

# Gender Issues in Red Cross and Red Crescent Response to the Tsunami

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## 1. Introduction

The present report summarizes the initial outcomes of an action research project launched by the Organizational Development Department to look at the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) response to the Tsunami from a gender perspective.

The project was initiated against the background of, on the one hand, a growing international consensus on the importance of adopting gender-sensitive approaches in disaster management and, on the other hand, repeated concerns and questions by staff at the Federation Secretariat and Delegations about the feasibility and usefulness of addressing gender issues in emergency and relief response.

The aim of the project is to identify what was possible and what was not possible in terms of addressing gender issues in disaster relief as per commitment of the International Federation<sup>1</sup> and to investigate both the operational and policy implications based on the experiences of the Tsunami. Furthermore, the project is intended to contribute to increased awareness and good practices for gender mainstreaming<sup>2</sup> in RC/RC recovery.

The findings in this report are based on a review and analysis of a wide range of external and internal documents related to the Tsunami operation as well as interviews with colleagues from host and partner National Societies (PNSs) and the Federation Delegation in Indonesia. A field trip to Sri Lanka is still pending for some time later in the year. Observations and analyses from the field thus focus exclusively on Indonesia.

The report is intended to provoke thoughts and to stimulate actions towards a better integration of gender issues in disaster management. It is targeted at the senior management and disaster response coordinators at the Federation Secretariat and Delegations, PNSs and host NSs.

## 2. RC/RC approach to gender issues

The approach adopted by the International Federation is to address gender issues in a culturally sensitive way and to build on the common purpose of NSs such as to benefit the most vulnerable men and women equally, according to their individual needs. The rationale is to improve the quality of RC/RC work by understanding and considering the biological, physical and social differences between men and women.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1999, a Gender Policy was adopted establishing the basis for the Federation Secretariat and individual NSs to ensure that the gender differences are taken into account and dealt with in relation to the core RC/RC programmes: disaster relief, disaster preparedness, health and promotion of humanitarian values.

<sup>2</sup> Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for achieving the International Federation's goal of ensuring that all RC/RC activities whether at NS, Delegation or Secretariat level, benefit men and women equally and encourage the equal participation of men and women. It thus refers to the systematic integration of men and women's respective needs, interests and priorities in all the organization's policies and activities.

***We are not to challenge existing cultural norms***

Often it is recognized that while disasters generally accentuate existing gender inequalities, they also have the potential to alter the sexual division of labor, mainly through changes in household composition, thus presenting opportunities for change.

The aim of RC/RC, however, should not be to take the 'opportunity for change' and to challenge existing norms. The primary aim is to focus on the beneficiaries' immediate needs and vulnerabilities while recognizing the issues surrounding their culture and society. It is in fact extremely important to understand the social and cultural norms; however, the task is not to change them. This approach would help to avoid creating a social or even a political tension, whereas an 'activist' approach to women and gender issues may not always be effective but can, on the contrary, even be counterproductive.

***Gender is also about men***

Women are generally described as the dominant beneficiary group in disaster situations and this may be the case in most instances, especially in the absence of sex-disaggregated data. However, in recent disasters, it has been reported that the majority of victims who lost their lives were women and that the majority of survivors who were men would need special attention.

It is therefore important to examine any situation from both, women's and men's perspectives so that the RC/RC response is based on a more in-depth analysis. Sex-disaggregated data can help.

***Nothing is wrong with addressing women's practical needs***

It is believed not sufficient to consider physical and biological differences between men and women, but that an emphasis needs to be placed on women's strategic needs. This may come from an anxiety of creating an image of women as 'vulnerable victims'.

However, by pointing out to physical (e.g. women's ability to carry a heavy load) and biological (e.g. pregnant women, lactating mothers) differences women will not be portrayed as weak.

***Practical relevance of promoting gender balance***

There is a tendency to understand that gender is about equal numbers of men and women participating in RC/RC work. In that sense the importance of gender issues is well understood, although the solutions have not always been easy.

Most relevant to disaster management, however, are equal opportunities of beneficiaries to access aid and other services. This is the main practical relevance for RC/RC to promote a gender balance. In some societies women often cannot get assistance from male aid workers due to local culture and traditions. By promoting equal participation of male and female volunteers, staff and delegates access will be ensured to both female and male beneficiaries.

### **3. How men and women experienced the Tsunami**

There is evidence that in Aceh province in Indonesia as well as in India and Sri Lanka many more women and children have died in the Tsunami than men. Some of the causes for the disproportionate impact of the disaster on women are similar across regions: many women died because they stayed behind to look for their children and other relatives; men in comparison to women are more skilled in swimming and climbing trees.

Other causes relate to regional differences: women in Aceh were mostly at home when the waves struck, while the men were working in the fields or were out on errands away from the seafront; women in India were waiting on the shore for the fishermen to bring in the catch; in Sri Lanka, the Tsunami hit at an hour when women on the east coast usually took their baths in the sea<sup>3</sup>.

The different death rates among women and men have implications for individuals, their families and communities, and also for the relief and recovery work. The main gender-related issues, during and after the Tsunami, grouped into three broad categories (health-related, economic and social aspects) are presented in Annex 1.

#### 4. Gender issues in the RC/RC response to the Tsunami

The nature of the Tsunami disaster was special in terms of limited relief needs in comparison with the overwhelming scale of the event itself. Despite the catastrophic nature of the disaster, there were a comparatively small number of beneficiaries to serve. Most immediate relief needs were being met by local people, organizations and governments<sup>4</sup>. These factors may have affected the way social issues in general and in particular gender issues were addressed in the RC/RC emergency response. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there are several systemic issues that need to be considered in future RC/RC international disaster response.

	<b>Essential measures</b>	<b>Tsunami response</b>	<b>Reflections and lessons for the future</b>
<b>Assessment</b>	Access to beneficiaries	<p>The assessment of the Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT) in Indonesia and Sri Lanka was limited. The teams played a less operational role than usual and this was due to the unique circumstances created by the Tsunami. Therefore it was not relevant to analyze to which extent gender issues were considered in the FACT assessment.</p> <p>It seems that the host NSs in Indonesia and Sri Lanka had better access to beneficiaries and to available information on the ground than international teams.</p> <p>Overall, the Recovery Assessment Team (RAT) produced much more comprehensive assessments in Indonesia and Sri Lanka than FACT.</p>	<p>Local presence, knowledge and language are crucial for assessing the needs. Therefore the role of the host NS is important for obtaining initial information on special needs of people. There is a need to invest more on national level work to raise gender awareness and provide gender analysis skills and tools.</p> <p>This does not mean that FACT, the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) and other international assessment tools are less important (it is in fact easier to target them, for instance, for gender training). The point is that it seems unrealistic to expect from FACT or RDRT to produce a meaningful gender analysis during early stages (1-2 weeks) of the emergency phase.</p> <p>If the RAT concept is going to be institutionalized, gender issues need to be incorporated in its assessment framework and reporting requirement.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Oxfam International (03/2005). Oxfam Briefing Note: The Tsunami's Impact on Women.

<sup>4</sup> Asia Earthquakes and Tsunamis - Real Time Evaluation Report, March 2005.

	<b>Essential measures</b>	<b>Tsunami response</b>	<b>Reflections and lessons for the future</b>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment team's competence	<p>There was no expert in gender analysis on the FACT teams for both Indonesia and Sri Lanka. However, one expert in psychosocial assessment in each team looked at the different concerns and needs of men and women.</p> <p>In general, there is a tendency to believe that gender issues will be considered if a woman is included in the assessment teams.</p>	<p>The gender balance of FACT, RDRT as well as RAT is important; however, this will not guarantee the expected gender analysis.</p> <p>Including an expert, whether male or female, in assessment teams to focus on special needs of men and women will ensure that adequate attention is paid to social issues.</p>
	Tools for assessment	<p>At national level, pre-Tsunami standard needs assessment formats of some NSs (e.g. PMI) include questions on the special needs of men and women; it is not known whether they were applied.</p> <p>As for FACT, the reporting format includes beneficiary details to be specified by men and women, children and elderly. A one week assessment checklist for FACT requires information about the number of men and women as well as local customs. However, it seems that due to various reasons the teams were unable to use the existing tools and, to some extent, conduct the actual assessment.</p>	<p>The most essential tools (including the newly developed guidelines for emergency assessment) consider gender and other social issues to support FACT, ERU, operation's managers and desk officers. Once applied, they can provide useful information that would help designing gender sensitive long-term relief and/or recovery programmes.</p> <p>However, it is not fully clear whether these tools have been endorsed by all stakeholders and also how consistent their application is.</p> <p>One of the ways to address the issue seems to be the development of minimum level practices for considering social issues in RC/RC international disaster response through a wide consultation process involving operations' managers at PNSs, the Federation Secretariat and Delegations.</p>

	Essential measures	Tsunami response	Reflections and lessons for the future
<b>Assessment</b>	Beneficiary data	<p>The beneficiary data has never been divided by men and women since the beginning of the Tsunami response.</p> <p>During the first weeks of the disaster it would have been extremely complicated to gather and to use sex-disaggregated data, especially in Aceh, due to a number of reasons: a) While official government figures exist, they did not match the reality on the ground; b) People were mobile and did not necessarily want to be registered for fear of being forced into relocation camps; c) Many beneficiaries were staying with host families, which makes it very difficult to assess and calculate; d) Many areas were logistically difficult to access, either due to simple geographic restrictions or TNI/military restrictions e) There was a high competition for beneficiaries among the organizations so that the numbers of beneficiaries who were in need of relief aid and support varied daily.</p> <p>After four weeks the Federation delegation in Indonesia was still unaware that there were more male than female survivors.</p> <p>However, according to feedback from host NSs and Federation delegates in the field, it would have been possible to register beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age after 3-4 weeks of the emergency phase.</p>	<p>No efforts have been made to know, in detail, who the beneficiaries are, while such information was available in the field. In fact, a relief distribution card for each household prepared by the PMI especially for the Tsunami operation requires the number of family members divided by men and women and also requests information about the family members' age. Accordingly, the beneficiary card has a similar format.</p> <p>It is true that the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data will create an 'additional' job. However, this is worthwhile. The practical benefits (e.g. to avoid stereotyping and improve the impact of aid) must be known to desk officers and operation's managers.</p>
<b>Appeal</b>	Capturing special needs of men & women	<p>The Revised Preliminary Appeal<sup>5</sup> considers the special needs of vulnerable groups, e.g. pregnant and elderly women; cultural aspects are addressed, for example, in the context of appropriate clothing<sup>6</sup>.</p> <p>The unavailability of sex-disaggregated data has not been acknowledged.</p>	<p>As the emphasis for the Preliminary Appeal is on basic needs rather than the quality of information, it seems unrealistic to expect gender analysis and the use of sex-disaggregated beneficiary data.</p> <p>However, this can be considered in the Revised Appeal (or in subsequent Operations Updates) which does not face severe time pressures and information constraints.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Asia: Earthquake and Tsunamis; Revised Preliminary Appeal no. 28/2004, December 2004.

<sup>6</sup> An Analysis of the Appeal 28/04 – Emergency & Recovery (Plan&Budget), May 2005, is included in Annex 2.

	Essential measures	Tsunami response	Reflections and lessons for the future
Reporting	Need for analytical information	Although the special needs of vulnerable groups such as pregnant or elderly women are reported, none of the Operations Updates from Jan-May 2005 provide beneficiary data divided by sex and age.	At present, gender and diversity are requested through official reporting formats for the Federation's Operations Updates and Information Bulletin. However, these issues were hardly covered in the reports. If included, gender analysis (based on sex- and age-disaggregated data that can be collected 3-4 weeks after the disaster) would make the key reports more informative and analytical.
Monitoring and evaluations	Analysis on differential impact	TOR for Real Time Evaluation includes the requirement to assess and provide expert opinion on the quality of disaster operation and resource utilisation, in particular, the extent to which concerns such as gender have been adequately included. However, this aspect was missing in the Real Time Evaluation reports on Indonesia and Sri Lanka, prepared in February 2005.	There are several evaluation reports from other organizations on natural disasters that occurred during the last 4-5 years with separate sections on gender analysis (see Annex 3), and it is possible for the Federation to adopt such a practice. This can start from including a question about the impact of a disaster on men and women (and on how the response was able to benefit men and women according to their different needs and capacities) in all TORs for major reviews and evaluations. As for the Tsunami response, the recent initiative to conduct a continuous impact assessment, registering developments at household and community level together with other agencies is a good opportunity to capture issues related to gender, age etc.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

An emergency is characterized by the reduction in people's ability to cope and survive in the time of disaster. The physical, biological and social differences between men and women influence the impact that a disaster has on individuals, households and communities<sup>7</sup>. These differences also influence the options available to cope with the situation and to recover. Therefore gender analysis is required for better understanding both the ways in which disasters affect people and their ability to recover.

There are a range of different rationales for raising gender issues in general and in particular in disaster management, including efficiency based, equity, empowerment, transformative and effectiveness based rationales. As for the Federation, the stage of discussing and arguing about the rationale of addressing gender issues is over. The aim, as defined by the NSs through the process of developing the Federation's Gender Policy, is to ensure that female and male beneficiaries have equal access to and equal benefits from RC/RC services according to their different needs, roles and capacities. The benefit is to avoid a possibly differential impact of interventions and ultimately to increase the quality of assistance.

<sup>7</sup> Examples on how women and men experienced the Tsunami are given in Section 3 and Annex 1.



Once the rationales and benefits of using a gender analysis are recognized, the question remains for organizations as to how this commitment and goodwill can be translated into practice. It begins from introducing an institutional requirement for gender analysis into relevant systems and procedures. As for the International Federation, it concerns primarily the standard operating procedures (SOP) for disaster response that should provide a necessary framework for gender analysis. It was not clear which of the SOPs were applied in the response to the Tsunami. The existing standard SOPs do not adequately address gender issues<sup>8</sup>. There is a need to introduce, or re-introduce, the requirement for gender analysis in all SOPs for international responses and to make sure that they are followed through. At the moment, gender analysis seems to be 'optional'.

There are many operational and other barriers to the implementation of the gender policy in emergencies. It is true that time pressure is enormous on both, the ones that provide emergency relief and those who assess the situation. This is often not properly acknowledged by so called gender 'experts'. However, this does not hold for the time after the emergency response phase.

It was felt possible, after 3-4 weeks of the Tsunami, to collect sex-disaggregated data of beneficiaries. Today such quality data would be extremely important for the recovery programme design. In some villages in Aceh province in Indonesia as well as in Sri Lanka, the majority of people who lost their lives were women. For instance, in Karieng village of Lhoong sub-district in Aceh, assisted by PMI and the Federation, 70-75 % of the survivors are men. According to a man in this village, who lost his family (2 children and wife), it is unacceptable that a women's organization in Aceh<sup>9</sup> is currently deciding to provide seeds to women: *"Firstly, women are not used to do this particular farming without men and secondly, since the majority of survivors in this village are men it is not appropriate just to target women"*. This anecdote demonstrates the need to base the recovery work especially the livelihood recovery on quality data and analysis. Stereotyping prevails when there is a lack of data. Moreover, in the same village it was noted that the majority of women survivors are elderly women who were away working outside the house in chili plantation when the disaster occurred. Age is another dimension which needs to be considered in all recovery programming along with gender issues.

The existing livelihood programmes such as the one run by the British RC<sup>10</sup> in Aceh need to pay special attention to these issues. The strategy to provide opportunities for people to choose the way to recover is good, but not sufficient. It is important to make sure that women equally participate in defining what they need and how they can be assisted. It is often a man who speaks on behalf of the household and therefore special efforts need to be made to ensure that women's voices are heard.

All the key RC/RC documents that are related to the Tsunami recovery have considered women and gender issues. However, there were some inconsistencies in terms of in-depth analysis, clear strategies and concrete actions as to how to address the issues that have been identified. Annex 2 provides an overview of these documents from a gender perspective.

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<sup>8</sup> For example, the pre-Tsunami SOP for the RDRT in the Southeast Asia region has made a reference to gender issues only with regard to the composition of the team ('diversity/gender considerations') which is obviously not sufficient.

<sup>9</sup> There are approximately 25 organizations currently active in Aceh to assist women affected by the Tsunami.

<sup>10</sup> Tsunami Indonesia Operations, PMI/BRCS Livelihoods Programme Proposal, March 2005.

The PNSs can play a crucial role in translating the commitments expressed in the above mentioned documents into specific measures or programmes. In fact, there are already a number of good examples in the field introduced by PNSs such as the requirement for gender analysis to appear on project proposals for recovery led by the Australian RC. Some of these good practices by NSs are presented in Annex 4.

What was not possible in terms of addressing social issues in the relief phase, such as gender and age, is possible and required for the recovery phase.

Finally, most organizations seem to recognize that in the absence of strong institutional procedures and disciplines, it is the personal commitment and belief of their own staff which makes a difference. In the case of the International Federation, it is the personal commitment and previous experiences of individual staff of NSs and Federation delegates that drive gender mainstreaming, and this must be appreciated especially in the absence of clear institutional and operational requirements proposed by the Federation Secretariat.

With regard to concrete suggestions, there have been a number of reviews and projects in the past on gender in RC/RC disaster management and accordingly a number of recommendations have been produced, ranging from issues related to the composition of assessment teams to the development of skills for gender analysis of disaster relief managers. A summary of these recommendations is included in Annex 6. Today some of them are still relevant and need to be implemented. Therefore the present report will not make any additional recommendations. Rather it suggests to take a step-by-step approach and to start by focusing on two points that need **immediate attention**, one of which is specific to the Tsunami response:

	What to do?	Why?	How?
International disaster relief	Develop minimum level practices for considering gender issues in international disaster response	<p>Currently, there seems to be a tendency to keep on coming back to the same question of whether it is useful, required and/or possible to address gender issues when a disaster occurs. There is a need to make sure all stakeholders agree on the most essential commitments and follow them through as a standard routine practice.</p> <p>Why minimum? A realistic set-up of practices for international disaster response is more feasible than having ambitious targets that are likely to become an excuse for not being implemented.</p>	<p><i>Possible step:</i></p> <p>To establish a small group of disaster managers from NSs, the Secretariat and Delegations with the task to develop minimum level practices and to run further consultations within the Federation. It seems that the Operations Support Department at the Secretariat is in the best position to facilitate this process.</p>
Tsunami recovery	Use sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender analysis in programming	<p>Data will help in understanding the specific needs, coping strategies and recovery capacities of individuals and households. However, data collection is not an end-result itself. It is a basis for gender analysis that can be used for effective programming, especially at community level.</p> <p>The key message is: by collecting sex-disaggregated data we will not do 'gender' work, but we will improve the effectiveness and impact of our programmes. Therefore, this is not an option, but it is a requirement.</p>	<p><i>Possible step:</i></p> <p>As a start, to target the existing Technical Working Groups in Indonesia and Sri Lanka and request them to look at gender analysis when approving project proposals.</p> <p>If necessary, organize gender training for Technical Working Group members for data collection and interpretation and gender analysis in general.</p>

## **Annexes**

### **Annex 1**

#### **How men and women experienced the Tsunami**

##### **Health-related aspects**

Among the millions of people affected in the Tsunami region, there were at least 150,000 women who were pregnant at the time the waves struck and who needed urgent medical and nutritional support. With many health facilities, including maternity hospitals, damaged or destroyed, there was a lack of reproductive health supplies such as emergency obstetric kits and safe birthing supplies. Many of the midwives who had previously provided home-based delivery support had been displaced and lacked the equipment to safely deliver babies<sup>11</sup>. Women who were living in temporary shelters were lacking family planning services and contraceptives, which are particularly important in the aftermath of natural disasters for the prevention of unwanted pregnancies or pregnancies that are spaced too close together, as well as the transmission of sexually transmittable infections such as HIV/AIDS<sup>12</sup>.

In addition to the need for access to water, food and medical care women and girls have particular hygiene needs, which are often overlooked in the larger emergency response. Many camps lacked even the most basic sanitation facilities, providing little or no privacy to wash or to go to the bathroom<sup>13</sup>.

Alcohol abuse and domestic violence were reported to grow with the added stress on families, i.e. the loss of men's livelihoods and the mental health implications of the disaster, at the same time increasing the risk of women being abused by spouses or other males<sup>3</sup>. The fear of gender-based and sexual violence impeded the mobility of many of the women who were in charge of obtaining food, water and other necessary provisions for their families<sup>14</sup>.

Many of the survivors, especially women and girls who have lost family members and their homes will need targeted psychological as well as continued social and emotional support<sup>15</sup>. Pregnant women who will have their babies without their husbands, experience additional stress on their mental health, on top of then normal strains associated with pregnancy<sup>3</sup>.

##### **Economic aspects**

The Tsunami has had different effects on the productive activities of women and men, due to a strong division of labour in the affected areas. Among the communities hit the hardest were

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<sup>11</sup> UNFPA (12/2004). Press release: Women survivors of Indian Ocean disaster face urgent needs, warns UNFPA.

<sup>12</sup> UNFPA (01/2005). News feature: Aceh tsunami survivors need more family planning supplies.

<sup>13</sup> UNFPA (01/2005). Press release: Survivors give birth without basic necessities.

<sup>14</sup> UNFPA (01/2005). Press release: UNFPA calls for greater security for women affected by tsunami.

<sup>15</sup> UNFPA (01/2005). News feature: UNFPA-trained volunteers lend social support to grieving Sri Lankan women.

coastal fishermen and farmers from poor fishing villages and small coastal towns. The houses and families of most of the people living inland remained intact; however, their livelihoods were closely connected with those in the destroyed coastal zone. Small entrepreneurs, for example, who used to sell dried fish or who provided specialized equipment to coastal communities now face economic devastation; women who used to process fish have no more fish to process<sup>16</sup>.

In the Tsunami affected regions, many women now have to go into wage or self-employment for the first time, but they lack the skills for employment and need assistance in identifying appropriate job and livelihood opportunities. As more women need to engage in income-generating activities outside the home, they can no longer depend on the extended family support system for child and other care work and thus need support to balance employment and household duties<sup>17</sup>.

Women have reportedly experienced difficulties in accessing benefits, especially cash payment and rations, as families are registered for government and insurance purposes in the man's name. In many cases, widowed women have not received their payments because the benefits are registered in their husband's name<sup>3</sup>.

For many migrant workers, who lost their documents when homes or workplaces were destroyed, it has been difficult to obtain new permit papers. They were thus unable to collect accumulated wages and were often excluded from humanitarian assistance. For the wives and children of missing or killed migrant workers, it has been especially difficult to re-establish their legal status and be protected under the local law<sup>15</sup>.

### **Social aspects**

As a result of the disproportionate death rate among men and women, many men are facing serious difficulties having to provide for themselves and for their families. The experience of being unable to support their families may lead to an increased strain on their mental health through a loss of self-confidence and self-esteem<sup>3</sup>.

Many widows and elderly women are left without people to take care of them and support them. Young women and girls who have lost both their parents have been reported to be married off without their consent either by or with members of their extended families<sup>3</sup>; other reports give account of cases of trafficking in women and girls resulting from a situation of displacement, uncertainty and loss of livelihood<sup>18</sup>.

In order for all these women to organize themselves collectively and to talk openly about their personal health or other problems, they need a place to meet. However, many community centres are closed, and in other cases places for meetings have been denied by the local authorities<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> FAO. Different impacts of the tsunami on men and women.

<sup>17</sup> ILO (03/2005). Address by Ms Christine Evans-Klock, Director of ILO Subregional Office for East Asia: International Women's Day 2005: Making disaster relief work better for women and men.

<sup>18</sup> Division for the Advancement of Women (2005). Policy guidance on trafficking in women and girls.

<sup>19</sup> SSP India (01/2005). Women talk to each other: Notes from the tsunami exchange.

## Annex 2

### **Analysis of key RC/RC documents related to the Tsunami response from a gender perspective**

A review and analysis of key RC/RC documents relating to the Tsunami recovery demonstrates the organization's overall commitment to consider women and gender issues in disaster management. In most documents the importance of gender mainstreaming is highlighted. Several important issues are identified such as the need to supply additional food parcels to pregnant women; the lack of women's underwear; the necessity to register land property in the name of women or as a family asset; the redistribution of relief items due to a culturally determined mourning period which may have caused women to stay in their homes during the first round of distributions; and the women-headed households' need for additional support, employment and income.

However, there is a tendency in all papers to limit gender issues to specific sections while other parts of the documents refer to 'individuals', 'people' and 'families'. Throughout the documents no sex-disaggregated data has been used and the unavailability of this information has not been acknowledged. The word 'gender' has often been used in a vague manner leaving much room for interpretation. A brief analysis of each of these key documents is given below:

#### **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (02/2005). Recovery Assessment Team Report. Indonesia<sup>20</sup>**

The document contains a special section on gender issues, and gender relations are acknowledged as a cross-cutting issue and priority. It is being recommended that the needs and capacities of women and men should be incorporated in each programme at different levels, assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; that gender sensitive strategies should include cultural and religious aspects of the local communities; that a more equal participation of women and men should be achieved in the programming process; and that training in gender mainstreaming should be integrated into all training events for staff and volunteers.

With regard to specific aspects of gender consideration, the report highlights the areas of:

- *health and care*, in particular the aim to provide psychosocial support to women, men and children within affected communities, to promote the participation of volunteers of all ages and both sexes in community-based health and social services and to recruit female and male health and social care professionals with skills in planning, training and public health;

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<sup>20</sup> The RAT report for Indonesia is the result of a revision of rehabilitation/recovery needs in affected communities and determines relevant recovery programming for components of the Movement for the next 12 month period. The assessment aims to build on the lead role of the PMI and to provide input for a clear plan that linked the emergency relief with longer-term programmes focussing on disaster risk management activities.

- *water and sanitation*, i.e. the integration of Wat-San activities with other areas such as housing and preventive health care and the involvement of women and men volunteers who will work as peer volunteers within their communities;
- *rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses*, where it is being recommended that registration of land property goes in the name of women or as a “family asset”
- *disaster risk management*, which encourages community participation with an emphasis on gendered perspectives within local cultural norms;
- *and livelihood security*, i.e. the planning of livelihood recovery assistance which should incorporate and use gender perspectives and participatory methodologies for assistance definition.

Although gender issues are given due attention and are included in most programme sectors, the needs assessment remains undifferentiated and is not based on sex-disaggregated data. Thus, the assessment failed to acknowledge the fact that the majority of survivors were men and that this aspect needs to be reflected in recovery programmes.

### **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (02/2005). Recovery Assessment Team Report. Sri Lanka<sup>21</sup>**

With regard to the overall RC/RC response in Sri Lanka, the report acknowledges that initial information and assessments made do not reflect the gendered dimension as required by the Federation’s policy framework in disasters and that a stronger gender sensitisation will be required in the next phases. The subsequent Recovery Action Plan specifically outlines gender-related issues with regard to health, i.e. a technical assessment of mother and child health care, especially for the displaced population; with regard to disaster management, i.e. specific interventions in support of marginalized groups, e.g. women, children, elderly and the disabled people; with regard to the area of construction, i.e. the consideration of social needs including gender in housing reconstruction; and with regard to critical issues such as in the case of discrimination and violence against women.

However, there is a lack of information as to how these issues in various sectors will be translated into concrete action. The leadership training, under the Organizational Development programme, that will provide special opportunities for women, appears to be the only activity clearly reflected in the sectoral plans of action attached to the report.

### **Asia Earthquake & Tsunami: Regional Strategy and Operational Framework Draft Proposal for Discussion at Hong Kong Forum (02/2005)<sup>22</sup>**

The Regional Strategy and Operational Framework re-establishes gender and gender sensitisation as one of the Movement’s vital cross-cutting issues which should be present in all relevant assessment tools and programme planning frameworks. Moreover, “gender participation and equity” will be included in a coordinated development framework and will

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<sup>21</sup> This RAT report presents findings related to the recovery programming for the RC in Sri Lanka for a 12 month period, incorporating the role of the Sri Lanka Red Cross within the Movement response and linking emergency relief with longer-term disaster risk management activities.

<sup>22</sup> The Regional Strategy and Operational Framework (RSOF) was discussed and agreed at the RC/RC Tsunami Response Forum in Hong Kong (March 2005), bringing together representatives of 38 national societies, the Maldives government, the Federation and ICRC and selected UN agencies. Its aim is to ensure effective long-term recovery programmes through flexible and well coordinated action as appropriate with communities, national authorities and international actors in the region.

thus be part of all strategic, operation and technical programme planning, resourcing and staffing.

**South/Southeast Asia and East Africa: Earthquake and Tsunamis (Appeal 28/04) - Emergency & Recovery (Plan & Budget) 06 May 2005<sup>23</sup>**

Gender-related implications for recovery programming are addressed in this Appeal for three countries in the South and Southeast Asian region, but not for any country in East Africa.

The Southeast Asia Regional Plan of Action considers gender as one of the Movement's key issues in disaster and health-related analysis, planning and operations. The organizational development programme includes training on gender sensitization. And the indicative plans for disaster management address "gender" to reduce the vulnerability of local communities. However, the meaning of 'gender' in this context remains unclear, as is often the case in other documents.

In Thailand and Sri Lanka, strong emphasis is being placed on the rapid restoration of livelihoods by providing fishermen, carpenter, tailor and other craftsmen with essential equipment and tools. Women in Thailand will be engaged in developing and improving livelihoods skills and establishing new enterprises; and women-headed households in Sri Lanka will be assured of access to income-generating activities, i.e. support for small businesses. However, while the planning for the restoration of men and women's livelihoods is well-elaborated, other gender-related issues such as for example consultation with women for housing reconstruction, prevention of gender-based violence and/or the special needs of men and women for psychosocial support are not mentioned. It is unclear whether these issues are of no priority or whether they have not been adequately covered.

In India, local resources were mobilized specifically addressing the relief needs of women and children. Gender issues will furthermore be taken into consideration in all sectors identified for medium- to long-term recovery, livelihoods, reconstruction, disaster management, health, water and sanitation, psycho-social support, information/reporting, branch development/organizational development, with emphasis on financial and resource management. Although the gender dimension will thus be included in all main service sectors in India, no specific plans or indicators for each sector have been established.

The only sex-disaggregated information given in this document is the description of the Bangladesh RC disaster management programme. There are 33,120 volunteers, 27,300 men and 5,520 women, working on warning, evacuation, rescue, first aid and emergency relief work in the coastal districts.

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<sup>23</sup> The South/Southeast Asia and East Africa Emergency & Recovery Appeal is a plan of action for the Federation's response to the 10 countries most affected by the tsunami disaster. It covers the short- and long-term recovery programming and budget for the two-year period 2005-2006 and with indicative figures for the period 2007-2010. It provides an overview of the effort by the International Federation's membership, the interventions of many RC/RC societies directly to the host NSs in the Tsunami affected countries and also the support of the ICRC.

## **Annex 3**

### **Lessons learned by other organizations from previous disasters**

There are several evaluation reports from other organizations on natural disasters that occurred during the last 4-5 years with separate sections on gender analysis. Lessons to be learned from these reports include:

#### **Emergency Response to Hurricane Mitch Disaster (1999)**

*Evaluation of the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA)*

- Methods used by partner organizations for identifying beneficiaries, their needs and for delivering relief supplies were characterized by community-oriented, gender-sensitive criteria; gender-balanced assistance teams; consideration of special needs of women and children.

#### **Bangladesh 1998 Flood Appeal: An Independent Evaluation (2000)**

*Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC)*

- Provision of women's sanitary napkins.
- Sanitary toilets set up at centralised locations.
- Vegetable seeds distributed free of cost and often to women involved in post-flood child nutrition or 'cash-for-work' programmes.
- Provision of loans to groups of landless and poor women primarily by NGOs.
- Provision of extra nutrition to pregnant and lactating women.
- Provision of a sari included in food ration (women with 1 sari often have to remain in wet clothes).
- Assurance of the security of women against gender-based and sexual violence.
- Women included in disaster committees, on community and district levels.
- Oxfam and NGO partners targeting cash-for-work programmes towards women, also elderly women by engaging them in child care on the construction sites.
- Fixing quotas for women as participants to ensure that gender perspectives are promoted when programmes are implemented by different players was recommended.
- TOR requires that the evaluation team seeks the active participation of men and women to give their views as to the assistance provided etc. for programme evaluation.

#### **India Cyclone Appeal Funds (2000)**

*Independent Evaluation of Expenditure of DEC*

- Efforts undertaken by NGOs to try to set up women's self-help groups.
- Gender consideration in agencies' emergency assessments; special components for women included in relief provision and systematical monitoring.



### **India Earthquake Appeal Funds (2001)**

#### *Independent Evaluation of Expenditure of DEC*

- All team members should be gender aware, and a reasonable gender balance of the evaluation team is desirable.
- The importance of informal chats to women, children and other groups that were difficult to access was highlighted during the research.
- CARE provided insurance through the Self Employed Women's Association to 5000 vulnerable women.
- Concern had asked women to form a committee, allowed them to identify the neediest people and then to distribute blankets themselves.
- Lack of female researchers limited access to certain groups, esp. female Muslims.
- Culture and custom: If women are not expected to take part in village meetings, should that be accepted? Example: Women couldn't queue in a public place, so they received no relief items.
- In societies where there are problems with the legal status of women, widowhood should be expected to be an important issue, e.g. difficulties to establish rights of ownership to house-plots without assistance.
- Overall perception: discrimination, i.e. more relief went to those with strong political connections, and less to lower castes, women migrant groups and minorities, esp. Muslims.

### **Mozambique Floods (2000)**

#### *Independent Evaluation of DEC*

- Provision of insecticide-treated mosquito-nets to families, as women and children are at greatest risk from malaria (Oxfam decided that rather than providing nets, it would be better to conduct an extensive public education campaign to emphasize the vulnerability of pregnant women and children to malaria; also to avoid the risk that the male head of household would use the net, rather than the intended beneficiaries).
- Action Aid found that distributing shelter kits, instead of supplying kits and labor, placed an extra burden on women who often had to build the houses, while the men went away in search of paid work.
- There were constraints for women without husbands, widows and the elderly because of a lack of men to help construct latrines.

### **Response to Southwest Bangladesh Floods : October 2000 - mid 2001**

#### *Evaluation of the Department for International Development, Bangladesh (DFID-B)*

- TOR of this evaluation requires that at least one member of the review team should have experience in gender analysis.

## **Annex 4**

### **Good practices by NSs**

Several good practices of partner and host NSs have emerged in Indonesia on how to include gender issues into disaster recovery. The collection of such good practices will continue as part of the current project and it will be extended to other Tsunami affected countries including Sri Lanka.

These examples are to contribute to the overall consideration of gender issues in RC/RC recovery and to promote similar good practices of including a gender perspective in RC/RC future disaster response and recovery.

#### **Australian Red Cross**

The Project Proposal Template for Tsunami Related Projects (02/2005) describes the requirements that must be addressed in any project proposal for it to be considered by the Australian Red Cross. Gender is included in the format as a desirable issue within the cross-cutting themes and principles. Questions that emerge in this regard concern the process that was used to analyze the impact of the project by gender; whether project purpose and outputs differentiate by gender; whether performance indicators allow monitoring of activities and outputs by gender; and whether the beneficiaries are specified by men and women.

An example of this template being used comes from the Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) and Australian RC that developed a project proposal on Support for Palang Merah Indonesia Blood Services with a section on gender issues. The proposal presents useful background information, for example on the increased percentage of women in the labour force, the decline of female illiteracy and the establishment of women's associations in sub-districts and communities to involve and educate women at grass-roots level. For the realization of the project's first objective, to increase the quality management of blood services, the proposal draws upon the traditional role of women by supporting their contribution as caregivers and health providers in blood service training and implementation.

#### **Consortium of Netherlands and Australian RC**

The role of women as the main caregivers and providers of health care is also acknowledged in a project proposal by the Consortium of Netherlands and Australian RC on Support of PMI Community Based First Aid Services. After giving a brief summary of the same background information presented in the proposal on blood services support, this project which especially targets vulnerable groups in rural areas, including women, elderly men and children, recognizes that in line with the women's community role is the need for women to actively participate in decision making and implementation of any projects that impact on their health and the health of their families.

### **Danish Red Cross**

The project on Psycho-social support Programme for People affected by the Earthquake and Tsunami in Indonesia initiated by the Danish Red Cross with the aim to reduce the suffering, psychosocial effects and risk of long lasting mental disorder of affected people of the Tsunami disaster who lost family members and friends and social and economic livelihood. Although the numbers of beneficiaries are not divided by sex, parents and caretakers, especially single mothers and fathers are identified as one of the particularly vulnerable groups in need of specific psychosocial intervention and their needs considered throughout the proposal.

It bases its rationale on findings of the needs assessment carried out by the Federation's FACT team together with expert support on psychosocial issues from the Danish Red Cross. The assessment distinguishes between the different psychosocial needs of men and women and recommends the immediate application of a psychological recovery programme in Meulaboh, especially for the children.

The planned activities of the operation include the provision of hygiene materials to women in view of tackling their sense of loss of human dignity, as well as ensuring proper lighting in places where women are at risk of sexual harassment, e.g. at toilets or washing places. Furthermore, possibilities will be explored to develop activities that are culturally appropriate for men and women, and to involve men in the reconstruction of houses, fishing nets and boats. The expected result is that men and women in evacuation centres or host families within the selected areas have been offered activities to reduce their feelings of distress, and the psychosocial consequences of and have been actively involved in activities.

### **Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) - Indonesian Red Cross**

The Disaster Risk Management Programme (05/2005), which is aimed at reducing disaster-related losses and sufferings of vulnerable communities, includes gender training as part of its activities to strengthen preparedness and emergency response capacities of PMI in Nangroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) and North Sumatra.

## **Annex 5**

### **Earlier initiatives and recommendations on gender in RC/RC disaster management**

In the past, several initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen the RC/RC disaster management through improved gender-sensitivity. As a result of including gender issues in the review<sup>24</sup> of the Federation's response to the hurricanes Georges and Mitch, the Colombia earthquake and the Venezuela floods that struck Latin America and the Caribbean in 1998 and 1999, measures were identified in order to ensure that the specific needs and coping strategies of men and women in emergencies are understood and addressed in needs assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation. With regard to institutional procedures it has thus been recommended:

- to include a social/gender analysis person in the assessment teams
- to collect sex-disaggregated data as well as to use participatory methods in needs assessments
- to include the responsibility of 'gender auditing' assessment checklists and other tools used at the assessment stage in the operational manager's job description
- and to develop mechanisms for accountability for gender analysis, e.g. by including the requirement of information on differential impacts of the operations on men and women in the Terms of References (TOR).

Furthermore it has been noted that tools being adapted and developed should be 'easy to use' to support stakeholders in applying gender analysis across all stages of the project planning cycle. A separate training programme on gender in disaster management should be developed, while simultaneously integrating gender across all other training programmes. Gender-sensitive recruitment practices would allow for the balance of men and women at various levels within the Federation Secretariat and delegations and the sensitivity of those being recruited towards gender and social issues.

While this review highlights issues for consideration in improving gender sensitivity in disaster preparedness and response at the international level, an example of how to better reach women beneficiaries and thus to provide more effective disaster management on a local level is presented by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society's (BDRCS) strategy of recruiting female volunteers in its disaster management programme<sup>25</sup>. By having more female volunteers, the BDRCS expected its disaster management programmes not only to reach more female beneficiaries, but to ensure gender-sensitive programme planning and to increase opportunities for women to fulfil their potential and ensure their full participation in programmes and the RC/RC organization. Thus, in the 1998 floods, the newly recruited female volunteers were active in the disaster preparedness squads by:

- preparing communities for disaster
- assisting in the assessment of needs

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<sup>24</sup> Review of major operations in the Americas. Hurricane George, Hurricane Mitch and Venezuela Floods.

<sup>25</sup> Bangladesh Red Crescent Society: The Recruitment of Female Volunteers to Respond to Disasters. (1999).

- providing health education and first aid by assisting in distributions and in organizing the 'women's queue'
- and fundraising locally for goods and cash.

Lessons that were relevant to the BDRCS programme's success include the use of a quota; the need to consider ways to support female volunteers with their household and family responsibilities; the importance of recruiting female staff at branch and headquarters level; and the advantage of assistance from the external environment for the recruitment of the women.

An analytical study on whether the use of sex-disaggregated data is a feasible and useful means to enhance the Federation's disaster management is described in the report on Gender Issues in Disaster Response<sup>26</sup>. It analyses all the key tools used at different stages of the Federation's Appeal process and assesses the extent to which each stage is limited by the pressures of time and information constraints. The report provides recommendations, which focus on what is considered to be feasible and appropriate in view of the findings of the analysis and elaborates on measures that specifically support the collection of sex-disaggregated data:

- Under the two-step Appeal process, the Revised Appeal – which is launched after the first Appeal with only minimal information – should be based on rigorous assessment, i.e. it should support the collection of better quality information including sex-disaggregated data and the use of participatory methods.
- In order to integrate gender issues across all stages of the project planning cycle, it is important to gender audit information collection tools and reporting formats such as the Revised Appeal, the Regional Assistance/Country Assistance Strategy formats and the Annual Appeal.

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<sup>26</sup> Gender Issues in Disaster Response. Phase One Report. (08/2000). The study was commissioned by the Federation Secretariat and managed by the British Red Cross.

## **Annex 6**

### **List of interviewed or consulted people**

#### **Federation Secretariat and Delegations:**

Ibrahim Osman, Director Policy and Relations  
Stephen McAndrew, Operations Support Department, Geneva  
Ian Wilderspin, Head of Disaster Risk Management Unit, Bangkok  
Holger Leipe, Head of Operations for Aceh Tsunami Disaster  
Bernd Schell, Former Head of Operations for Aceh Tsunami Disaster  
Viv Lusted, Health Coordinator, Banda Aceh  
Alain Dardel, Logistics PMI Support, Banda Aceh  
Igor Dmitryuk, Logistics Coordinator, Banda Aceh  
MD Latifur Rahman, Disaster Management Delegate, Jakarta  
Philips Charlesworth, Head of Office Medan  
Axel Pawolek, Federation FACT Team Leader for Sri Lanka  
Husnur Esthiwahyu, Relief Officer, Banda Aceh

#### **PNSs**

Josh, Logistics Delegate, American RC  
Brian Clark, Blood Project Technical Advisor, Australian RC  
Natasha Davidson, Head of Delegation, Australian RC  
Vu Minh Hai, DM, Consultant, British RC  
Fiona McSheehy, Technical Advisor, British RC  
Peder Damm, Country Coordinator, Danish RC  
Christophe Perruchot, French RC  
John Gelissen, Liaison Delegate, Netherlands RC  
Unni Borchgrevink, Representative, Norwegian RC

#### **PMI – Indonesian Red Cross Society**

Arifin Muh Hadi, CBDP Programme Coordinator, Jakarta  
Irman, Disaster Response Manager, Headquarters, Jakarta  
Rukman, Disaster Response Officer, Jakarta  
Lita Sarana, Health and Social Service Division, Jakarta  
Juliati Susilo, Head Human Resources Division, Jakarta  
Rina Utami, Youth Sub-division, Jakarta  
Fauzi Husaini, Volunteer, Aceh Chapter  
Pack Bustari Mansyur, Chairman, Aceh Chapter  
Ms. Norhaina, Volunteer, Aceh, Chapter  
Ms. Syaribuni, Volunteer, Aceh Chapter  
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Uswatun Hasanah, Board member, Banda Aceh Branch  
FG Marti Zebua, Chairman of Nias Branch  
Mr. Harifa, Operations Manager, Nias Branch  
Nasir Khan Abdul Rahman, MRCS Delegate, Malaysian RC

#### **Other Organizations**

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