Addressing Gender based Violence (GBV) in Humanitarian Situations in the Asia and the Pacific Region

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Overview

- Context
- Unpacking the terms
- Models of intervention
- Good practices
- Resources
- Q&A
BACKGROUND: THREATS IN THE REGION

- Cyclones
- Floods
- Landslides
- Drought
- Earthquakes
- Conflict/Complex Emergencies
In humanitarian situations

Families and communities are separated

Mechanisms for protection and service delivery such as health, education, and police are disrupted

Community support systems and protection mechanisms break down
Deep rooted gender inequality

Discriminatory socio-cultural norms and practices

High rates of Violence Against Women/Gender Based Violence (worsens in times of disasters and conflicts)

Harmful practices (pre-natal sex selection, child marriage, honor killing)

World Vision study found that out of 25 countries with high rates of child marriage, majority are affected by conflicts and disasters

P4P report found that a quarter of men in Asia-Pacific admit to committing rape

UNFPA study showed that in the Pacific, approx 60-80% of all women reported experiencing physical or sexual violence
Humanitarian Situations are not Gender Blind

• Conflict and natural disasters have different impacts on women, girls, boys and men
• Women and girls are disproportionately affected
  • In Myanmar, 51% of women said they felt insecure when they left the camp in the Kachin conflict-affected areas
  • In Pakistan, following the 2011 floods, 52% of surveyed communities reported that privacy and safety of women and girls was a key concern
• In some armed conflict settings, sexual violence has been used as a strategic weapon of war/conflict
• Crises can provide opportunities to influence gender norms
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
Gender-based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE)
Defining GBV

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.
Focus on Gender

- Social construction of difference:
  - Between men and women
  - Between different categories of men and of women (age, economic status, race, etc.)

- Subject to variations in time and space:
  - Gender order isn’t fixed or inevitable (considers social change in response to events, trends and movements)
  - Neither men nor women can be said to have exclusive, essential characteristics

- Built on power relations:
  - Decision-making and political power
  - Access to and control over economic resources
The Term “Gender-based Violence”…

- Moves beyond describing the act to acknowledging its primary underpinning factor
- Promotes the inclusion of men, women, boys and girls in preventing and responding to GBV
- Encourages action to focus on the societal and relational contexts in which violence occurs
How does GBV Manifest in Disasters?

1. Random
   - By-product of the collapse in social and moral order
   - Taking advantage of the lack of checks and balances, of the overall chaos of the situation

2. Opportunistic
   - Means to an end
   - Vulnerabilities exploited in the context of meeting basic needs
How does GBV Manifest in Disasters?

3. Systematic
   • Carried out to destabilize populations and destroy bonds
   • Aim is often for maximum humiliation and shame for survivor and her family

4. Chronic
   • Escalated levels of certain types of GBV during crisis remain acute (or even increase) in recovery/peacetime
   • May be a brief perceived drop immediately post crisis as GBV moves more into the private sphere
The GBV Tree

- Breakdown in community/family support systems and family separation
- Changes in social norms/social structures
- Institutions such as health, police broken down or non-existent
- Vulnerabilities of certain higher-risk groups
- Physical environment: site layout, local environment

Intimate partner Violence
Physical Assault
Forced Marriage
Psychological Abuse
Rape
Gender Discrimination
Abuse of Power
Lack of respect for/belief in human rights for all
“GBV is a life-threatening protection issue primarily affecting women and children. All humanitarian actors have a responsibility to take action from the earliest stages of an emergency to prevent GBV and provide appropriate assistance to survivors”.

--IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings, 2005--
One case is too many..
Addressing GBV in Disasters
Addressing GBV requires a comprehensive approach

**PREVENTION**
Activities and actions that target the root causes and contributing factors of GBV

**RESPONSE**
Actions and services that target the consequences of GBV
Referrals within the Multi-Sectoral Model

PROTECTION

- HEALTH
- LEGAL/ JUSTICE
- SURVIVOR Centered
- PSYCHO-SOCIAL*
- SAFETY/ SECURITY

*Includes social reintegration and livelihood initiatives
GBV Guiding Principles

- Respect
- Confidentiality
- Safety & Security
- Non-discrimination

- How can we respect survivors? What are the links between the guiding principles?
Models of Intervention
Establish Multisectoral Coordination for GBV in Emergencies
Existing GBV Coordination Mechanisms in Asia Pacific

- Pakistan
- Afghanistan (co-lead by AIHCR)
- Nepal (Chair by DoWC)
- Myanmar
- Indonesia (in process to co-lead by MoWE CP and MoSA)
- Philippines (Chair by DSWD)
- Mongolia (co-lead by center for VAW)
- Pacific (Regional in Suva and Vanuatu and Solomon)
- Sri Lanka (phased out in 2012)
- Bangladesh (informal coordination)
- Regional for Asia Pacific in Bangkok (IASC network)
➢ Set up Women Safe Spaces in areas of Displacement
Distribute Dignity Kits for Women and Girls

UNFPA DIGNITY KITS

Nepal Earthquake

When disaster strikes, UNFPA ensures that the reproductive health needs and protection concerns of women and girls are integrated into emergency responses.

One of the ways in which UNFPA supports women and girls in the aftermath of natural disasters is by providing “dignity kits.”

- Maxi
- Sweater
- Shawl
- Petticoat
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Comb
- Underwear
- Towel
- Sari/Dhoti
- Reusable sanitary napkin
- Bath soap
- Cloth washing soap
- Nail cutter
- Flashlight with batteries
Establishing multisectoral referral mechanisms for GBV

Conduct assessments and monitor the protection situation

Developing/re-establishing documenting and reporting systems

Train service providers such as Health care providers on clinical management of rape and provide post-rape kits, and police and security sector on GBV and protection

Developing alliances with other sectors to mainstream gender and GBV adequately
Gender & GBV mainstreaming
Toilet arrangement
Fire wood collection
Water and sanitation
Camp Management
Food distribution
Group Exercise

- You are in the midst of a major flood response and initial assessments show that women and girls are an increasing risks of abuse given they lack adequate shelter, sanitation facilities, and many single female headed households are unable to access food distribution. Other reports highlight that due to absence of female doctors and distant location of medical facilities, many women are not accessing medical facilities.
- The technical advisor from your country office has agreed to meet with you, but he/she is very busy with the response so only has 5 minutes to talk to you.
- Using as reference the sector checklist, define what are the three key priorities for that sector to adequately integrate gender and GBV.
Group Exercise

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- Role play with the person next to you, one acting as the technical advisor and the other as the gender & diversity focal point. (5 mins)
Country Examples:

*Good practices and Challenges*
Philippines Typhoon Haiyan
Video: Surviving Haiyan: A Celebration of Women's Resilience

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOW3Z_obj0
Nepal Earthquake
Regional Challenges and Opportunities
### Challenges

- Limited capacity of services and systems to address GBV, particularly in humanitarian crisis
- Sensitivity, at community and government level, particularly in conflicts
- Natural disasters with ongoing population movement, limiting follow up of GBV survivors
- Pre-existing gender inequalities and prevalence of GBV
- Limited prioritization of GBV in the humanitarian agenda, specially at the onset of the disaster

### Opportunities

- Greater engagement of government in disaster management
- Strong women’s networks and national organisations
- Existing agenda on Gender equality, primarily related to development
- Regional processes such as Beijing +20 review, CEDAW, WPS, DRR
- Existing lessons learned on models to address GBV, tools and mechanisms in the region and global practices
Resources
Q&A

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