

# Gender Equality in Humanitarian Aid

## Fast Facts

### ***What is gender equality?***

Gender equality, or equality between women and men, refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances is not governed or limited by whether they are female or male.

### ***Why does gender matter in crisis situations?***

Women, girls, boys and men have different needs, capabilities and constraints. Emergencies have different impacts on women and men and often change households' dynamics. Additionally, disasters and emergencies tend to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. The objective is to assist all groups – not just the advantaged – in a quicker and more sustainable recovery.

If we want to ensure that effective assistance is provided, we need to understand the different roles and responsibilities, needs, capacities and constraints of women and men in the affected population. Otherwise, how will we know who we are assisting and what their needs are?

Thinking about the gender dimension of your work improves what you do, how you do, and what effect you have.

### ***How can gender equity be accomplished in humanitarian response situations?***

The first step toward gender equity is gender analysis. Including gender in your needs analysis allows you to understand who in the population is affected by the crisis; what they need, and what they can do for themselves.

If humanitarian interventions are not planned with gender equity in mind, not only do the chances of doing greater harm increase, but the opportunity to support and promote equality in livelihoods between women and men can be lost.

### ***What is gender analysis?***

Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources, their roles and the constraints they face relative to each other.

To ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by humanitarian interventions and that where possible greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted, integrate a gender analysis into the humanitarian needs assessment and in all work assessments or situational analyses.

### ***Why are sex-disaggregated data important in crisis situations?***

Unless we know who is affected – women, girls, boys or men – and who among them is the most at risk, the services we provide may be off-target. Data on the population affected by the crisis should always be broken down by age and sex and other relevant factors such as ethnicity or religion.

Good data and good analysis are key to identifying which groups are being marginalized and for what reasons. Such data are not only essential for a review of the humanitarian needs, they also send a powerful signal: being counted shows that each individual is recognized and included and can exercise her or his rights.