

ADDRESSING THE GENDER CHALLENGE

For years, humanitarian actors have recognised the need for greater sensitivity to gender issues in emergency response and long term-recovery efforts. Mainstreaming gender is a priority for the humanitarian sector, and a number of policy guidelines and tools have been developed in support of this, ranging from the policies of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to cluster-specific guidelines, and the internal policies and procedures of many international humanitarian organisations and donor governments. Nevertheless, there are persistent problems in moving from policy commitments around gender to actually incorporating gender sensitive approaches in operations and programmes.

Over the past five years, Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) field research teams have visited dozens of crises and repeatedly found examples of humanitarian actors failing to consider the different needs of women, girls, men and boys, causing gaps in responses, or worse, accentuating suffering. The consequences of a lack of attention to gender range from culturally inappropriate feminine hygiene kits in Bangladesh and Pakistan to latrines for women in internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugee camps with insufficient lighting and security in Haiti or the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It's not just about programmes to specifically target the needs of women and girls, however. Men and boys also have specific needs, and programmes which fail to address these needs can have equally negative consequences. In DRC, for example, the needs of men and boys, many of whom are themselves victims of rape and sexual assault, are often overlooked in Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) programmes.

Thankfully, the humanitarian sector is beginning to pay closer attention to the issue. A number of recent studies and evaluations (including an ongoing study by DARA for UNICEF, UN Women and OCHA on gender outcomes of humanitarian responses) are beginning to build a solid evidence base to show the importance of gender sensitive approaches for effective crisis response. Initiatives like the IASC Gender Marker (GM),¹ which codes the extent to which gender is incorporated into humanitarian projects on a 0–2 scale, are helping raise awareness among humanitarian agencies of how good project designs can ensure that women, girls, men and boys will benefit equally from projects. The IASC Gender Standby Capacity

project (GenCap)² and many humanitarian organisations have deployed gender advisors to more and more crises to help train humanitarian staff from all sectors to better understand gender issues from a practical, programming perspective. The HRI 2011 hopes to contribute to these efforts by providing additional evidence on the role of donor governments in ensuring gender is addressed adequately in humanitarian assistance policies, funding and practices.

DARA'S APPROACH

From DARA's perspective, gender mainstreaming cannot simply be a political statement of commitment; it is essential to the quality, effectiveness and accountability of aid efforts. Good gender analysis and gender sensitive approaches in programme design and implementation are essential to meet the fundamental humanitarian principle that aid is impartial and based on needs. Any action, no matter how well-intentioned, can fall short of meeting humanitarian objectives if organisations do not know the specific capacities and needs of *all* the different parts of the population affected by a crisis, and fail to design, monitor and assess the effectiveness of interventions in meeting those needs. Donors can facilitate this by incorporating gender more systematically into all aspects of their policies and procedures, and monitoring their partners to ensure that the aid efforts for which they provide funding and support are gender sensitive, and therefore, more accountable to affected populations.

In order to analyse donor support for gender in humanitarian action, the HRI 2011 incorporated a new indicator into the research methodology based on three components:

- policy reviews to see whether gender is specifically incorporated into donors' humanitarian or development policy frameworks;
- funding analysis to see whether donors align their funding and distribute aid according to gender sensitive criteria;
- survey questions to see how field-based humanitarian staff perceive donors' commitments to gender issues in their funding and support.

A desk review of OECD/DAC donors' policies was conducted to determine whether gender was included in their humanitarian assistance policies, in their overall official development assistance (ODA) framework, or not mentioned at all. Donor governments were also asked to provide examples of any specific requirements for their partner organisations to include gender analysis and sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) in project funding proposals, or as part of reporting requirements; however, this could not be included as an additional indicator due to the limited response.

The IASC GenCap Project and UN OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS) provided the data used for the funding analysis, based on an assessment of funding alignment to the Gender Marker tool. In 2011, the GM was used in nine CAPs (Chad, Haiti, Kenya, Niger, occupied Palestinian territories [oPt], Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and Zimbabwe), two pooled funds (DRC, Ethiopia) and the Pakistan flood appeal. The HRI field research included seven of these countries, which made it possible to collect perceptions of actors in the field about gender issues and the utility of the GM. The initiative has since been expanded to cover countries in 2012, allowing for further comparative analysis of funding trends in the future (IASC 2011; UN OCHA FTS 2011).

For the purposes of the HRI's analysis, the funding component of the HRI gender indicator is based on:

- the share of each donor's funding provided to projects classified as **gender sensitive** (code 2a or 2b) under the GM compared to the donor's total funding to crises where the GM was applied; and
- the percentage of donor funding to projects classified as **gender blind** (code 0) compared to the donor's total funding to crises where the GM was applied.

The third component of the HRI gender assessment is based on field staff perceptions of donor commitment to gender, and beneficiary engagement captured by the following questions of the HRI field survey on donor practices: "Does your donor require you to incorporate gender sensitive approaches in your programmes?" and "Does your donor require beneficiary participation in: programme design; implementation; monitoring and evaluation?". Respondents were asked to use the following scale:

- 1 It's not a requirement and not given any importance by the donor
- 2 It's not a requirement by the donor, but they like to see it if we include it
- 3 It's a requirement but not given much importance by the donor
- 4 It's an important requirement for the donor
- 5 It's an important requirement and the donor verifies to make sure we do

Over 870 survey responses on OECD/DAC donors' gender practices were collected from over 270 senior and mid-level representatives of humanitarian agencies in nine crises. In addition, over 150 responses to open-ended questions on donors' gender approaches were collected, along with supplementary questions regarding how the humanitarian sector deals with gender issues and barriers to women's participation, either as staff or aid recipients.

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE AND MALE STAFF INTERVIEWED IN THE HRI 2011 FIELD RESEARCH

POSITION HELD IN THE ORGANISATION	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	TOTAL	
SENIOR MANAGEMENT	74	32	156	68	230	100%
MID-LEVEL	21	43	28	57	49	100%
TOTAL	95	34	184	66	279	100%

Survey and interviews did not include questions about specific programmes, though many comments mentioned examples of the degree to which gender was being addressed, or ignored, in different contexts. Nevertheless, it does offer interesting insight on how the sector is dealing with the issue.

Using a statistical analysis of the scores against the HRI's set of 35 indicators of donor policies, funding practices and field perceptions, donors have been classified into three categories based on their shared characteristics. The specific results for gender are outlined below.³

OVERVIEW OF DONOR PERFORMANCE AROUND GENDER ISSUES

On the whole, donors could do much better at integrating gender into their policies, funding and support at the field level, as illustrated in Tables 2 and 3. At the individual level, Canada stands out for its consistent support for gender in its humanitarian policies, funding and practices, and is a model for other donors. Sweden, the European Commission (ECHO), Norway and the United States complete the list of top five donors for their support for gender.

TABLE 2: DONOR PERFORMANCE AGAINST HRI GENDER INDICATORS

	HRI 2011 GENDER INDICATOR SCORE
CANADA	7.82
SWEDEN	7.63
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	7.62
NORWAY	7.59
UNITED STATES	7.50
SWITZERLAND	7.03
UNITED KINGDOM	7.02
AUSTRALIA	7.02
FINLAND	6.92
IRELAND	6.88
SPAIN	6.80
DENMARK	6.65
FRANCE	6.57
GERMANY	6.52
BELGIUM	6.09
ITALY	5.65
JAPAN	5.44
NETHERLANDS	5.32
LUXEMBOURG	4.96

POLICIES IN PLACE, BUT INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP OF PROGRAMMING

Most donors have gender policies, but very few have specific procedures to monitor and follow up on gender in the programmes they fund. The review of OECD/DAC donor governments' policies shows that the majority (61%) have a gender policy for humanitarian aid, either as a stand-alone, separate policy or mentioned specifically in their humanitarian policy. Some of the remaining donors include gender in their overall ODA framework, although in some cases this is simply a generic mention of the importance of women in development programmes.

Group 1 donors, "Principled Partners"⁴ (Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland), tend to have the most comprehensive and progressive gender policies for their humanitarian assistance, with clearly defined guidelines, objectives and descriptions. Group 2 donors, "Learning Leaders"⁵ (Canada, ECHO, France, the UK and the US), also generally have gender policies, though sometimes not as clearly defined as Group 1 donors. Canada in particular, stands out for its long-standing commitment to mainstreaming gender in its humanitarian and development assistance, while ECHO was criticised by many organisations for delays in launching an updated gender policy despite commitments to gender in the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Assistance*.

As part of the overall donor policy review, DARA also asked donors whether their funding, reporting and evaluation criteria included specific requirements for SADD - generally considered the first step towards ensuring gender-sensitive programming. Of the donors that responded, most stated that they encouraged and promoted gender in their dialogue with partners, but only a few, such as Canada and Spain, cited specific SADD reporting requirements. None of the donors consulted provided specific examples of how they went beyond SADD information to ask the critical question of partners: what does that data mean for the approaches taken, prioritisation of interventions, or monitoring that would demonstrate how partners were addressing gender issues?

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN OF DONOR PERFORMANCE

		POLICY	FUNDING	FIELD PERCEPTION	HRI 2011 GENDER INDICATOR SCORE
Group 1 PRINCIPLED PARTNERS	DENMARK	↑	↓ 5.74	↑ 5.90	→ 6.65
	FINLAND	↑	→ 6.68	→ 5.62	→ 6.92
	NETHERLANDS	↑	↓ 2.90	→ 5.40	↓ 5.32
	NORWAY	↑	→ 8.12	↑ 5.85	↑ 7.59
	SWEDEN	↑	↑ 8.30	↑ 5.76	↑ 7.63
	SWITZERLAND	↑	↑ 8.27	↓ 4.31	→ 7.03
Group 2 LEARNING LEADERS	CANADA	↑	↑ 8.54	↑ 5.99	↑ 7.82
	EUROPEAN COMMISSION	↑	→ 7.99	↑ 6.06	↑ 7.62
	FRANCE	→	↑ 8.29	→ 5.64	→ 6.57
	UNITED KINGDOM	↑	→ 7.52	→ 5.03	→ 7.02
	UNITED STATES	↑	→ 8.04	→ 5.71	↑ 7.50
Group 3 ASPIRING ACTORS	AUSTRALIA	↑	↑ 8.54	↓ 4.00	→ 7.02
	BELGIUM	↑	↓ 5.72	↓ 4.51	→ 6.09
	GERMANY	→	↑ 9.09	→ 4.70	→ 6.52
	IRELAND	↑	→ 6.34	↑ 5.85	→ 6.88
	ITALY	→	→ 6.74	→ 4.89	↓ 5.65
	JAPAN	→	→ 6.89	↓ 4.20	↓ 5.44
	LUXEMBOURG	↑	↓ 3.82	↓ 3.59	↓ 4.96
	SPAIN	↑	→ 6.95	→ 5.06	→ 6.80

All scores are on a scale of 0 to 10. Colours represent performance compared to OECD/DAC donors' average performance rating: ↑ Good → Mid-range ↓ Could improve

SIZEABLE PORTION OF APPEAL FUNDING STILL "GENDER BLIND"

According to data provided by the IASC for the 2011 appeal cycle, 58.3% of funding to CAPs in which the GM was applied was gender-sensitive (i.e. allocated to projects that either significantly contribute to gender equality or whose main purpose is to advance gender equality). Still, 15.4% of project funding was found to be gender blind (in other words, with no evident consideration of gender in the design). There is significant variance, however, from one crisis to another. Funding to CAPs in Kenya and Yemen was largely gender sensitive, with 98.2% and 78.3% respectively allocated to projects making some contribution to gender, while only 6.1% of funding to Zimbabwe and 2.4% of funding to Niger contributed to gender equality.

Similar differences are seen among donors, as shown in Table 4. On the whole, Group 1 donors, "Principled Partners", did not match their record for good gender policies with corresponding funding. On average, over a quarter of funding (26.3%) of the crises included in the 2011 GM was considered "gender blind" in this group. Within the group, Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands performed poorly in terms of funding allocations, although, as some respondents pointed out, these donors also tend to support pooled funding mechanisms, which did use gender as one of the criteria for project funding allocations. Group 2 donors "Learning Leaders", on the other hand, tended to perform best of all donors assessed in terms of allocating funding based on GM scores, with Canada and France leading the group. Of the Group 3 donors, "Aspiring Actors",⁶ Germany and Australia deserve mention for the high degree of funding

allocated to gender-sensitive programmes. Group 3 donors performed similar to Group 1 donors, with an average of 27.2% of funding to gender blind programmes.

Some field respondents questioned whether funding allocations based on GM scores represented a pro-active position by donors, or were more an indication that humanitarian organisations were simply becoming more aware by including gender in their plans and appeals. “Do donors require gender because agencies do, or is it the other way around?” asked one respondent in oPt. There was a certain amount of cynicism among many respondents, with several commenting that “some organisations use gender ‘to look nice’ for the donors so they will get the funding, but the projects are no good.” “NGOs and UN agencies are simply copying and pasting from past proposals,” said another in Haiti.

Nevertheless, there were many respondents who felt that initiatives like the GenCap and GM project were slowly making a difference in improving the quality of project proposals and using gender criteria for funding allocation. “The Humanitarian Country Team has really accepted and appropriated the Gender Marker. They’re very serious about it. It has really been adopted by people who hold leadership in the humanitarian system: only gender sensitive projects receive financial aid,” according to a respondent in DRC.

Even critics admitted that the GM, while perhaps a “blunt tool for raising awareness,” as one respondent put it, was profiling gender issues more systematically. However, like the issue of quotas for women in programmes, several respondents cautioned about the risk of converting the GM into simply another procedural exercise for both donors and agencies, limited to making “sure basic things are taken into account in projects,” in the words of one respondent in DRC. “It’s very basic. It’s about minimal requirements. It’s not about making a qualitative analysis of the real situation.”

DONOR COMMITMENT TO GENDER QUESTIONED IN THE FIELD

While donors performed reasonably well in the HRI indicators for gender policy and funding, perceptions of donors’ commitment to gender at the field level is a concern. In the HRI field survey question related to gender, OECD/DAC donor governments were given an average score of 5.79 out of 10 by their field partners. This is below the overall average survey score for OECD/DAC donors of 6.02, and among the lowest of all HRI survey scores. Other questions with similarly low average scores include donor support for beneficiary participation (5.08) and accountability towards beneficiaries (4.47), indicating that the issue of promoting inclusive and participatory approaches to understand and meet needs is a collective weakness for donors. One

respondent in DRC summed it up this way: “We would have to take affected populations into account to be able to take affected women into account.”

Interview comments overwhelmingly confirmed the generally poor perception of donors in the field, with most viewing donor commitment to gender as “theoretical” and largely limited to asking for some gender sensitivity in project proposals. “There’s no real engagement, donors look at gender in a very general way,” said one respondent working in Somalia. “No donor has a real interest and understanding of gender,” affirmed another in Haiti. “Gender is definitely not an issue for donors. They don’t even know what it means, and while some are more sensitive, most just check on paper,” remarked one respondent in Chad. “Donors have not indicated to their partners that gender mainstreaming is non-negotiable because it is at the root of understanding vulnerability, exclusion and abuse in every single situation,” asserted another respondent working in Somalia.

Several respondents equated the slow progress on gender with a lack of accountability and push from donors, and called for donors to “put your money where your mouth is” by pushing for funding based on gender criteria and requiring gender analysis in all stages of programme design, implementation and monitoring. Many felt that there was “no serious effort by donors to include gender in decision-making and monitoring. Donors themselves are often the first to ignore compliance with gender sensitivity requirements, if any,” said one respondent in Pakistan.

The majority of humanitarian organisations interviewed stated that their organisations had their own internal requirements on gender-sensitive approaches and SADD in programmes. When SADD was requested by donors, it appeared to be due to individual donor representatives’ own initiatives rather than an institutional policy. According to one respondent in DRC, “Gender is in vogue. But donors like the US, UK, ECHO or Spain don’t even know what they want in terms of gender. They don’t put in practice means for verifying whether gender is actually taken into account.”

Even donors most often cited for their commitment to gender issues, such as Sweden and Canada, were often criticised for a lack of follow-up: “CIDA (Canada) is strong at being gender sensitive in the project proposal stage but not in implementation, monitoring and evaluation,” said one respondent in Sudan. “Donors ask us for gender approaches in our proposals, but they never verify it,” commented another in Kenya. The US and ECHO were also often cited as donors that follow up on gender policies in their programming support, though this was not systematic and depended on the crisis, such as appears from this observation from Haiti: “OFDA (US) generally requires a gender approach, but in this emergency case, they don’t care that much about it.”

At the field level, several respondents complained about donors like DFID (UK), ECHO or others imposing quotas on the number of women beneficiaries or project staff. Many regarded this as counterproductive to more nuanced assessments of needs and better targeting of programmes.

One gender advisor interviewed gave a positive example of how more consistent application of donor commitment to gender could lead to changes in the behaviours and practices of their partners: "I always wondered what would happen if donors were the ones who pushed for gender sensitiveness. It worked! I went to give trainings on the Gender Marker in a very remote area and a lot of programme planners from national NGOs showed up, coming from isolated villages. They came because they were concerned about not getting any more funding if they didn't incorporate gender."

MAIN FINDINGS: THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR IS STILL TOO MALE-DOMINATED

Each year, the HRI interviews hundreds of field representatives of humanitarian organisations in different crisis contexts. This year, over two thirds of the senior managers interviewed were men (68%) and one third women (32%), a ratio that has remained largely unchanged since the HRI began five years ago (see Table 1). Progress has been made, but there are still structural and attitudinal barriers to more effective engagement of women in the sector, as our field research shows and is echoed by other studies, such as the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance's (ALNAP) study on leadership (ALNAP 2010).

Several respondents - both male and female - felt that the dominance of "Anglo-Saxon men" in key decision-making positions in donor and UN agencies was an impediment to effectively understanding gender problems in humanitarian settings. Others acknowledged and appreciated the important role that senior male staff can adopt in driving a gender agenda in programming, but complained that female staff attempting to do the same were often perceived as pursuing personal or emotional agendas: "When men talk about gender, it's perceived as a professional issue, related to effective responses. Women are seen as doing it for more personal reasons."

At the programming level, several respondents mentioned the difficulties some male colleagues encountered in applying a gender perspective to interventions. "Men wouldn't understand why it was important to put locks on latrine doors. They thought it was just so the wind wouldn't open them," stated one respondent. "When we told men about the importance of doing focus groups separated by sex, they didn't believe it. We had to use watches during meetings for them to

realise how men talk much more than women when focus groups are mixed," said another working in DRC.

Many field respondents pointed to the difficulty of finding and retaining international and local female staff at the field level for projects. "Gender sensitive strategies or programmes are written in an office, but there are many practical constraints when in the field," stated one respondent in DRC. Social and cultural barriers, limited access to education opportunities, poor health conditions, and concerns around protection and security were factors cited by many interviewees as impeding greater numbers of women from working in the humanitarian sector. "Lots of women don't want to work in remote or dangerous areas, especially if they have families," said one. "It's hard to hire qualified women. We had a vacancy. We did a first round of applications and no women participated. Even for international staff it's hard to find women candidates," commented another in Chad.

Few respondents could offer any concrete examples of how organisations were finding ways to address these kinds of barriers, suggesting there is much more work to be done to resolve some of these structural issues impeding greater numbers of women staff in crisis situations. There were some positive signs, though. Some organisations are more proactively and persistently trying to recruit women, while others are investing in building capacities of female local staff. As one woman working in DRC reflected, "As a woman, it's now easier to work in the UN than it was before. The atmosphere is better and better. There's respect towards women. Plus they really try to recruit more women to have a more gender balanced staff."

Clearly, much more research needs to be conducted to understand the potential bias that the predominance of male humanitarian staff might create in the way needs are understood, assessed and prioritised in the design and implementation of humanitarian programmes. However, it stands to reason that with women and girls making up over half of the world's population, and with clear evidence that the effects of crises are different for women and men, an increase in the number of women engaged in the humanitarian sector and in decision-making processes could only be a positive move.

GENDER IS OFTEN CONSIDERED A LOW PRIORITY IN EMERGENCY RESPONSES

A recurring theme that emerged in all the crises assessed was the opinion of a significant number of respondents (including several donor representatives) that gender is not a priority in humanitarian relief operations. Rather than seeing gender as an opportunity to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of aid efforts, many respondents saw gender as an "added luxury" - optional depending on timing and

resources. They subordinated gender to more important objectives and activities, arguing that the urgency of a situation requires immediate action, not analysis.

The HRI research teams frequently heard comments like: “there was no time for that [gender analysis] in such an emergency situation” in Haiti, or “gender is something that comes later, in the recovery phase”. Similar comments were made in other crises: “The donor does not go through the gender score card with you because proposals have to be accepted quickly in such an urgent situation,” despite the reality that many of these same crises are now protracted for years or even decades.

Donors themselves contribute to perpetuating such attitudes, according to many respondents: “It is a donor requirement, but they also understand that we are working under very difficult constraints so gender is not pushed.” “Normally, they do require a gender approach in other projects but not in this case. This is a humanitarian crisis targeting entire populations, big numbers. They aren’t focused on women,” commented another in Haiti. In essence, the message from donors seems to be that gender is an important political commitment, but not a practical priority in humanitarian crises. One donor representative in Somalia summed up this line of thinking: “In truth, this is not a priority; it’s more of a ‘tick the box’ approach. The scale and complexities of the crisis mean there are more important issues to address.”

GENDER IS STILL MAINLY EQUATED WITH WOMEN'S ISSUES AND NOT AS A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING

While there is ample evidence that women are disproportionately and differently affected by disasters and effects of conflicts (such as sexual and gender-based violence), this is not to say that gender is or should be limited exclusively to programmes and interventions focused on women. As a recent study sponsored by UN OCHA and CARE demonstrates, a review of SADD in humanitarian programmes shows that humanitarian organisations often make incorrect assumptions about programming priorities, based largely on incomplete or inaccurate information about the affected populations and their needs (Mazurana, Benelli et al. 2011).

Similar conclusions were evident in many of the crises covered by HRI field research. The perception among many interviewed was that gender was often misunderstood to include solely women and girls. “Many donors, like Canada, the US, Sweden or Norway, are very sensitive to gender, but their programmes mainly focus on women. They don’t necessarily discriminate against men, but they mainly target women,” commented one respondent in Sudan. Another in DRC provided examples of how this can inadvertently exclude men: “Males are not included in programme

activities. It’s not a real gender strategy; they just focus on providing special care for women. Sometimes they even neglect men’s needs completely.”

One respondent in Sudan reflected the attitude of many when he stated: “Focusing so much on women only worsens the general situation; positive discrimination is not the answer.” This type of attitude was frustrating for other respondents: “Gender is not about underlining the vulnerability of women or constantly showing them as victims! We need less talk about gender and more about gender in projects tackling the needs of all men, women, boys and girls. There are some improvements in humanitarian action in this regard but much more needs to be done.”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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Gender only constituted a small component of the overall HRI research process. However, even the limited areas assessed generated a great deal of information that can help the humanitarian sector better understand the constraints and challenges to integrating gender into humanitarian action.

While the majority of OECD/DAC donors were reported to have gender policies, very few actually monitor and follow up with their partners in the field on how gender is integrated into programming. Funding also appears to be mostly aligned with gender criteria, but as the analysis of GM data for 2011 shows, there are huge discrepancies in the level of support for gender sensitive projects in some crises compared to others, and the level of priority given to gender by some donors in their funding allocations.

It is clear from the field research that the majority of humanitarian actors interviewed see donor commitment to gender as limited to the most general and superficial levels, not as an integral part of their strategy and approaches. Even donors that have a reputation for championing gender – and there are a few – were often seen as failing to systematically use gender criteria to guide decision-making, and not actively monitor and follow up to verify how gender approaches were being applied in programming.

In the absence of clear directions and requirements from donors, many humanitarian organisations have developed their own internal policies on gender mainstreaming. Within the sector, initiatives like the IASC GM and the work of GenCap and other gender advisors in the field were generally seen as positive moves to advance gender issues. However, a significant number of the representatives in humanitarian organisations expressed their scepticism about the utility of gender sensitive approaches in emergency responses, and many equated gender with a simplistic view that this

catered only to programmes specifically aimed at women. Many of the donor and agency respondents saw gender as a bureaucratic procedure (“ticking the boxes”) and an administrative burden rather than as a basic and essential step in ensuring that humanitarian assistance is non-discriminatory and allocated on the basis of need.

It seems evident that much more work needs to be done to research, understand and address the continued negative attitudes towards gender issues and to resolve some of the more difficult structural barriers that impede greater participation of women in the sector. To move forward and truly live up to the collective commitment to mainstream gender in humanitarian responses, donors can and must take on a leadership role. In the opinion of many of those interviewed, if donors show that gender is a priority for them, and begin to actively promote gender, the sector is likely to follow, at the very least, due to concerns about continued access to funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some recommendations for simple, practical steps that donors can take to promote better acceptance, awareness and understanding of the need for enhanced gender sensitive approaches. The majority of these recommendations have already been made before, but they are worth repeating.

1. MAKE SURE GENDER IS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, DONOR FUNDING DECISIONS, AND PROGRAMME DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

In the *Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Principles*, donors commit to ensure aid is non-discriminatory and in proportion to needs. The only way to guarantee this is by ensuring that needs are properly assessed from a gender perspective. By aligning funding to projects that show how gender is being addressed, donors can send a powerful message to partners that gender analysis must be improved and applied systematically to programmes. While many donors request partners to include gender analysis and provide SADD in proposals, very few actually follow up to see how this data is being used in implementation or require partners to report on how gender analysis is being used to improve quality and effectiveness of interventions for all parts of the population. To achieve this, donors should:

- Support the roll-out of initiatives like the IASC Gender Marker and align funding decisions to gender coding, justifying when funding is allocated to gender-blind programmes;
- Require partners to include gender analysis, outlining what the different needs of women, girls, men and boys are in the crisis, and how these will be addressed at different stages of the response;

- Insist on the collection and analysis of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) in all project proposals and reports, and ask partners to show how this data is being used to adapt and improve the quality of responses.

2. INTEGRATE GENDER SPECIFICALLY INTO PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

Donors are consistently weak at supporting prevention, preparedness and risk reduction in general. But their efforts would likely have much greater and lasting impact if gender was fully integrated into disaster and conflict prevention programmes. As the recent report on the use of SADD concludes, there are numerous steps humanitarian organisations could take prior to an emergency to better understand the different roles and social norms that apply to women, girls, men and boys in crisis prone countries. Donors can facilitate this by supporting their partners to take measures beforehand to anticipate, plan and prepare themselves and vulnerable communities to better address gender in prevention, response and recovery efforts. And as pointed out by Michelle Bachelet, the Executive Director of UN Women, women have a vital role in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation, but are largely absent from these processes. Donors can help rectify this. In order to minimise the possibility of gender gaps in crisis responses donors should:

- Require partners to include gender analysis and strategies in any prevention and risk reduction programmes, preparedness and contingency planning they fund;
- Insist that their partners integrate strategies to increase the engagement with and build the capacity of beneficiary communities to prevent and prepare for crises, with a specific focus on ensuring participation of women in activities;
- Ensure gender is adequately incorporated into recovery and transition programming, including in conflict and post-conflict situations.

3. SUPPORT MEASURES TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF WOMEN IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

There is a large disparity in the number of men and women working at the field level, especially at the senior management level. The sector is still dominated by men, raising questions about the ability of humanitarian organisations to fully understand the needs of women and men in different cultural and social contexts. At the field level, while there are slow improvements, too many programmes still do not fully integrate crisis-affected populations as a whole, and women in particular, in the design, implementation and decision-making processes of aid interventions. Donors can work towards changing this imbalance, and should:

- Promote greater participation of women in management and leadership roles in the sector;
- Support and fund initiatives and tools like the Gender Marker, the GenCap project and the use of gender advisors to help increase understanding of gender issues and address gender gaps in humanitarian action;
- Support humanitarian partners to increase their capacity for integrating women and gender into their human resources strategies, programming policies, planning, reporting and operational procedures, including SADD;
- Support partners in addressing some of the cultural, social and other barriers to women's and men's participation in humanitarian action, as part of an overall strategy for increased accountability towards crisis-affected populations.

4. INCREASE EFFORTS TO ENSURE GENDER IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF PROTECTION STRATEGIES

Women and girls are often extremely vulnerable in situations of conflict, and are frequently the targets of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). In disaster situations like Haiti, SGBV is often present as well, but does not receive the same attention as it does in conflicts. At the same time, men and boys are often themselves victims, or require special focus in prevention efforts. Much progress has been made, but there are still disturbing incidents where the international community's responsibility to protect these vulnerable people has not been fulfilled, and where perpetrators of SGBV act with impunity. In order to ensure that the rights, dignity and physical integrity of all affected populations are protected donors should:

- Support better training of humanitarian and other actors (such as peacekeeping and military forces) on gender, human rights and the responsibility to protect, and monitor compliance;
- Insist that partners incorporate gender perspectives into all protection activities, including an analysis of the specific needs of men and boys;
- Support international mechanisms to end impunity for acts of SGBV

5. MAKE GENDER AN EXPLICIT FOCUS OF MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

As HRI research indicates, donors do not consistently monitor, follow up, or evaluate how gender issues are being addressed in humanitarian action. Awareness and understanding of gender are still limited in the sector, and attitudes towards gender issues are often negative. Progress is happening in many crisis contexts, thanks in part to initiatives like the Gender Marker and gender advisors, and recent and ongoing evaluations are adding

new and compelling evidence that gender needs to be an integral part of an overall strategy to improve the quality and effectiveness of aid. In order to ensure that aid resources are effectively meeting needs, donors and their partners must monitor and report how interventions are contributing, or not, to meeting gender needs at all points in the response cycle, especially in the emergency response phase. Unless donors and their partners make gender an integral part of monitoring, evaluation and learning, there is a risk that gender remains marginalised rather than mainstreamed in humanitarian action. Donors have an important role to play in this, and should:

- Require all partners to monitor and report on SADD and demonstrate how gender is being addressed in all phases of programming;
- Integrate gender as a component of all monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements for themselves and their partners;
- Sponsor and support more evaluations and learning around gender issues for the sector;
- Develop and/or refine their policies on gender in humanitarian action, making clear links between gender, beneficiary participation and inclusiveness, and accountability towards affected populations;
- Develop a collective donor policy statement on their commitment to gender equality in humanitarian action.

TABLE 4. DONOR FUNDING ALLOCATIONS BASED ON GENDER MARKER CRITERIA

FUNDING TO 2011 CAPS IN WHICH GENDER MARKER WAS IMPLEMENTED VS. DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER MARKER							
	CLASSIFICATION UNDER GENDER MARKER IS NOT SPECIFIED	0 NO SIGNS THAT GENDER ISSUES WERE CONSIDERED IN PROJECT DESIGN	1 THE PROJECT IS DESIGNED TO CONTRIBUTE IN SOME LIMITED WAY TO GENDER EQUALITY	2A THE PROJECT IS DESIGNED TO CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO GENDER EQUALITY	2B THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT IS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY		TOTAL FUNDING COMMITTED/ CONTRIBUTED (USD)
AUSTRALIA	29.9%	4.0%	23.1%	40.8%	2.2%	100.0%	23,955,878
AUSTRIA	0.0%	47.7%	0.0%	52.3%	0.0%	100.0%	428,261
BELGIUM	0.0%	41.8%	12.2%	46.0%	0.0%	100.0%	13,958,892
CANADA	0.0%	14.9%	14.8%	67.9%	2.4%	100.0%	106,645,131
DENMARK	31.1%	31.7%	11.0%	26.2%	0.0%	100.0%	15,068,739
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	0.0%	16.0%	21.9%	61.6%	0.6%	100.0%	219,044,047
FINLAND	12.3%	26.5%	18.0%	43.2%	0.0%	100.0%	22,814,948
FRANCE	0.0%	2.8%	40.9%	50.9%	5.3%	100.0%	13,179,174
GERMANY	0.0%	12.5%	10.3%	73.8%	3.4%	100.0%	21,034,037
IRELAND	45.7%	21.4%	11.4%	21.5%	0.0%	100.0%	8,987,753
ITALY	0.0%	17.4%	39.9%	42.7%	0.0%	100.0%	4,199,910
JAPAN	0.0%	26.4%	21.0%	50.7%	1.9%	100.0%	151,312,015
LUXEMBOURG	0.0%	53.2%	22.6%	24.2%	0.0%	100.0%	1,511,979
NETHERLANDS	28.4%	59.5%	1.8%	8.6%	1.8%	100.0%	23,798,948
NEW ZEALAND	0.0%	42.5%	0.0%	57.5%	0.0%	100.0%	1,848,877
NORWAY	60.1%	14.7%	0.0%	25.2%	0.0%	100.0%	38,720,318
SPAIN	27.8%	25.5%	8.5%	38.1%	0.0%	100.0%	33,298,450
SWEDEN	32.7%	6.7%	20.4%	37.6%	2.5%	100.0%	102,163,075
SWITZERLAND	0.0%	18.6%	12.5%	66.1%	2.7%	100.0%	19,867,732
UNITED KINGDOM	77.6%	2.4%	10.3%	9.7%	0.0%	100.0%	137,333,023
UNITED STATES	0.0%	12.8%	26.9%	53.9%	6.4%	100.0%	716,767,503
GRAND TOTAL	11.8%	14.9%	21.1%	48.8%	3.5%	100.0%	1,675,938,690

NOTES

¹The IASC Gender Marker is a tool that codes, on a 0–2 scale, whether or not a humanitarian project is designed well enough to ensure that women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally from it or that it will advance gender equality in another way. If the project has the potential to contribute to gender equality, the marker predicts whether the results are likely to be limited or significant. <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

²The IASC Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) project seeks to build capacity of humanitarian actors at country level to mainstream gender equality programming, including prevention and response to gender-based violence, in all sectors of humanitarian response. GenCap's goal is to ensure that humanitarian action takes into consideration the different needs and capabilities of women, girls, boys and men equally. For more information: Inter-Agency Standby Capacity Support Unit <http://gencap.onerresponse.info>

³For more information on the methodology and the donor classification, please see: www.daraint.org

⁴Group 1 donors, “Principled Partners”, are characterised by their generosity, strong commitment to humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, and for flexible, funding arrangements with partners.

⁵Group 2 donors, “Learning Leaders”, are characterised by their leading role and influence in terms of capacity to respond, field presence, and commitment to learning and improving performance in the sector.

⁶Group 3 donors, “Aspiring Actors”, are diverse in terms of their size and capacities, but are characterised by their focus on building strengths in specific “niche” areas, such as geographic regions or thematic areas like preparedness and prevention, and their aspirations to take on a greater role in the sector.

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