

Executive Summary:

Gender Profile for Humanitarian Action, and across the Humanitarian-Peace-Development Nexus

Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan, Myanmar
(as of 24th January 2019)



The crises in Kachin, Northern Shan and Rakhine, Myanmar, have different impacts on women, girls, boys and men among crisis-affected populations based on gender, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, sexual orientation and gender identity, and other diversities. **The crises disproportionately affect women and girls, as well as the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups, by perpetuating and exacerbating pre-existing, persistent gender and social inequalities, gender-based violence, and discrimination.** These gendered barriers lead to their lower ability and opportunity to survive and recover from crises as well as lower resilience against and influence in preventing future shocks and conflict escalation. The most vulnerable and marginalised groups include older persons, persons with disabilities, children (especially unaccompanied or separated), adolescents, female-headed households, single women, pregnant and lactating women, single parents, ethnic/religious minorities, persons of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations – Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ). Women and girls, and the most vulnerable and marginalized, are thus the first to experience additional access barriers to scarce and overstretched humanitarian relief services, as well as restricted humanitarian access. **Notably, pre-existing gender norms of roles also shape the differential impact of the crises on men and boys**, who have been exposed to human rights violations due to performing their gender roles as heads of households and breadwinners (forced recruitment, arbitrary arrests, landmines etc.). Evidence from disasters and crises in the Asia-Pacific region, demonstrate that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer persons face increased vulnerability, particular risks and discrimination during times of crisis and in crisis aftermaths, including due to discriminatory laws and socio-cultural practices which can create barriers to their safe and equitable access to relief, services and information and render them particularly vulnerable to sexual and gender based violence and other forms of harassment and abuse. **Strengthened efforts to integrate gender equality measures into the crisis responses, as well as preparedness, recovery and resilience building processes, is critical** to ensuring that all women, girl, boys, and men — particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized — have equitable access to (and benefit from) relief, services, information, community level activities and decision making. **Humanitarian responses often miss opportunities to transform gender relations through the leadership and empowerment of women and girls** in their role as decision makers, first responders and economic actors — notwithstanding the fact that these are key to response effectiveness and to communities' longer-term resilience and social cohesion.

The **purpose** of the gender profile is to present:

1. An **overview of the gendered context** in crisis settings in Rakhine, northern Shan and Kachin states in Myanmar including key gender issues, needs and gaps,
2. A **stock-take of current and past efforts** to address these gender issues, needs and gaps by humanitarian actors and the humanitarian coordination system, and finally
3. **Key strategic goals and recommended actions** to further promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action and across the humanitarian-development peace nexus by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups (ICCGs) at national and state levels in Myanmar.

Acknowledgments of Ongoing Commitments and Efforts for Gender Mainstreaming

The Government of Myanmar has demonstrated strong commitments to advance gender equality and promote the empowerment of women and girls, including through its National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) (NSPAW), the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan 2018-2030, the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and the draft Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) Law in line with the government's commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Both NSPAW and the PoVAW constitute essentials steps for Myanmar's progress towards their commitment to ensure women have access to a legal framework that protects them from the disproportionate levels of discrimination and violence they experience in their home, work and public life. Also, the Government's establishment of an Advisory Commission on Rakhine state in 2016 demonstrated the Government's

commitments to finding lasting solutions to the complex nature of the conflict in Rakhine state, yet, their further strengthened efforts are needed to implement the recommendations submitted by the Rakhine Advisory Commission (RAC) in August 2017.

Humanitarian actors from the UN, INGOs, NGOs, CSOs, bilateral and multilateral donors have made significant efforts of promoting gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action, as well as across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus efforts, in Myanmar. Within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups (ICCGs) at national and state levels, the protection sector and the gender-based violence (GBV) coordination working group and sub-sectors have especially been leading these efforts of developing guidance, tools and capacity strengthening on gender mainstreaming as a part of protection and GBV mainstreaming efforts across and within all sectoral areas. In recognizing that there remain gender gaps in humanitarian action in Myanmar, the work on further strengthening gender mainstreaming efforts will build further on these efforts to further ensure that broader gender issues beyond GBV and protection are adequately addressed for more gender transformative humanitarian programming across all sectoral and cross-cutting areas. While a number of actions are required to enhance gender-responsive humanitarian action in Myanmar, it should be noted that the lack of humanitarian access and the deteriorating operational space for humanitarian action remains a challenge to addressing not only practical needs of women, girls, boys and men, affected by crisis, but also limits the opportunities for transformative interventions that address the strategic needs of women and girls, as well as men and boys.

Key Overall Strategic Goals for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action and Across Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus¹


1. **Advocacy with Government and key stakeholders is increased to uphold the commitments to gender quality and women's empowerment** in compliance with the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Advocacy is increased for the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW), and the recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Committee (RAC), as well as the adoption and implementation of a CEDAW compliant Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) Law.
2. **Gender, age and disability disaggregated data is collected, analysed and used** and consultation are conducted equally with women, girls, and the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, across all ages and diversities, including during assessments and in the overall response monitoring. Advocacy is increased with the Government to facilitate assessments in order for humanitarian and development actors to develop evidence-based programmes.
3. **Gender mainstreaming and targeted action for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) is integrated in preparedness, response, and recovery.** These are rights-based and gender transformative, meeting the specific needs and priorities of women, girls, and men and boys of all ages and diversities. To guide this process, application of the IASC Gender with Age Marker, the IASC Gender in Humanitarian Action Handbook and other IASC global and regional gender in humanitarian action guidance² is ensured. Protection mainstreaming throughout humanitarian actions is continued.
4. **Positive and healthy constructions of masculinities are promoted and fostered throughout humanitarian actions** in order to address the root causes of gender inequalities as fueled by negative power dynamics shaped by restrictive, negative and harmful socio-cultural constructions of gender identities, norms and roles and thereby empower and provide equal opportunities for women, girls, boys and men.
5. **Women's economic empowerment** is supported through livelihoods and employment interventions (including cash-based programmes wherever feasible and appropriate) ensuring that these activities adequately take gender dynamics into consideration to ensure that they are gender transformative going beyond traditional gender stereotypical divisions of labour instead of perpetuating gender inequality and ensure they minimize risks of potentially contributing to gender-based violence including intimate partner violence. Strategies are adopted that recognize, reduce and redistribute the unpaid care and household responsibilities assigned to women and girls.
6. **Leadership, decision-making as well as meaningful, equal representation of women and marginalised groups** is promoted and advocated for in overall humanitarian action as well as in the longer-term peace building and development processes.

¹ in line with Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Policy and Accountability Framework (2017) <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action/documents-public/accountability-framework-iasc-policy-gender-equality> and <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action/documents-public/iasc-policy-gender-equality-and-empowerment-women>

² All resources available at: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action> and <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/gender-humanitarian-action-working-group>

7. **Activities to prevent, mitigate and respond to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, especially against women, girls are strengthened and expanded** through systematic gender mainstreaming that addresses harmful societal and institutional gender norms and ensuring that gender-based violence response and prevention services are more widely available and accessible to women and girls and that attention to quality and Guiding Principles is upheld through expansion of activities and continued efforts to localize services. To this end, work with men and boys is increased to achieve the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action, and to promote positive masculinities.
8. **Collaboration and engagement with and capacity strengthening of local women's rights civil society organisations and those working with persons with diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC), and other marginalised groups is increased.** Strengthening of work with all ministries and departments of the Government of Myanmar, especially the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, at Union and State levels with a focus on strengthening their capacities on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action. Investing in these national stakeholders' capacities to prevent, prepare for and respond to crises and disasters of all types, resourcing them financially, and protecting the spaces in which they can operate, in support of equality, inclusion and localisation.
9. **Gender balance and adequate numbers of trained competent international and national female staff in the overall response** is promoted. This includes ensuring female staff are provided with necessary safety and security measures and are supported through capacity enhancement and mentoring.
10. **Advocacy is increased with donors to make financial provisions to fully resource GEEWG programming** for both mainstreaming and targeted action, including **by ensuring the application of IASC gender with age marker** and creating specific budget lines for the purpose.
11. **Existing multi-stakeholder coordinating bodies to promote gender equality and mainstreaming** are strengthened at national and state levels that cut across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and that goes beyond a focus on GBV.

Summary of Cross-Cutting Coordination Needs, Issues, Gaps, Challenges, Constraints, Response and Recommendations to Promote Gender-Responsive Humanitarian Action by the HCT and ICCGs

 Coordination	Needs/Issues/Gaps	Current Response	Challenges and Constraints	Recommendations
	<p>Gender balance and inadequate numbers of trained competent female staff in overall humanitarian action, both as field-level first responders and senior level decision makers, as well as inadequate safety and security measures.</p> <p>Limited level of prioritisation of gender mainstreaming and gender equality and women's empowerment programming in humanitarian action, especially limited gender-transformative programming – often due to</p>	<p>The Government, Donors, UN, INGOs, NGOs and CSOs are promoting gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment across the humanitarian-peace-development nexus through normative, policy, advocacy, research and targeted programmes at the national and state levels.</p> <p>Inter-sector and sector-specific technical support on gender integration being provided in line with global IASC gender in humanitarian action guidance.</p>	<p>Although improving, there remains limited awareness and understanding of gender, gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming among national bodies may have a negative impact on efficient coordination mechanisms.</p> <p>Limited political will and recognition among humanitarian actors of gender equality and gender mainstreaming as a life-saving issue relevant for humanitarian action.</p>	<p>Conduct an overall review or performance assessment of the HCT on gender mainstreaming in line with the IASC GEEWG Policy and Accountability Framework and the UN System Wide Action Plan for GEEWG Gender Score Card to determine key gaps and recommendations to further strengthen HCT accountability and effectiveness.</p> <p>Strengthen efforts to ensure all assessments collect, analyse and use disaggregated data and analysis on gender (female, male and other), age and disability and equally consult with women (and girls as appropriate) through female enumerators and gender-segregated focus group discussions as well as key vulnerable and marginalized groups. (In NSPAW key objective of Women and Emergencies.)</p>

organisations' limited capacity, time and resources.

Limited number of gender trainings – while gender training initiatives have and are continuously being rolled out at national and state level to humanitarian actors, including workshops on using protection mainstreaming tools and a gender training of trainers, many sector representatives from international and national agencies reported that their teams had not received any training on how to provide gender-responsive services and felt that their teams lacked technical skills in gender analysis and mainstreaming.

While most actors collect sex disaggregated data, there are still limitations in using this data to inform programming. Not all ongoing assessment, monitoring and reporting by sectors and across sectors include gender, age, and disability disaggregated data and analysis. Not all assessments ensure gender balance among enumerators or adequate numbers of female staff.

Not all sectors have gender expertise or gender focal points in place.

Consultations are being conducted with women's CSOs to capture their demands and channel these to shape humanitarian decision making, including the recent development of a Common Charter of Demands by Women in Kachin State.

Sectors and their members are to a certain extent mainstreaming gender across the humanitarian programme cycle including through the use of sex and age disaggregated data and gender analysis, application of IASC gender marker in humanitarian funding proposals and gender mainstreaming guidance in overall programming.

Sex and age disaggregated data and gender analysis included in the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview. Inter-Agency PSEA Network of PSEA focal points have been established and PSEA audit checklist, code of conduct, mapping survey and training material have been developed. The development of PSEA minimum package and SoP is in process.

Agencies are improving on their efforts to ensure a gender balance within humanitarian response assessment teams.

Trainings have been conducted in Kachin by UN Women with the support of UNDSS on Women's Safety and Security Interagency referral SOPs including specialized GBV and CP protocols have been developed for central Rakhine and

Lack of adequate funding to prioritise GEEWG in humanitarian action.

Limited national and administrative data, especially sex- and age-disaggregated data, may hamper coordinated efforts to successfully develop and implement prevention and response plans that cut across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

While a cohesive strategy for international engagement in Kachin and Shan is being developed, the current lack of a strategy that brings together humanitarian, development and peace actors / programmes is a limitation.

Strengthen efforts to substantiate quantitative data on LGBTIQ communities with qualitative data, using methods of feminist participatory research and storytelling from the LGBTIQ community, and ensure a robust do no harm policy and practice when collecting data on LGBTIQ people to avoid subjecting LGBTIQ people at risk when disclosing information on them.

Strengthen efforts to ensure gender balance and adequate numbers of trained female staff as aid workers, interpreters, assessors and security staff, health staff; that female staff members are available at any time to support women; and that female staff are provided with necessary safety and security measures including for housing and transportation.

Strengthen efforts to enable a formal, meaningful consultative engagement with representatives from the different groups within the LGBTIQ community and network to ensure that a LGBTIQ and feminist lens, which considers the diversity within the LGBTIQ community, is used in the assessment, planning, prioritization, coordination, development, implementation, and monitoring of humanitarian policies and programs and that LGBTIQ issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as human rights are included.

Strengthen efforts to ensure the inclusion of LGBTIQ and feminist leaders and community organisations, including but not limited to experts, in technical, advisory and decision-making roles in humanitarian action.

Conduct cross-sectoral and sector-specific assessments on considerations, needs, risks, capacities and impact for LGBTIQ persons in humanitarian action in order to identify targeted, inclusive and rights-based response.

All humanitarian actors should receive training on gender in humanitarian action, including a focus on LGBTIQ. Current gender training should be scaled-up to reach more staff and should be supported across all programmes and sectors, not only programmes considered to be 'gender or women' specific.

Engage all humanitarian workers and familiarize them with Protection, GBV, Child Protection and PSEA referral pathways and guide them in mainstreaming these policies

regular training has been provided to humanitarian workers. GBV/CP "do no harm" protocol and training for non-protection UN/INGO/NGO staff has even developed and presented in central Rakhine.

Gender-sensitive checklist for assessments has been established and disseminated through ICCG in central Rakhine to promote safe and effective data collection. FGDs and interviews with women and girls have been conducted.

GiHA training has been provided to humanitarian workers in central Rakhine in 2016 and in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan in 2018.

into all on-going cross-sector planning, assessment, implementation and monitoring. Ensure all humanitarian actors comply with PSEA policy and procedures in line with jointly agreed Code of Conduct developed by the inter-agency PSEA Network. Create and/or strengthen existing multi-stakeholder coordinating bodies for gender mainstreaming at national and state levels that cuts across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and that goes beyond a focus on GBV.

Use the GiHA gender profile as well as the IASC GiHA handbook and policy guidance in all sectors through the humanitarian programme cycle. All sectors shall apply the IASC Gender and Age Marker.

Strengthen efforts to ensure the leadership and equal representation of women and marginalised groups (such as LGBTIQ) as well as civil society organizations representing these population groups in assessments, planning, management, implementation, relief distribution and monitoring of humanitarian response activities. Create more opportunities, channels and platforms for women, women's groups and networks to speak out and make their voices and demands heard through engagement with the humanitarian coordination system. (In compliance with NSPAW key objectives of Women and Emergencies and Women and Decision-Making, RAC Recommendation No 1, 51)

Gender analysis, sex, age and disability disaggregated data, cross-cutting gender indicators, and overall cross-sector and sector-specific gender mainstreaming commitments shall be in line with this GiHA gender profile. The IASC gender in humanitarian action guidance shall continuously be included in the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview.

Developed on behalf of the national and sub-national humanitarian coordination system in Myanmar with collective inputs from key humanitarian stakeholders from across the UN, INGOs, NGOs and CSOs with technical and coordination support from UN Women.

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⁹¹Gender Equality Network, Gender Needs Assessment, Myanmar Floods, 2015 (2016)

⁹²Gender Equality Network, Raising the Curtain: Cultural Norms, Social Practices and Gender Equality in Myanmar, 2015.

⁹³Gender Equality Network and Kachin Women Peace Network (February 2013), Women's Needs Assessment in IDP Camps, Kachin State