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Gender in Emergencies Guidance Note
Gender Action Plan

This guidance note provides information on the Gender Action Plan – what it is, who prepares it and when, and how to develop, monitor and report on the GAP. Country office staff who have been tasked with preparing and/or reviewing Gender Action Plans are the target audience for this guidance note. Resources and information on accessing technical support are also included.

What is a Gender Action Plan?

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) is both a tool and a process for planning a gender sensitive response. The GAP tool draws on the *ADAPT and ACT collectively to ensure gender equality* developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), as well as lessons learned by CARE and its peer agencies in delivering a gender sensitive response.

CARE introduced the GAP in 2012 which soon became a mandatory requirement for receiving funding from the CI Emergency Response Fund. GAPs are also being prepared voluntarily as part of funding proposals for donors including DFID and Australia's DFAT. This is also a tool being used by our partners.

The GAP is now mandatory as part of the Emergency Preparedness Planning, Emergency Response Strategy and the CI Emergency Response Fund.

Who is involved in the GAP process?

If you are creating a GAP as part of your emergency preparedness, make sure that the CO Emergency Response Team (ERT) is involved. This underscores that gender integration is everyone's responsibility not just that of the gender focal point or the gender advisor. The GAP is usually developed by the country office in the early stages of an emergency response. The preparation of a GAP is raised during the Crisis Coordination Group (CCG) call as a requirement to ensure a gender sensitive response, and is a mandatory element of submission for the CI Emergency Response Fund. A member of the Gender in Emergencies team then contacts the Gender focal point to help in the preparation of the GAP.

A recommended way to develop a GAP is to have the Emergency Response Team take the IASC gender e-learning course and after doing this to develop this plan together as a team.

You will need to use information from gender-sensitive assessment/s and your Rapid Gender Analysis (refer to the *Guidance Note: Rapid Gender Analysis*) to decide how to design the response to address identified issues and to make sure that different groups are getting the support they need. The GAP helps you to work through that process.

It is vital that you get inputs from other people (e.g. program managers, program support staff and gender advisors) as others may spot implications or risks that you miss. Make sure that

you speak to some people who are nationals of the country (ideally local to the area of operations), as they will have vital contributions.

When to use the GAP
Since its inception in 2012, there has been innovation from around CARE in using the GAP tool in new ways. The processes listed below are when a GAP is developed and used:

Emergency Preparedness Planning: The GAP provides guidance on how to integrate gender across the emergency preparedness planning (EPP) process and a training package is available to support this. You can also request support through your REC or Lead Member. Also refer to the *Guidance Note: Gender equality and the emergency planning process*.

At the start of an emergency: A GAP should be prepared at the start of an emergency. This can be prepared in draft form in the very first phase of a response, building on the GAP that is part of the EPP document and then updated when more information and analysis becomes available.

CI Emergency Response Fund: A GAP must be developed and submitted with all applications for the Emergency Response Fund. It is the responsibility of the country office to prepare a GAP and it is the responsibility of CEG/Lead Member to assist with technical support.

After Action Review: The difficulties and successes of developing the GAP and of putting it into practice should form an important part of the After Action Reviews (AAR). See the CARE Emergency Toolkit for more information on how to use the GAP in AARs.

Preparing the GAP
Refer to Annex 1 for the GAP format which comprises ten components with planned actions to respond to the different needs and priorities of women, men, boys and girls. It identifies who will be responsible for delivering the planned actions, along with an indicator and timeframe for measuring success. The GAP should include an abridged capacity needs assessment; available

resources in the country office and support required to implement the GAP.

The GAP should be short, concrete and focused on a few things that the country office CAN do rather than a long list of aspirational elements.

Implementation and reporting
While mainly used at the preparedness and planning stage, we need to ensure the GAP reflects actual implementation of the response. Integration and monitoring of the GAP beyond planning is therefore a crucial issue. Some approaches that have proved effective in monitoring implementation of the GAP include:

* Regular country office tracking of progress;
* Updating the GAP by the country office when moving from response to recovery phase;
* CARE member partners incorporating GAP into proposals and reporting against them;
* CARE member partners, Regional Emergency Coordinators and Gender in Emergencies team assessing GAP implementation during monitoring visits;
* Including GAP progress in final reports to donors (mandatory for all Emergency Response Fund final reports).

Want more information?
* *Different Needs – Equal Opportunities: Increasing Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action for Women, Girls, Boys and Men* by the IASC is an excellent online training for gender in emergencies. Available in English and French (Spanish under development) here.
* *CARE Emergency Toolkit*: gender section in Chapter 9 which explains a gendered approach to emergency response with examples, checklists and links to guidelines/resources here
* For technical support contact the CI GIE team at: emergencygender@careinternational.org.
* All GIE resources are available at on Minerva

Key documents:

* CARE International Gender Policy (in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese) here.
* IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action here.

Annex 1 – Gender Action Plan format

COMPONENT	PLANNED ACTIONS TO RESPOND TO DIFFERENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES OF WOMEN, GIRLS, MEN, BOYS	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATOR OF PROGRESS	TIMING
Need Assessment	*Guiding questions[i]:* • *How can we ensure that Gender Analysis is part of all rapid assessments and the results are used to design the emergency response strategy?* • *How can we ensure we have a gender balanced team?* • *How can we ensure we are collecting age and sex disaggregated data?*			
Design and planning	*Guiding questions:* • *How can we ensure that all program design and implementation are based on consultation with men, women, boys, and girls (where possible also other categories-ethnic groups, minority groups, disabled, etc.) & the program design addresses the different needs of men, women, boys, and girls?* • *How is the emergency program linked to the LRSP and the long term women's empowerment programming of the CO? How is the women's empowerment team engaged with the emergency response team?* • *How can we ensure that all program design and implementation will address the protection and safety requirements of the most vulnerable and address gender specific vulnerabilities?* • *How will we ensure that a Gender action plan will be a part of all programs implementation strategy?*			
Participation in decision making	*Guiding questions:* • *How are men, women, girls and boys participating in decision making around the humanitarian response?* • *How can we ensure that where ever possible ensure that our programming is addressing gender transformation and not only gender mainstreaming?*			
Equal access and participation in program services and benefits	*Guiding question:* • *How can we ensure equal access and participation for all program participants and in a manner that ensures protection and safety?*			
Prevention and response to Gender Based Violence	*Guiding question:* • *How do we ensure that all staff and partners are aware of services available for survivors of GBV?*			

	Guiding questions:			
Monitoring, evaluation and accountability	*Guiding questions:* • *How can we ensure the use of Sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) through data collection, analysis, design of indicators and monitoring through the entire response to be able to report on gender equality programming and its impact?* • *How can we ensure that the monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks are based on gender analysis?*			
Communications and Media	*Guiding questions:* • *How do we ensure all internal and external communication is gender aware and acknowledges the different impact and needs of men, women, boys and girls?* • *How do we present positive images rather than victimhood, focus on survivors?*			
Coordination with other actors	*Guiding questions:* • *Who and how will we coordinate with the relevant gender working groups, GBV AOR?* *How will we make sure that our engagement externally is contributing to a gender equality agenda?*			
Internal gender capacity (agency and partner/s)	*Guiding questions:* • *How can we invest in regular capacity building of all staff, senior management and partners on gender equality programming in Emergencies?* • *How can we ensure allocation of appropriate human & financial resources for gender equality programming e.g. % of women on ERT?* • *How can we ensure all staff and partners are aware of CARE vision, mission and values?*			
Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	*Guiding questions:* • *What safeguards are in place to prevent and respond to PSEA?* • *How can we ensure all staff and partners are aware of policies and procedures related to sexual harassment and PSEA?* • *How do we implement and monitor programs (our own and those of partners) to address safe programming (especially PSEA) in all situations?*			

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[i] The questions listed in this section are as a reminder, have we thought through the key elements required for the relevant component? They are to guide and not prescriptive- add and ask additional questions too- these are just the highlights