girls and boys, and people with disability to speak for themselves.
- Assess the level of need for protection of vulnerable community members by sex, age and disability, and prioritise these.
- Assess factors increasing protection risks, like displacement, unsafe routes or locations for distributions, or food insecurity leading to violence in the home. E.g.
 - are there cultural/community practices that are harmful or discriminatory towards women or girls; e.g. early marriage of girls?
 - how are cases of exploitation or violence against women, girls and boys reported?
 - are services in place to respond to cases of violence, exploitation and abuse?
 - what is the capacity of formal and customary justice actors to safely respond to gender based violence incidents like domestic violence or sexual assault?
 - what is the level of awareness of protection and security staff on basic issues of human rights, gender and gender based violence?
 - what is the level of awareness in the community on human rights, gender and gender based violence?

Access

- Prioritise the most vulnerable people in protection programming and monitoring, e.g. women, girls and boys, people with disability and older people.
- Consult vulnerable people to identify their specific protection concerns, e.g. consult girls about their concerns regarding early or forced marriage, use of WASH areas, or accessing food distributions.
- Make sure that a lack of documentation does not prevent individuals from accessing protection services.
- Aim for gender balanced staff teams in protection and security services, and identify female staff as a contact point for women and girls in the community.
- Communicate information about protection services through different methods (e.g. extension workers, radio, sms messaging, posters, newsletters, television or loudspeaker), so that information reaches everyone (e.g. literate, illiterate or children).
- Consider how cultural practices may limit access to protection services and discuss with community leaders ways to prevent discrimination, exploitation and abuse.

Safety and dignity

- Consult with vulnerable groups about ways increase safety; e.g. safe locations and routes to distribution sites; security patrols; community awareness raising.
- Include child protection and prevention of gender based violence in aid program policies, standards and guidelines.
- Implement strategies to protect beneficiaries during documentation, profiling and registration processes for assistance, from violence, exploitation and abuse.
- Monitor and respond to safety concerns, including risks of exploitation, abuse, violence, or injury for vulnerable people.
- Consult with gender based violence specialists on ways to respond safely and confidentially to cases of exploitation and abuse, including where to refer survivors to services and support.

Participation, empowerment and accountability

- If protection or peace committees are established, promote meaningful and equal representation of women and men, and participation of other vulnerable people.
- Inform communities about their right to protection, how to access protective measures and where to seek support for survivors of abuse.
- Promote appropriate justice responses to gender based violence, child abuse and other forms of violence,
 - support the employment of women in police and security sectors
 - promote codes of conduct
 - promote child protection and gender based violence prevention training for duty bearers
 - establish and promote referral pathways for survivors.
- Coordinate with other actors and sectors (e.g. WASH, Shelter, Food Security and Livelihoods) to address protection risks and improve safety for vulnerable people. Report and share protection concerns with the Gender and Protection Cluster.
- Provide training and policies to staff on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Provide clear information to communities explaining that beneficiaries, particularly women and girls, do not have to pay or provide services or favours in exchange for assistance.
- Set up accessible, confidential and well-understood mechanisms for suggestions and complaints.

Monitoring

- Collect and monitor data on beneficiaries by sex, age and disability.
- Monitor to find out who is not able to access protection services, and address any barriers they face.

This checklist was adapted from:

- *IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, 2015*
- *Protection Programs – Tips for Protection Mainstreaming, Global Protection Cluster, May 2014*
- *Protection Gender Marker Tip Sheet, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, September 2012*