

## **Concurrent Facilitated Sessions: Engendering Complex Emergencies**

### **DISCUSSION NOTES: Working Group 5**

**Tagore Room**

**Leaders:** Marion Pratt and Stuart Katwikirize

**Facilitator:** Sharon McHale

**Rapporteur:** Karen Smith

**Participants:** Nga, Richard, Barbara, Marcella, Betty, Juniper, Sahana, Eugenia, Maigee

Eugenia – raised a question between the difference in the title of the presentation, which included “Complex Humanitarian Emergency”, and the workshop’s title of “Complex Emergency”. After discussion it was agreed that there is a difference but that the participants agreed to disagree.

Internally Displaced Persons – displaced persons that move within their own country’s borders.

Refugees are populations that have crossed borders.

Each group has their own set of legalities and international issues.

Marion and Stuart discussed the challenges that are faced by refugees, IDPs, and the humanitarian aids workers when camps are initially set up. Through and accurate (as possible) registration of refugees into the camp is absolutely a vital process that needs to take place by the humanitarian agencies. This is necessary for camp security, sanitation, and fair distribution of resources.

Multiple agency coordination is usually difficult the first few days. Usually the lead agencies are the WFP and the ICRC.

Sharon noted that it is important to identify strong community leaders in the initial phases of a camp in order to more rapidly identify the vulnerable populations.

Betty pointed out that this can be a precarious practice for the men are usually the more mobile members of a household and they miss use the provided funds or supplies. This can be especially risky when a camp is set up near a town and the camp residents have access to taxis, and shops that the normally would not frequent. An additional problem is that the refugees, community leaders, or even governments will inflate the numbers of those that are in need of assistance in order to try and gain additional funds or supplies.

Inappropriate relief distribution mechanisms have the potential to undermine women’s traditional areas of authority such as the distribution and production of food and family health care.

Sharon - Camps should be seen as a last resort for a humanitarian agency but if it is necessary camp set up is very vital. The placing of water points, situation of shelter and the safety of public spaces for women are important factors in planning. Women need to feel safe during daily activities such as firewood gathering and water collection.

Stuart: During CHEs, women in particular are prone to adopt negative strategies, due to relative lack of status, minimal control of assets, and the fact they are in control of the coping measures including the disposal of assets like livestock and land

Implementing agencies try to adhere to the SHERE standards and guidelines that are called upon by funders, but it is not only as possible. SHERE guidelines are a standard set of humanitarian guidelines that most humanitarian agencies and governments have adopted during an emergency response.

During war and refugee setting the incidences of violence against women and rape dramatically increase. Problems associated include increase in HIV/AIDS or other STDs, unwanted pregnancies, and rejection of women and girls from their families.

Barbara – Where is “away” when the family rejects a female? Sharon says that sometimes extended family members take them in but often the women try and move to other areas of their country to try and seek another life. Babies are the result of rape are sometimes killed, rarely adopted, but often religious or NGO organization try and educate women in order to accept and keep their children.

During times of crisis, access to health services often becomes restricted or completely unavailable.

Violence towards women and children the most difficult and challenging issue that are faced by agencies and refugees in emergency operations.

### **Topic List for Group Discussion:**

#### **Logistics:**

- Gender and Site Planning
- Gender and Activity Planning
- Gender and Negative Space and Time Use

#### **Psycho-Social/Cultural:**

- Gender and Negative Coping Strategies
- Gender and CHE related To Human Rights Abuse

#### **Institutional:**

Aid Agency Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming during CHE responses

- Policy, Practice, Constraints, Opportunities, Recommendations
- Training

1. Timing and measurement of success of training are currently difficult to implement.
2. Differences in Military and NGO training sometimes run against each other. In the current climate there has been greater amounts of sharing of training and resources but often conflicting interests will be counterproductive in establishing partnership.

Marion cited an example where in Liberia the local populations markedly noticed a great improvement in behavior of peacekeeping troops that had received gender sensitivity training and it was demonstrated in their interactions and behavior. This was in comparison to a previous war where there had been problems with the peacekeeping troops and the local female population.

- Awareness

Sahana – problem with the designation of who is a head of household in receiving resources.

- Sensitivity

Richard mentioned the example of the problems that the Australian military had when they were sent to East Timor. They had not received any gender training and the mission was a disaster. The whole mission was pulled and replaced with peacekeepers that had received the training.

- Best Practices

Is there a way to engendering communication or reporting of events. Getting reporters gender training.

- Human Resources (High turnover)
  1. Paid vs. Volunteer
  2. Recruitment and Retention practices

Recruitment must be careful because aid workers are now more and more being seen as targets.

### **Additional Topics:**

- Gender and CHE Demographics
- Gender and Needs Assessment
- Gender and Access to Emergency Entitlements
- Gender in Disempowerment during Emergencies
- Gender and Post CHE Demographics
- Gender and Emergency Health Services Aid Agency Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming during CHE responses.

Topic of Discussion decided by the group was to tackle the Institutional problems of engendering the first response staff, local staff, donors, and governments.

Betty – Brought up the point that if the trend of the first responders would continue to be men from NGOs, IGO, and governments that we will have to put a greater emphasis on gender training for those men.

When discussing which one organization or agency that has a strong gender component and it was realized that each agency varies from country to country and program to program.

Stuart suggested that for training that instead of each organization train individual staff that regional SHERE training occur.

A major problem with staff receiving training or information is that usually practitioners do not have time to read all the reports or unless the training is mandatory people do not feel compelled to attend.

Sahana – brought up an example where the Indian government during the time of partition provided housing for women who were raped. The housing was provided for the women for their lifetime and the women were treated as widows. This model could perhaps be used as a case study for other situations where women have been subjected to violence.