

INTER-CLUSTER GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP, SINDHUPALCHOK

Terms of Reference

Context:

Sindhupalchok is the most affected district by the 2015 Earthquake in Nepal causing large-scale damage and casualties. A total of 3557 (1564 females, 1045 males, 508 girls and 440 boys) population lost lives; 1569 people (785 females, 587 females, 112 girls and 85 boys) are injured and 8 People (5 females and 3 males) are still missing as a consequences of large earthquake of 7.9 magnitude on 25 April and earthquake of 7.3 magnitude on 12 May 2015, as well as continuous aftershocks and tremors.

The impact of Earthquake recognized that women and girls suffer disproportionately in natural disasters and their aftermath. Such vulnerability stems from the social, political and economic circumstances of women that exist before the disaster. Their needs are often overlooked in responses to disasters, in the need to restore lost livelihoods and reduce burden of work which often increases due to disaster emergencies.

The Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) findings recognized that the poverty, inequalities, exclusion and discrimination not only shape vulnerabilities of people to disasters but also have a direct bearing on how survivors response to disasters. It requires sustained support and monitoring of protection issues, accompanied by provision of alternative livelihoods, will be crucial to recovery of vulnerable people. It addition to this, the concerns of vulnerable population (representation, leadership, budget allocation and utilization etc) requires to be addressed in the recovery, reconstruction and ongoing development process. It draws the conclusion that women have a unique capacity to drive resilience building of communities and that recovery and reconstruction programmes present an “opportunity to reduce the vulnerability of women and increase gender equality.”¹ Committed to taking forward gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), which formed an important element of the engendered assessment, the PDNA included a commitment to apply the government’s gender responsive budgeting (GRB) principles and practices to all recovery and reconstruction programmes.

According to the Protection Thematic Report² (30th July), female representation is lacking in decision-making committees at the community and site level. A rapid assessment in six districts observed an absence of women from relief coordination and decision-making mechanisms.

In this context, under the leadership of Women and Children Office (WCO) the inter-sector/cluster Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) working group has been conceptualized in Sindhupalchok by the protection sector/working group (former called protection cluster) meeting held on 29 December 2015 to streamlining the coordination and build upon active engagement of all sector actors in response, recovery and reconstruction, preparedness and long-term development interventions in the district. The working group will be guided by the principles of gender equality and social inclusion aimed at improving quality and impact of recovery and promoting disaster risk reduction as well as sustainable development interventions.

¹ PDNA, p. 91.

² UN OCHA Nepal Earthquake Assessment Unit:

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/150730_protection_thematic_report.pdf

Objectives

The main objective of GESI working group is to mainstream gender equality and social inclusiveness in humanitarian actions, recovery and reconstruction and long-term development interventions ensuring the needs of all vulnerable/affected populations – women, men, girls and boys and people from various social backgrounds- are addressed equally and their rights protected and promoted.

The other objectives are:

- To provide technical support to the district level clusters/sectors/working groups and other relevant stakeholders/networks (Women's groups, CSOs, NGOs, UN, Government, etc) to achieve gender responsive in programming results.
- To strengthen inter-sector coordination mechanism to raise GESI issues/concerns to all working groups/sectors,
- To provide a forum for cross learning of good practices, information sharing and joint advocacy by raising gender equality issues with concerned clusters/sectors/working groups and other relevant stakeholder and networks, and
- To avoid duplication and promote inter sectoral services to address gender specific needs in the district.
- To support district level stakeholders to develop practical skills on gender mainstreaming in their interventions.
- Advocacy by raising gender issues with the relevant stakeholders and other network members.

Scope of Working Group

Ensuring Coordination:

- Ensure that a gender analysis, including the collection of sex, age disaggregate data, of the humanitarian context has been carried out and documented for all actors to use in response, early recovery, reconstruction and disaster preparedness;
- Ensure close collaboration and sharing of platforms, joint trainings and referrals of data and information with all sectors including protection working group;
- Build linkage with national gender coordination structure, mechanism and share information so that relevant issues emerging locally are discussed and taken into account at the national level and vice versa;
- Advise the humanitarian and development partners to nominate gender focal points in their respective agencies for sharing information and represent in relevant meetings and platforms etc.

Technical Support:

- Promote the use of available tools, most notably based on the IASC Gender Handbook, to provide guidance on gender mainstreaming to their respective sectors/working groups, and support/advocate for the inclusion of GESI dimensions into various sector/working groups' policies, guidelines and tools;
- Support the humanitarian and development partners to prepare and implement GESI-sensitive monitoring frameworks for each sector/cluster and for the overall humanitarian response and disaster preparedness; (district level indicators sector wise)

- Regularly monitor progress on gender mainstreaming by using IASC Gender Handbook checklist and adopted gender-sensitive monitoring frameworks, in close partnership with IM and M&E specialists or various agencies working in the district;
- Identify and analyse important developments, including needs, gaps, best practices and success stories of multi-cluster concern and raise at the Gender Working Group meetings (or earlier if critical and important);
- Collect issues and provide inputs on key GESI concerns to multiple working groups and raise those issues in ERN and DDRC as well as national Gender Working Group for further advocacy;

Capacity Building:

- Provide orientation and training sessions, as needed, on the gender dimensions of the emergency situation, including disaster preparedness for the humanitarian and development actors;
- Provide relevant information to national GWG for regular Gender Equality Bulletins and Updates highlighting district highlights;
- Support partnership between civil society organizations, the government and the UN/NGO community for GESI in recovery, reconstruction and disaster preparedness.
- Develop (who does what where) template and establish referral mechanism among service providers to address gender needs and other services as well.

Working Modality and Composition:

The GESI Working Group consists of one GESI focal point nominated from each cluster/sector/working group by each sector. The Gender Working Group members are expected to nominate an alternate member to ensure coverage of meetings and follow-up activities as required. The other members of the working group will be the gender advisors/officers of Government agencies, UN Agencies, INGOs and representatives from local NGOs and women's groups. The Gender Working Group is chaired by Women and Children Office and co-chaired by UN Women with the support of other interested agencies.

The Working Group also provide a **multi-stakeholder forum** to share information, coordinate efforts towards shared priorities, and raise attention to key issues in the field of gender equality and social inclusion during the humanitarian response, recovery and reconstruction as well as long term ongoing development interventions.

Regular feedback on key GESI issues raised will be provided to the respective sectors and bring it to the attention of District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC), District Reconstruction and Recovery Network (DRRN) and other relevant authorities/agencies.

UN Women will provide technical support, advice, guidance and analytical support to the Group. Working group meeting takes place on monthly basis.

Continuation of Support

The GESI working group will be led by WCO and continue its efforts to mainstreaming GESI throughout the planning of programmes both in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction phase and continuous development interventions. The group will continue its advocacy for ensuring participation of women and vulnerable communities and their leadership development.