



International  
Labour  
Organization

▶ **Gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work in fragile, conflict and disaster settings**



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▶ **Gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work in fragile, conflict and disaster settings**

March 2022



# Foreword

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Prior to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, about 1.8 billion people across the world were already living in fragility, and the pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of people who were already in the grip of disaster and conflict.

Conflicts and disasters, including pandemics, affect women and men in all their diversity differently, and women and girls often suffer the most. Crisis-related hardships combine and compound pre-existing disadvantages, for example, they often cause women's working conditions to worsen while increasing their overall workload and care responsibilities. At the same time, crises can give rise to changes that enable women to take up roles that were previously available only to men, and crises can open opportunities to address existing gender-based discrimination and violations of rights.

There is a strong commitment by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its constituents, jointly with the United Nations system, to enhance gender equality and non-discrimination and strengthen women's empowerment and leadership in settings of fragility, conflict and disaster. This is evidenced in the ILO normative and policy frameworks, including the [Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 \(No. 205\)](#), the 2019 ILO [Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#) as well as the [Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient, 2021](#). At the global level, since the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, gender equality and women's empowerment has consistently been integrated as an issue of critical importance in overall development, peace and resilience related agendas and frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

All of these frameworks underscore that poverty, conflict and climate change and disaster vulnerability, and gender inequality and discrimination are intrinsically linked, and that development, peace and resilience gains can only be realized by putting equality and equity at the centre of efforts.

This guide was developed by the ILO Coordination Support Unit for Peace and Resilience in collaboration with the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI). It is hoped that it will provide support to ILO colleagues, constituents, partner organizations and other stakeholders in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in effectively mainstreaming gender equality and non-discrimination in order to pave the way to more equal, peaceful and resilient societies.

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Any omissions or mistakes are the responsibility of the authors.





# List of acronyms

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<b>COVID-19</b>	coronavirus disease
<b>CSPR</b>	Coordination Support Unit for Peace and Resilience (ILO)
<b>DDR</b>	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
<b>DRR</b>	disaster risk reduction
<b>EBMO</b>	employer and business membership organizations
<b>GEDI</b>	Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (ILO)
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-agency Standing Committee
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>INEE</b>	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>OSH</b>	occupational safety and health
<b>PBSO</b>	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>WPS</b>	women, peace and security
<b>Y4C</b>	Youth for Change
<b>YES</b>	Youth Employment Somalia

# Introduction

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▶▶ Humanity can only be at its best when gender equality becomes a reality for all, everywhere. We must and will make it happen.

▶ ILO Director-General: "Let us invest in women as part of a human-centred recovery",  
8 March 2021

Social justice and decent work are key to long lasting peace, resilience and stability. In a world of multiple crises, conflict and violence interact with the conditions created by additional stress, such as climate change, that give rise to fragility, and the increasing frequency and intensity of disasters. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been responding to conflicts and disasters since its foundation, and has always highlighted the central role of decent work and employment in peacebuilding and disaster recovery. A humanitarian crisis resulting from conflict or disaster can be an entry point for the ILO to proactively engage with a country at an early stage, promoting decent work and employment across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

Currently, about 1.8 billion people live in fragile contexts (OECD 2020). Due to their different roles, responsibilities, needs and activities, women, men, girls and boys are affected by crisis in different ways. Even more so, when different personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual identity, age, disability, or HIV status and others intersect resulting in more pronounced unequal power relations. For example, women's overall workload often increases significantly during crises owing to the need to compensate for declining family income and social services; the additional care needs of orphaned children, older people and people with disabilities; and damaged infrastructure, housing and workplaces. At the same time, because of the increased burden of unpaid care work, insecurity and its impact on mobility and other challenges, such as limited access to land, inputs and markets, women's engagement in paid work becomes more challenging. In addition, in times of crisis, education tends to decline most for girls (INEE 2021), jeopardizing their ability to secure decent work in the future. The gendered division of labour in households and the economy increases unequal access to and control of resources and processes relevant to addressing crises. In summary, fragility, conflict and disaster tend to combine and compound pre-existing gender-related disadvantages, vulnerabilities and inequalities.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a clear illustration of how crises exacerbate existing gender and intersecting inequalities around the world. During the COVID-19 pandemic, women's employment and income in particular have been severely affected as women have lost employment at a faster pace compared to men and have seen a heavy reduction of working hours and an increase in unpaid care work (ILO 2021b; ILO 2020a; ILO 2020b).

At the same time, crises can provide opportunities to break down gender barriers and to strengthen gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership, in the world of work as well as more broadly. For example, unequal pre-crisis gender roles can change when coping strategies in conflict or disaster settings increasingly require women to engage in occupations and tasks that had been reserved for men, such as managing small enterprises, contributing to reconstruction discussions, or acquiring more skills and education to support their livelihood. This empowers women in terms of their economic independence, ability as family providers, decision-making and social position.

Furthermore, it is important to address gender and intersecting inequalities in crisis settings to make sure that women in all their diversity can participate fully and equally in all processes related to peacebuilding, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and recovery, and climate change adaptation. Given the contribution of employment, decent work, social protection and social dialogue for peace and resilience (ILO and PBSO 2021), gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work is more closely interlinked with sustainable development and peace and resilience than one may think. For example, employment programmes that increase women's employment and decent work opportunities and respond to women's short- and long-term needs can enhance social justice, cohesion and contact, and they yield positive dividends for peace and strengthen women to act as agents of peace. Likewise, improved and equal preparedness, response capacity and social protection, and more secure working conditions and livelihoods for everyone, will positively contribute to both gender equality and DRR and resilience.

The significance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience was reiterated by the ILO through the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). Adding to other important conventions, recommendations and frameworks in the area of equality and non-discrimination, Recommendation No. 205 reinforced the strong mandate of the ILO to promote gender equality in the world of work in all types of settings, including those characterized by fragility, disaster or conflict. The pursuit of gender equality is high on the agenda of the broader UN system and the international community, as shown, for example, by the resolutions of the UN Security Council on women, peace and security and the strong emphasis on gender equality in the Sendai Framework.

## This guide

Anchored in and building on these frameworks and UN inter-agency work and initiatives on gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership, this guide aims to enhance awareness of gender dimensions and issues in fragile, conflict and disaster settings and to provide guidance on gender mainstreaming in initiatives related to employment and decent work across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. It is intended to support both ILO staff and constituents and other stakeholders working at global, national or local levels in ensuring gender-responsiveness in the world of work across the triple nexus. The guide supplements existing ILO resources in the area of gender equality<sup>1</sup> as well as disaster and conflict.<sup>2</sup>

The first part of this guide provides an overview of how fragility, conflicts and disasters affect gender equality, particularly in the world of work, and presents the key frameworks in this area. Its second part provides practical guidance on gender mainstreaming in the world of work in settings characterized by fragility, conflicts and disasters. The section covers general recommendations and guidance for analyses and assessments as well as projects, programmes and other initiatives. It also includes gender-related challenges and dimensions as well as recommendations for specific technical areas of the Decent Work Agenda in fragile, conflict and disaster settings.

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- 1 See for example ILO, 2021, [A gender-responsive employment recovery: Building back fairer](#); ILO, 2021, [Violence and harassment in the world of work: A guide on Convention No. 190 and Recommendation No. 206](#); ILO, 2020, [The COVID-19 response: Getting gender equality right for a better future for women at work](#); ILO, 2019, [A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all](#); ILO, 2018, [Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work](#); ILO, "How to guide number 15 on gender mainstreaming in development cooperation".
  - 2 See for example ILO, 2021, [Employment and decent work in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#), Geneva; ILO, 2019, [Handbook: How to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding results in jobs for peace and resilience programmes](#); ILO, 2021, [Peace and Conflict Analysis – Guidance for ILO's programming in fragile and conflict-affected countries](#).

# 1

## Background: Gender in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster

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Fragility, conflict and disaster affect women, men, girls and boys in different ways and often have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, including in the world of work. While it is important to analyse and take into account the gendered impacts in each specific setting, this section describes gender dimensions and issues in a range of different areas that often occur in conflict and/or disaster settings. It also gives an overview of the key international frameworks that address these issues and aim to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, generally as well as in the world of work, in settings characterized by conflict, disaster or fragility.

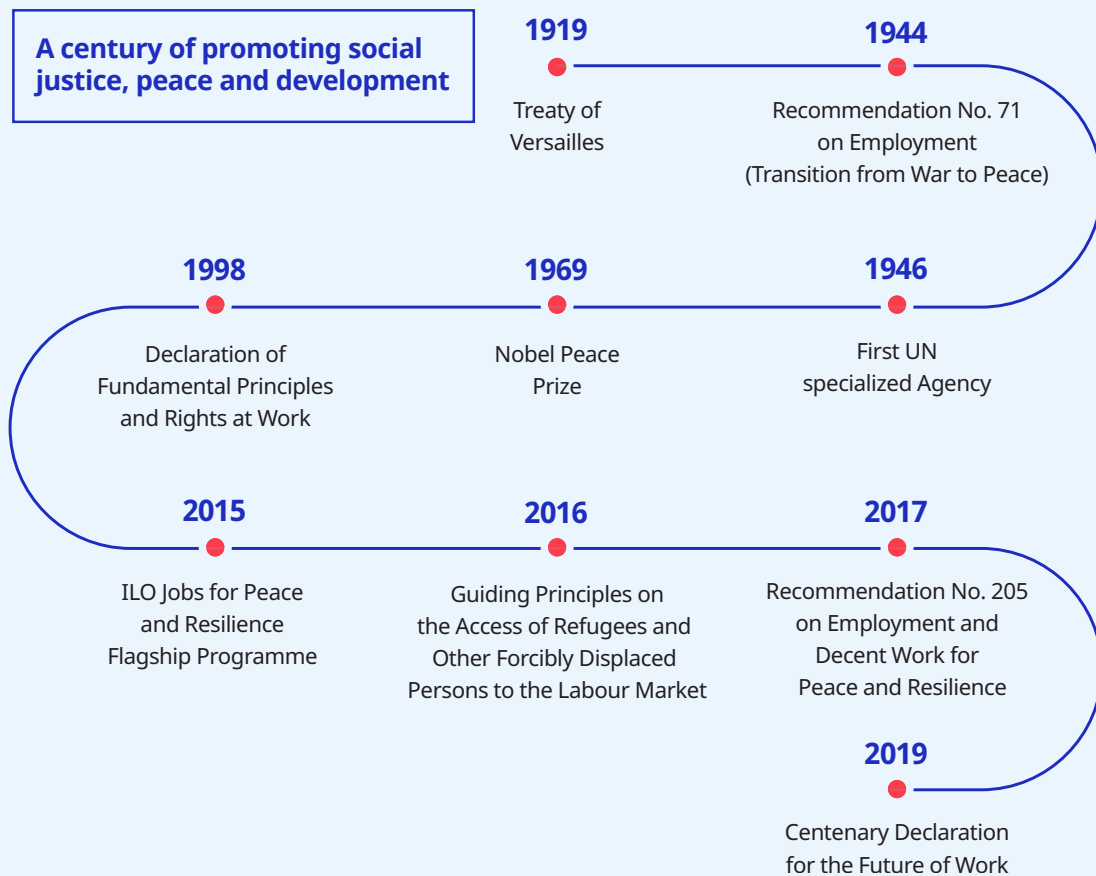
▶ **Box 1.1 Decent work, peace, resilience and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus**

Social justice and decent work are key to long-lasting peace and stability, as well as resilience. The ILO, established in 1919 to tackle the causes that had led to the First World War, was founded on the constitutional principle that “universal and lasting peace can only be established if it is based on social justice”. Today, promoting peace and resilience remains equally central to its mandate, as reflected, for example, in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work which highlights that persistent poverty, inequalities and injustices, conflict, disasters and other humanitarian emergencies are a threat to shared prosperity and decent work for all.

The ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) is the normative framework guiding the world-of-work responses to crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters, while the Global Flagship Programme on Jobs for Peace and Resilience and other technical approaches and policy areas translate Recommendation No. 205 into tangible action. Decent work, through the application of international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue, is not only possible but necessary for sustainable social cohesion, peacebuilding and social and economic recovery and progress in disaster and conflict environments.

In crisis environments, humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding are not serial processes but are all needed at the same time in order to reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Employment and decent work therefore make critically important contributions in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in complementing humanitarian action by interventions to stimulate and support long-term socio-economic development in an inclusive and rights-based manner, and addressing the underlying factors of fragility that made the society and economy particularly vulnerable to external shocks in the first place.

**ILO milestones for peace and resilience**



## 1.1 Gender issues in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster<sup>3</sup>

Crisis-related hardships often combine and exacerbate pre-existing gender-related structural barriers and challenges to women's access to paid work in safe and decent conditions. Since women already perform the over-whelming burden of unpaid care and household/community task, this workload increases significantly when family income plummets coupled with decreased or inexistent care and other social services (ILO 2018; SDC 2017). Such unpaid care may include for orphaned children, older people and those with disabilities, all in a context of damaged infrastructure, housing and workplaces. This in turn limits women's mobility and time for income generation. Demographic patterns and household structures and roles can also change in crisis situations, resulting, for example, in a higher incidence of women being the sole providers and caregivers of the household. Moreover, girls are more likely than boys to lose out on education opportunities owing to tighter family budgets and increased demands on their time to assist with care and household tasks (INEE 2021). Often, women's opportunities are further diminished by their declining political participation and the emergence or re-emergence of traditional patriarchal attitudes and practices. In disaster situations, women without land rights or women smallholder farmers are highly vulnerable. Since land and labour arrangements are usually negotiated through men, women in many societies lose access to both because of the changes in household structure. As a consequence, they may be forced off their land entirely. While some crises may include violence and harassment that affect everyone, women are particularly vulnerable to it within a context of deteriorating law and order, and mass rape and abduction are sometimes used as a weapon of war.

At the same time, the gender division of labour and stereotypes about roles, responsibilities and duties of women and men decrease the resilience of individuals,

families and economies, and exacerbate disaster-related vulnerabilities. Conversely, gender equality and women's empowerment can generate peace and resilience dividends: women often make significant contributions to peacebuilding and the strengthening of social cohesion, as well as enhancing community resilience to disasters and climate change. In order to leverage this potential, it is essential to have a good knowledge of and address both pre-existing inequalities and risk factors for discrimination in the world of work, as well as those stemming from or arising in situations of conflict and disaster.

This section provides an overview of the gender dimensions of various issues linked to both conflict and disaster situations and to each of these specifically.

### 1.1.1 Gender issues in conflict and disaster situations

#### Gender identities and norms

Stereotypes about duties, responsibilities and roles greatly influence how women and men are impacted by fragility, conflict and disaster. For instance, this can limit or enhance response capacities and resilience. Moreover, gender norms can also become drivers of fragility and conflict. For example, masculinities or gender norms that define manhood in terms of domination and aggression help fuel violence towards women and towards other men. Similarly, falling short of various ideals of manhood (such as providing for the family) may make men more susceptible to recruitment into armed groups in order to make up for perceived inabilities and may also increase domestic tension and violence (OECD 2019; ILO 1998). At the same time, crisis situations also offer opportunities for transforming gender stereotypes and behavioural norms, with women often becoming breadwinners and engaging in work previously considered unthinkable or unacceptable for them (see an example in box 1.2).



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<sup>3</sup> Definitions of key concepts, such as conflict, disaster, fragility, gender-responsiveness and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus are provided in the Annex. In this guide, "crisis" refers to both conflict and disaster.

### ▶ Box 1.2 Yemen: Changes in paid and unpaid work

More than seven years of war have devastated the lives of tens of millions of Yemenis in what has become one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

In terms of changes in the gender patterns of work, since the onset of the conflict, men have been working less in paid jobs, and an increasing number of women have entered the labour market and become their family's main breadwinner. While women also spend more time on household tasks than prior to the conflict, men's contribution to household chores has increased, and in some areas, activities like collecting water and grazing livestock are increasingly being carried out by men and boys due to security concerns. On the one hand, in some instances men's loss of ability to earn an income and women's new role in doing so have heightened risks of domestic conflict and violence. At the same time, there is an increased appreciation by men of the heavy care and household workload by women (Gressman 2016).

In terms of paid work, observations by the news website Al-Monitor in Sanaa point to some employers having refrained from laying off male employees given the assumption that they are the breadwinners of their families, while many women – even though they are their family's main breadwinners – have lost their jobs. Moreover, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the conflict has had disproportionate impact on women's businesses which closed in greater numbers in the period covered by the 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview. However, as revealed in Gressman (2016), simultaneously the situation has brought about an increased openness to women engaging in professions that used to be considered 'shameful' (for instance, butchers, barbers, or chicken sellers), and there is a greater acceptance for women to earn an income and to play a role in household decision-making.

Therefore, while conflict has led to a worsening of gender relations and a marginalization of women in participation, decision-making and leadership, alongside this deterioration, there are also signs of incipient transformation of gender roles and norms.

Source: Rohwerder, Brigitte. 2017. Conflict and gender dynamics in Yemen, K4D Helpdesk Report, Sussex: Institute of Development Studies; Gressmann, Wolfgang. 2016. From the Ground Up: Gender and conflict analysis in Yemen. Care International, Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap), Oxfam Great Britain; Nasser, A. 2017. "Is more women entering Yemen's labor market really progress?", Al-Monitor; OCHA Yemen. 2016. 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Yemen.

It should be noted that gender norms can fluctuate over time and that women and men in all their diversity are affected differently by fragility, conflicts and disasters. Ethnicity, race, caste, religion, cultural background, age, disability, migration, refugee or displacement status, geographical location, employment/work status, sexual orientation and gender identity are examples of factors that may intersect, resulting in compounded discrimination.

### Collapse and transformation of the economy

Paralysis of an economy can be caused by destruction of infrastructure and capital stock, flight of human resources and capital, rampant inflation and disruption of trade, among other things. Damage to economic facilities, including for production, markets and transport routes can severely disrupt the functioning of industries as well as other sectors such as agriculture, which can result in increased unemployment and poverty.

While it also suffers as a result of crisis, the informal economy – in which women are over-represented (ILO 2019) – tends to expand in such situations. In addition to the overall challenges faced by individuals in conflict and disaster situations (difficult access to inputs, business support services and markets; a lack of

social protection and so on), when male unemployment increases, they may increasingly enter the informal economy, competing in it with women.

As governments often respond to economic downturns by limiting spending on care services, there is an increase in the burden of unpaid care and household work that typically is borne by women and girls.





## Employment and labour market

In crisis situations, the shortage of male labour (due to engagement in combat, death, displacement and migration) can at times increase opportunities for women to engage in paid work, including in sectors or occupations traditionally closed to them. This positively impacts women's opportunities and treatment in paid work, which can enhance their sense of empowerment and self-worth, and it helps deconstruct rigid stereotypes about roles, responsibilities and duties of women in the world of work. However, these opportunities do not always come with equal terms and conditions. The

gender pay gap exists across the globe, women are underrepresented in decision-making posts and the quality of employment varies. Also, employment gains are often lost once the male workforce returns and women are expected to leave their jobs.

At the same time, in the vicious cycle of fragility, unemployment can lead both women and men to migrate.<sup>4</sup> It can also push individuals to accept indecent and/or unsafe work. These can render migrants, especially women, more vulnerable to different forms of violence

### ► Box 1.3 Women traders, conflict and disaster in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has faced a situation of multifaceted fragility and multiple crises in the past few decades, including conflict as well as recurrent Ebola outbreaks. This has affected the labour market and employment situation, and it has had gendered impacts both in general as well as in specific sectors. The case of female cross border traders is one example of this.

During the Ebola outbreak of 2014, in terms of direct health impacts, cross-border trade was a particular infection risk factor for women while bush meat hunting and time spent outside of the home were particular risk factors for men due to the respective involvement of women and men in these activities. At the same time, restrictive measures imposed to limit the outbreak had severe impacts on women's livelihoods in particular as women cross-border traders were unable to access financial and other business services and reach their markets. Both during the conflict and Ebola outbreak, insecurity also affected women traders disproportionately: the absence of rule of law, limited state security services, lack of safe infrastructure, extreme searches and other factors exacerbated the vulnerability of women traders and exposed them to both sexual violence and attacks on their stock of tradeable goods (which they often carried with them). And similarly, both the health crisis and conflict increased the care burden on women as they had to take care of ill or orphaned family members, which adversely affected their ability to sustain a business.

In the face of these challenges, women traders adopted various coping strategies. These included the protection of cash and assets by using bank accounts, reducing the capital for trade as well as closing businesses temporarily. They also coped by diversifying their economic activities and joining forces with other women traders in various associations.

At the same time, the contribution of women traders to poverty reduction, community resilience and peacebuilding is significant. Women are estimated to represent up to 80 per cent of informal cross-border traders in Africa, with spillover impacts on community welfare, with 48 per cent of income from cross-border trader being spent on household needs such as food, rent, education and healthcare services. In times of crisis, when official exports decline, women cross-border traders who remain operational also play an important role in ensuring the continuity of flows of essential goods. Moreover, they contribute to peacebuilding and social cohesion, both formally – as part of the Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units of the Mano River Union – and informally through the relationships that they build across borders, which generate opportunities for positive social contact with groups with diverse interests, languages and cultures. This highlights the importance of providing appropriate support to women traders to ensure negative impacts (and negative coping strategies) are avoided and women's agency leveraged.

Source: ILO (International Labour Organization), with support from Value for Women (V4W) (no date). Promoting women's entrepreneurship in fragile settings for peacebuilding and resilience programmes - a guide developed using Sierra Leone as a case study, unpublished document.

4 See for example the ILO websites on [Crisis Migration](#) and [Climate change, displacement and labour migration](#) and ILO. 2021g. [Impact of COVID-19 on nexus between climate change and labour migration in selected South Asian countries: An exploratory study](#).



### Infrastructure and physical assets

The destruction of infrastructure as a result of conflicts or disasters causes livelihood losses as workplaces lose their operational capacity, as transport to and from work gets disrupted, and as entrepreneurs lose access to inputs, productive assets, and markets. In reconstruction, the infrastructure needs of women and men are usually not taken into account equally; in particular, infrastructure needed by the formal economy is often prioritized over infrastructure relating to working families' needs such as for childcare and care for older persons. For women, damaged roads and bridges or schools and crèches often mean an increased burden as the fetching of water or firewood or caring for children – often women's tasks – is made more difficult.

### Demographic and household structure change

Death, displacement, migration and fluctuating birth rates in conflict and disaster situations bring about

changes within the overall demographic composition of communities as well as structural changes at the household level. The number of female-headed households tends to increase in crisis settings due to a decrease in the adult male population, both de jure (for instance through the death of the husband) and de facto (for example, where men migrate or go into hiding) (UN Women 2012). Due to the absence of men and lack of male labour in such situations, women may also lose access to land, as such productive resources and labour arrangements are often negotiated through men. Single, widowed or divorced women may also not be able to (re)marry, which in turn may limit their access to livelihoods and productive resources, especially in contexts where unmarried women are stigmatized. Households, whether female headed or not, may also experience an increase in the number of dependent persons such as orphaned children, people with disabilities, older people or other family members, leading to an increase in women's unpaid care burden in particular (UN Women 2012).

### ► Box 1.4 Conflict, displacement and gender equality

In both Syria and in its neighbouring countries, the demographic shifts such as the engagement of men in combat; their deaths, increasing disabilities among them, or their flight from conflict have led to increases in the number of female-headed households. In Syria, they were estimated to amount to 12–17 per cent of all households in 2016 and in neighbouring refugee-hosting communities up to one-third of all households (Buecher and Aniyamuzaala 2016).

On the one hand, the need for women to provide for their families as a result of the conflict has opened up new possibilities for women to engage in work outside of the home. For example, in Syria, in 2015, women constituted 65 per cent of persons engaged in agricultural production, an increase of 6 per cent compared to 2009 (Buecher and Aniyamuzaala 2016). Women's entrepreneurship has also seen a marked increase from 2009 to 2018, from 4.4 per cent to 22.4 per cent (Bayram 2017). However, these opportunities do not necessarily constitute decent work, nor do they lead to equality and empowerment in all cases. For example, in Syria the income of female-headed households tend to be lower than that of male-headed households (Buecher and Aniyamuzaala 2016). Also, women not only have to deal with pre-existing challenges such as biases in terms of work that is considered appropriate for women, but also with conflict-related threats such as aerial bombing and shelling when working outside of the home or exposure to (sexual) harassment and violence at checkpoints.

The situation in neighbouring countries, similarly, provides a mixed picture regarding women's empowerment among refugees. On the one hand, some women have expressed feelings of increased empowerment as a result of having to make decisions and being engaged in paid work. These women felt that such opportunities were less available in Syria. On the other hand, some women have been restricted by male family members or feel constantly unsafe and confined. They experience obstacles in resuming education, restricted mobility, and limited work avenues, not to mention taking care of children amidst dire living conditions (El-Masri et al. 2013). For instance in terms of access to work, in Jordan work permits are limited only to a few employment sectors that are considered "male professions"; as a result, in 2017 only 5 per cent of the work permits issued to Syrian refugees were to women (ILO 2019). Many also expressed a sense of disempowerment and uselessness and have lost hope in any capacity-building potential or chance of progress. Younger women have been led to marriages under conditions that would have been unacceptable under normal circumstances (UNFPA et al. 2014).

Source: Buecher, Beatrix, and James Rwampigi Aniyamuzaala. 2016. *Women, Work and War: Syrian women and the struggle to survive five years of conflict*, Care; Bayram, Ahmad Sufian. 2017. *Entrepreneurship in Conflict Zones: Insights on the startups in Syria*; UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), UNICEF (United Nations Children Fund), UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization), Save the Children and the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). 2014. *Situation analysis of youth in Lebanon affected by the Syrian crisis*; El-Masri, R., C. Harvey, R. Garwood. 2013. *Shifting Sands: Changing gender roles among refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: ABAAD-Resource Centre for Gender Equality and Oxfam; ILO. 2019d. *Jordan: Advancing gender equality and supporting job creation among refugees and host communities through public works*, EIIP Country Gender Brief, 6 March.

## Education and training

The destruction of training and educational facilities, the death or migration of teachers or trainers and restrictions on mobility can interrupt training and education in situations of conflict and disaster for both girls and boys and men and women. In conflict situations, those who are recruited or forced into armed groups or forces are at a particular risk of losing access to such training. Some girls and boys may enjoy some new opportunities to engage in education: for example, refugees may be provided with education and

training that they would normally not have had access to. However, often the increased care burden of women and girls as well as household budget restrictions limit their ability to take part in training and education. Due to historic inequalities in literacy and skills training (for instance more limited access for women as well as bias in curricula), women may also have more limited chances of being able to benefit from reconstruction and development programmes, or these may reinforce existing unequal gender power relations or be based on stereotypes about what type of work women can engage in and therefore can be trained in.

## Legal and institutional frameworks

In situations of conflict and disaster, the application of laws, including equality-related legislation and labour laws where such exist, may be officially suspended or become disrupted (ILO 2021a). In such emergency contexts, the respect of fundamental principles and rights at work, including principles such

as non-discrimination and equality of opportunity and treatment or equal pay for work of equal value in line with the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), 1951 and the Discrimination Convention (No. 111), 1958, may not be realized. At the same time, in crisis situations, access to legal redress is also often hampered when rights violations occur.

### ► Box 1.5 Fundamental rights violations: Gender patterns in trafficking and forced labour in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan

Typhoon Haiyan, which made landfall on 8 November 2013, brought about a catastrophic loss of life and livelihoods. It affected more than 16 million individuals and resulted in more than 6,000 deaths and the displacement of 4.4 million people. The Eastern Visayas region of the Philippines was hardest hit with 90 per cent of the infrastructure destroyed in Tacloban, the largest urban centre of Leyte island.

A study on trafficking in the aftermath of the disaster by the ILO and the International Organization for Migration found that before the devastation caused by the typhoon, the Eastern and Central Visayas were already among the poorest and most trafficking-prone regions in the Philippines, being both a source and a transit point for women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation and for men and boys trafficked for forced labour. For instance, in Cebu, a commercial hub with the Philippines' second largest international airport, sex trafficking of women, girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth is prevalent, with tourists and truck drivers fuelling demand for sex, which in turn fuels trafficking. At the same time, men are also vulnerable to illegal recruitment and trafficking: for example, there have been increases of abuses of Filipino seamen in recent years as illegal agencies operate with impunity and send men to work in exploitative conditions on ships with poor safety and labour records. Other sectors in which workers are exploited include manufacturing, construction, agriculture, domestic work and other service sectors.

The study revealed that the typhoon exacerbated the physical, social and economic insecurity of already vulnerable populations and caused a marked rise in trafficking, with traffickers preying on men, women and children struggling to cope with the death of family members and the destruction of their houses and livelihoods.

A frequent trafficking tactic was to offer employment with false information about the work and conditions or type of work, which caused both men and women to fall into situations of trafficking and forced labour. Examples include offering women bar/restaurant work in another part of the country, and forcing or coercing them into prostitution upon arrival, while men were offered jobs in construction with decent pay and conditions only to find themselves trapped in situations with inadequate working conditions with meagre pay and unable to leave.

One of the key recommendations of the study was to address the gender-specific impacts of the disaster and to apply a gender-sensitive approach to livelihood programmes to understand the different skill sets, needs, vulnerabilities and responsibilities of affected women, men, boys and girls.

Source: ILO and International Organization for Migration. 2015. *Impact of Livelihood Recovery Initiatives on Reducing Vulnerability to Human Trafficking and Illegal Recruitment: Lessons from Typhoon Haiyan*.

Furthermore, in post-conflict situations when laws are re-examined and revised, women are often not part of law-making bodies. While women's representation in national parliament has increased from 13 per cent in 2000 to 25 per cent in 2020 worldwide, in conflict-affected countries, their representation in parliament remains at only 19 per cent (UN 2020). As

a consequence, all matters, including those related to property, land, taxation and labour rights, are decided on without their involvement. This low participation in law-making has a spill-over impact for women's empowerment, including their economic position, as well as societies' sustainable recovery and peacebuilding.

## Health

During and after conflicts and disasters, public health often deteriorates, with diseases spreading more rapidly due to crowded conditions, damaged or destroyed water and sanitation facilities, and limited and difficult-to-access health service provision and information (WHO et al. 2011). There are a number of gender dimensions to this overall deterioration. For example, women's sexual and reproductive health needs are not necessarily prioritized, and maternal and infant mortality rises in such situations. In disaster and crisis, the interruption or lack of access to contraception and lack of treatment of sexually transmitted infection are commonly reported.<sup>5</sup> Women also often face difficulties to access hygiene and sanitation services and therefore to manage their periods.

Lack of health services and health problems have a direct impact on women's ability to work, but can also have an indirect effect on their livelihoods: for instance, ILO research from Zimbabwe revealed that the injuries

to reproductive organs limited the marriageability of female ex-combatants, which in turn had impacts on their access to resources needed for their livelihoods (ILO 1998). In addition, the responsibility of caring for sick family members often falls on women, limiting their time available for productive work. In cases of post-conflict situations, landmines are a particular risk for women in cases where they are responsible for agricultural work (tasks such as taking out livestock for grazing) as well as water and firewood collection. Regarding disabilities arising from conflicts or disasters, in some cases, there is a gender dimension in family relations. For example, in Cambodia, ILO research showed that men with disabilities tended to rely on their wives for economic support, while women with disabilities were often abandoned by their spouses or had difficulties finding a spouse, which had negative repercussions on their livelihoods (ILO 1998). Box 1.6 contains information on the impact of the COVID-19 on women.



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5 See WHO, Health Protection Agency and partners, 2011, *Disaster Risk Management for Health: Sexual and Reproductive Health*, Disaster Risk Management for Health Fact Sheets, May. The impact of the climate crisis on sexual and reproductive health is discussed in IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation), 2021, *The climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights*, London. The *Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crisis* works with humanitarian actors on a range of sexual and reproductive health issues.

► **Box 1.6 COVID-19: Gender implications of a health and socio-economic crisis**

Disasters can have devastating health impacts. At the same time, health-related hazards such as virus outbreaks can also bring about disasters.

COVID-19 is no different than other disasters in terms of “discrimination” among different population groups, as evidenced in relation to gender. While men and older age groups have higher mortality risks than other population groups, in terms of the socio-economic impact, women and girls are likely to be disproportionately affected. Due to their role as providers of unpaid or paid care work, women are more exposed to the risk of contagion of the virus, and, in the case of unpaid work, their care responsibilities also limit their opportunities to engage in paid employment (IASC 2020). As women are more likely to be engaged in informal or low-wage activities or migrant work, the devastating impact of public health emergencies is likely to be even greater for them than the population at large.

While data specific to fragile situations is scant, global data shows that women make up 70 per cent of health and social workers; that they constitute the vast majority of at-risk domestic workers (for example, 70 per cent in Africa); and that in hard-hit sectors, 42 per cent of women workers work informally, as compared with 32 per cent of men (ILO 2020a).

In this situation, countries experiencing fragility, conflict, disasters or population displacement face a multiple burden, having to cope with concurrent and mutually reinforcing challenges while having a limited response capacity. In such contexts, there is a risk of a serious reversal of gains made in terms of gender equality, peacebuilding and resilience.

While women are heavily engaged in the health and care work emanating from the pandemic, their participation in decision-making structures related to their management is marginal, especially in fragile contexts. For example, a survey of 30 countries with COVID-19 task forces and committees showed that, on average, only 24 per cent of members were women, while in conflict-affected countries, this figure was even lower, at 18 per cent (Care International 2020; UN 2020). The fact that women's voices are left unheard and their contributions remain unleveraged may in turn jeopardize the resolution of the crisis.

Source: CARE International. 2020. *Gender Implications of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings*; IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Reference Group for Gender in Humanitarian Action. 2020. *Interim Guidance: Gender Alert for COVID-19 Outbreak*; ILO. 2020a. *ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work*. Fifth edition; United Nations. 2020. *Secretary General's Report on Women, Peace and Security 2020*. New York.



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### Violence and harassment

Rape and other forms of sexual violence are often used as instruments in conflict situations, to weaken communities as well as individuals. Sexual violence and gender based-violence and harassment are also an increased risk in camps after crisis and disasters. Some factors contributing are crowd spaces, lack of light, absence of safe washing facilities for women's needs.

In addition to the immediate violence and harm, for all individuals, sexual violence can lead to trauma and long-lasting mental health problems, severe physical injuries, as well as sexually transmitted infections (including HIV). For women and girls, it also carries with it the risk of unwanted pregnancies. These detrimental health impacts may directly limit the ability of the victims to work. Furthermore, indirect impacts may also be dire: victims of rape may be ostracized and discriminated given the shame of rape, and may be denied access to resources vital for their livelihoods.

Men and boys can also be victims of sexual violence in conflict situations; while the incidence among them may be lower than among women and girls, the shame attached to it may be greater. Talking about it may be especially difficult for men given that male rape remains taboo; support services targeting men may also be limited or non-existent.

There is also a link between conflict-related violence and gender-based violence and harassment in general: for example, in post-conflict situations, the failure to address trauma, in particular for men, has been identified as one of the factors contributing to an increase in intimate partner violence (Vinck and Pham 2013).

### Emergency relief

In the immediate humanitarian phase of crisis response, participatory methods and analytical processes (for example, gender analysis and needs assessments)

may not be given the prominence they should due to concerns about expediency or because of limited time and resources.

However, the delivery and distribution of aid has a strong and critical gender dimension: for instance, if men are the sole receivers of aid, women are rendered more dependent on them, which exacerbates their status and further marginalizes women (see box 1.7).

It is essential to involve women in emergency relief planning. Also if sensibilization for men about the benefits of both gender mainstreaming and gender-targeted initiatives, including for families and the economy, is not undertaken, male backlash is inevitable and can involve gender-based violence and harassment. For this reason it is also important to engage men – especially decision makers and opinion-leaders or peer educators – as visible and engaged champions for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

#### ► Box 1.7 Gender and caste dimensions of the 2015 earthquake emergency relief in Nepal

Research conducted after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal indicates that women and persons of lower castes had more difficulties accessing humanitarian assistance than men and persons of higher castes. It is reported that the majority of Nepali relief volunteers were high-caste, and in some instances likely to prioritizing high-caste earthquake victims. Women members of lower castes were especially vulnerable and disadvantaged in terms of access to emergency relief due to this double discrimination based both on their caste and gender.

Source: IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Reference Group for Gender in Humanitarian Action. 2020. *Interim Guidance: Gender Alert for COVID-19 Outbreak*.

It is also important to note that when women are targeted by humanitarian assistance and projects to increase their access to economic resources, action to ensure that women have control over these resources may not be taken. Moreover, factors that sustain women’s long-term exclusion, perpetuate discriminatory norms and prevent their involvement in decision-making may not be adequately addressed (UNEP et al. 2020).

### 1.1.2 Gender issues specific to conflict situations

#### Engagement in armed forces and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

In most conflict situations, men and boys are more at risk of being recruited into armed forces or groups than women at girls. While civilians are also affected, those who are part of such groups are more at risk of death,

injuries, trauma and other psychological disorders, as well as more likely to lose out on livelihood-related activities, including work itself as well as education and training. Men and boys are thus particularly vulnerable.

However, women and girls are also recruited into and take part in armed combat (see box 1.8). In some conflicts, they make up a significant share of armed groups: For example, during the 1996–2006 conflict between Maoist rebels and the state forces in Nepal, women are estimated to have made up 30–40 per cent of the People’s Liberation Army (OCED 2017).

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes often target male ex-combatants, partly given the assumption that combatants are male (Mazurana and Cole 2012). Programme delivery may not be provided in a way that is conducive to women’s participation: for example, security concerns may limit women’s participation. As a consequence, women ex-combatants may be left out of land allocations, credit schemes, livelihoods training and other assistance.

### ► Box 1.8 Gender dimensions of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's over decade-long civil war – which led to the deaths of over 50,000 people and widespread poverty – ended with the signing of the Abuja Protocols in 2001 and was followed by a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process.

Out of the approximately of the 75,000 combatants demobilized in 2002, 6.5 per cent were women. The numbers of girls who entered the programme was much lower than expected: about 6 per cent of the girls in the Revolutionary United Front, 2 per cent of the girls in the Armed Forces Ruling Council and a mere 0.4 per cent of the girls in the Civil Defence Forces entered the process.

Several reasons explain the low participation of women and girls in the DDR process:

- Women had played a range of roles in the different armed factions, including fighting, but also providing care for injured combatants, cooking for the armed groups, and spying. The DDR program's strict definition of members of armed factions as combatants led to women and girls who had played non-combatant roles (such as nursing, cooking, spying) being excluded from the process.
- Some participation requirements favoured men. For instance, one of the criteria for entry into DDR centres was the possession of a gun. As there had not been enough guns for all combatants during the war, and as men had often been privileged over women in the distribution of weapons, many women did not have one to begin with. Moreover, those who did have a weapon were reportedly often obliged to hand them over to men who were on their way to DDR centres.
- The denial among some of the armed factions that there were female combatants among them also led to a limitation in the number of women receiving DDR benefits.
- Some female ex-combatants chose not to participate in the programme for a number of reasons, including fears of violence in the DDR centres, intimidation due to the large number of men in the DDR centres and concerns about the stigma of having been associated with armed groups.

Therefore, a large share of female former combatants did not benefit from the programme and support provided to facilitate reintegration into society.

Source: Sesay, Mohamed Gibril and Mohamed Suma. 2009. *Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of Sierra Leone*, Research Unit, International Center for Transitional Justice.

## Violent extremism

While men make up the majority of violent extremist groups, women also participate in extremist action. Women are estimated represent 30 per cent of members of terrorist organizations worldwide, either as combatants or in auxiliary roles (for example, informants or logistics staff). Box 1.9 contains recent findings on the intersection of gender, violent extremism and the world of work.

However, women tend to receive less support in terms of rehabilitation and reintegration, which is also often not tailored to gender-specific needs (UN 2020).

While more research is needed, there also appears to be a link between misogyny and violent extremism. A study by Monash University and UN Women covering Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Libya and based on quantitative surveys found that misogyny was more strongly associated with support for violent extremism than other factors such as religiosity, age, gender, level of education, or employment (UN 2020).

In terms of counterterrorism, women are significantly under-represented in decision-making and law enforcement bodies linked to counter-terrorism, and,

support to victims (for instance of sexual slavery and violence, as in the case of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant [Da'esh]) tends to be minimal (UN 2020).





### ► Box 1.9 Violent extremism, work and gender in the Sahel

While the topic remains under-explored, a recent study on violent extremism and gender in the Sahel reveals the gender dimensions of violent extremism, including in relation to work. The findings point, notably, to the following:

- ▶ In terms of involvement in armed groups, in the Sahel, unlike in other settings such as Syria or Lake Chad, women rarely take part in combat operations; however, some women are thought to make essential contributions to the activities of extremist groups through auxiliary services such as laundry, cooking and nursing. In addition, they may be involved in collecting information or money for the groups.
- ▶ For women who are marginalised due to their status or profession (for instance, enslaved women, low-caste women, or sex workers) being connected with extremist groups may bring social recognition as well as guarantees of material well-being. In the case of sex workers, as they have access to soldiers deployed at outposts, they are often considered a source of tactical intelligence. In exchange for sharing their knowledge, they receive financial remuneration from the extremist groups as well as social legitimisation.
- ▶ Whether they are involved in the activities of extremist groups or not, women's support of them is partly attributable to the perceived benefits of being ruled by sharia, including in relation to work: while household chores are considered rewarding, work outside the home (for instance in the fields in very harsh conditions) is seen as onerous and inappropriate for women. The exemption of women from work outside of the home is thus considered a privilege.
- ▶ For men, there may be a number of reasons attracting them to extremist groups, including reasons linked to gender norms and masculinities, also in relation to work: partly, the masculine ideal is expressed in terms of a man's ability to protect his wife from the arduous need to work. A man's dignity and integrity is undermined if he lacks the means of subsistence. Therefore, for some men in the central Sahel, it may be less stigmatising to be a jihadist than to be unemployed.
- ▶ To some extent, the gender division of labour is also starting to be re-shaped due to the rules imposed under 'jihadist governance'. Restrictions such as women not being able to go out after sunset, traveling or using public transport with a man who is not her husband or a member of her family or frequenting crowded places like markets restrict women's work, hindering activities such as collecting firewood, selling milk and itinerant trade. There are indications that these restrictions are starting to transform gender roles, leading men to take on some of the tasks traditionally done by women that they are now prevented from performing.

Source: Raineri, Luca. 2020. *Dogmatism or Pragmatism? Violent extremism and gender in the central Sahel*. International Alert.

## Peace agreements

Women tend to be marginal or almost absent in peace negotiations: between 1992 and 2019, women made up on average 14 per cent of negotiators, 7 per cent of mediators, and 5 per cent of signatories in peace processes around the world (UN 2020). Peace agreements are also often gender blind and do not take into account the need to mainstream gender into peacebuilding processes, including the reconstruction of communities and societies. Between 1995 and 2019, the percentage of peace agreements with at least one gender equality provision increased from 14 to 22 per cent, although the quality and implementation of those provisions vary greatly (UN 2020).

This is a lost opportunity in terms of both gender equality as well as peacebuilding, as women play a critically important role in building sustainable peace. Women's participation in peace negotiations has been shown to increase the likelihood of a peace agreement lasting at least 15 years by 35 per cent (OECD 2017). Moreover, women's economic empowerment is a significant contributor to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. Women's participation in the economy contributes to full use of productive resources, and women tend to allocate a substantial proportion of their economic dividends to family well-being and community recovery.

### 1.1.3 Gender issues specific to disaster situations

#### Disaster risk reduction

In general, women and girls are more likely to die as a result of disasters than men and boys: for example, women made up 61 per cent of fatalities caused by Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, 70–80 per cent in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and 91 per cent in the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh (Habtezion 2013). They are also often the hardest hit in terms of socio-economic impacts of both sudden- or slow-onset disasters and climate change. This disproportionate exposure and vulnerability is explained by several factors, including that women often live and work closely with natural resources and in environments that are most strongly impacted by disasters; they may be prevented from being able to escape from disasters due to socio-cultural norms that restrict movement; and they have lower levels of access to economic resources as well as

to education and information, including in relation to disaster warnings (Habtezion 2013).

It should be noted, however, that in some situations men are disproportionately vulnerable and affected: for instance, the nature of their work (for example, outdoor jobs) may expose them to disasters and gender norms may mean men are expected to take undue risks in disaster situations.

DRR and responses to disasters also have gender dimensions: women are often not adequately represented in DRR bodies or response entities, so their needs and preferences may be neglected in the planning and provision of support. For example, relocation or new economic activities in post-disaster contexts may generate opportunities that are more accessible to men than women. At the same time, disasters may also trigger re-negotiations of existing power relations and resource management systems (SDC 2019). Box 1.10 provides examples of gender impacts of disasters, and box 1.11 provides insight into intersection of gender, conflict and climate change.

#### ► Box 1.10 Examples of gender impacts of disasters and climate change

##### Sudden-onset disasters

Following the 1991 cyclone and flood in Bangladesh, the death rate was almost five times higher among women than men. There are several explanations for this. Warning information was conveyed by men to men in public spaces, but was in many cases not communicated to the rest of the family. Many women are often not allowed to leave the house without a male relative, and died while waiting for their relatives to return home and take them to safety. In addition, most women in Bangladesh have never learned to swim, which significantly reduced their chances of surviving during the flood (Habtezion 2013).

When hurricane Mitch struck Central America in October 1998, there were more immediate deaths among men than women, which can be attributed to them being engaged in open-air activities, but also to them taking fewer precautions when facing risks (Habtezion 2013). In terms of post-disaster action, in Honduras, it led to more equitable land distribution and better flood preparedness which benefitted the poor, demonstrating how recovery and reconstruction can be leveraged to “build back better” (SDC 2019).

##### Slow onset disasters and climate change

In Mali, women are responsible for rice cultivation in the irrigated areas while men are more likely to be engaged in wage income or livestock rearing activities. Therefore, changes in rainfall patterns affects women more than men. At the same time, men might suffer more as single-parent survivors, as support is often targeted only at single mothers and not fathers because of the gendered division of labour and the perception of men as breadwinners and of women as family caretakers (SDC 2019).

Sources: Habtezion, Senay. 2013. *Gender and disaster risk reduction*, Gender and Climate Change Asia and the Pacific Policy Brief 3; SDC. 2019. *Gender, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction*, SDC Guidance Sheet.

### ► Box 1.11 Gender, climate change and conflict in northern Nigeria

There is a dual link between conflict and climate change: communities in conflict-affected settings are generally less resilient and less able to cope with the impacts of climate change; at the same time, climate change can compound already existing tensions and generate new ones, for instance ones sparked by limited opportunities or access to productive resources.

In northern Nigeria, challenges caused by a decade of conflict and climate change (for instance increases in temperature and the unpredictability of rainfall) converge and compound each other.

In the Middle Belt region, violence between communities is generally considered to be caused by farmer-pastoralist conflict, which is to a great extent attributable to the increasing scarcity of natural resources that become an object of inter-group grievances.

Gender relations and norms contribute to and are impacted by this double challenge:

In a situation of limited resources including grazing land and water for cattle, young men are increasingly moving alone with their cattle, leaving families behind. The responsibility of protecting family wealth tied up in cattle, the stress experienced by these young men are among the factors which intensify conflict dynamics.

Conflict is frequently ignited between young male pastoralists and women in farming communities. Women report that conflict sites include farmlands, which pastoralists are more likely to encroach on if a woman is present, and water points, if women fetch water at the same time cattle is watered.

Attacks – including sexual violence – against women in these situations fuel conflict as norms of protective masculinity lead men to retaliate when “their women” have been attacked.

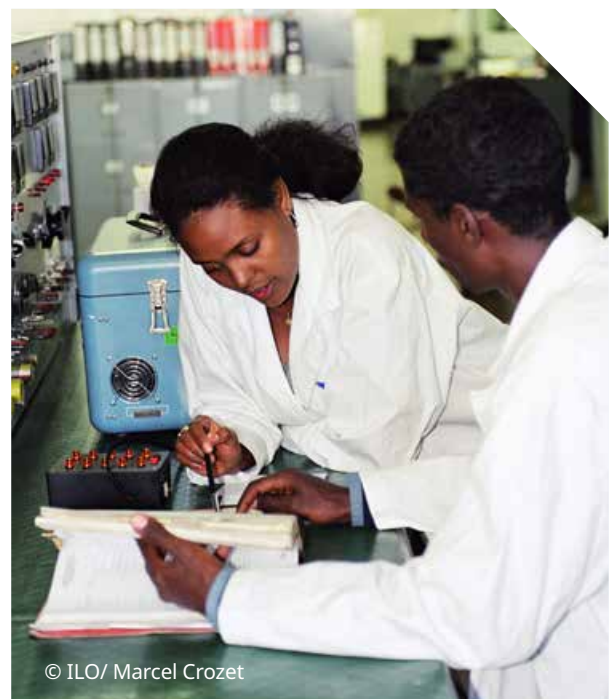
Source: UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and PBSO (UN Peacebuilding Support Office) of DPPA (Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs). 2020. *Gender, Climate and Security: Sustaining inclusive peace on the frontlines of climate change*.

Taking into account gender in relation to DRR is essential given not only the gendered vulnerabilities in such crises described above (which often exacerbate existing inequalities), but also to leverage women’s knowledge, skills and experiences as a means of enhancing the equitability and effectiveness of DRR. Although their voices are rarely heard, many women have in-depth knowledge of the natural environment, and they have developed solutions in relation to risk. For example, a study from South Asia reveals that in many communities women have found effective strategies to protect their livelihoods assets from damage and destruction by flooding, including by storing their seed in high places (UNEP et al. 2020).

## 1.2 Key frameworks for gender equality, peace and resilience

There is a strong commitment by the UN system, including the ILO and its constituents, to enhance gender equality and strengthen women’s empowerment and leadership in settings of fragility, conflict and disaster. While some frameworks focus or touch upon on gender equality in the world of work in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, most frameworks do not bring these three dimensions together. It is, however, important to keep in mind that international labour standards are also applicable in fragile settings, although this may not be specified. Likewise, frameworks

on gender equality, peacebuilding and DRR are highly relevant for the world of work. This section includes a summary of the most important frameworks in the areas of gender equality, peace and resilience. Box 1.12 provides an overview of inter-agency working groups and committees for gender, peace and resilience.



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► **Box 1.12 Inter-agency working groups and committees on gender, peace and resilience****Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security**

The Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality was initially set up in 2001 as a task force to follow-up on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. It aims to play a catalytic role in global policy development, advocacy, strategic policy advisory support to global programming, coordination, monitoring and reporting of the UN system actions to advance the WPS agenda. Among other work, it contributes to the preparation of the UN Secretary-General's reports on WPS; prepares awareness-raising materials, events and activities related to open debates of the Security Council on WPS; and works on specific thematic or programmatic issues, including via issue specific sub-working groups (for instance, on indicators for monitoring WPS). The Standing Committee is chaired by UN Women, meets on a quarterly basis or needs-based basis and reports annually on its work to the Chief Executives Board through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. The ILO joined the Standing Committee in 2020. More information is available [here](#).

**Task Force on gender mainstreaming in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus**

The Task Force on gender mainstreaming in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus was set up under the IASC Gender Reference Group in mid-2021 for an initial period of two years. Its aim is to coordinate work on gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process at headquarters and country level. The Task Force meets every two months and is co-chaired by UN Women and Oxfam and its members represent the Gender Reference Group, Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and IASC Results Group 4 (Humanitarian-Development Collaboration). The ILO joined the Task Force following its creation in mid-2021. The Task Force will coordinate global dialogue, including by identifying entry points and providing guidance on advancing gender equality in triple nexus-related planning processes and coordination mechanisms, and will provide strategic and technical guidance on the operationalization and strengthening of country level pilot initiatives.

**Task team on gender equality and women's leadership in disaster risk reduction**

In 2021, a task team was set up as part of the DRR Focal Points Group following a recommendation from the Senior Leadership Group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to strengthen work in this area. The task team, co-chaired by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the United Nations population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women and in which ILO participated, developed a [study](#) identifying gaps on gender equality and women's leadership in DRR within the UN system and recommending priority areas of action for the UN system based on this gap analysis. One of the recommendations (Recommendation 8) highlights the need for innovation in supporting women's economic resilience, and it is expected that the ILO will contribute to its implementation through its activities on promoting gender equality and resilience through decent work.



## 1.2.1 Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by United Nations Member States in 2015. They constitute the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and guide global, regional and national efforts to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all and the planet. While the 2030 Agenda as a whole seeks to achieve gender equality and peace, several goals have a particular focus on gender equality, employment and decent work, resilience and peace:

- ▶ **SDG 5** calls on all states to achieve gender equality and to empower all women and girls. The goal recognizes that despite advances on gender equality and women's empowerment in recent decades, gender inequalities persist and constitute a key obstacle to achieve sustainable development. Targets include ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; giving women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership and control over land and natural resources; ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership; and recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work.
- ▶ **SDG 8** urges the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. It is acknowledged that unemployment as well as informal, unsecure and unsafe employment hinders economic growth and sustainable development. Among other targets, the aim is to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, and equal pay for work of equal value; eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery, human trafficking and all forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers; and protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
- ▶ **SDG 13** highlights the need to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Climate change is recognized as the "single biggest threat to development, and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable". Efforts by all should be taken to strengthen resilience and

adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries and improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

- ▶ **SDG 16** calls for states to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Ending abuse exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, and ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, are two of the targets for SDG 16.



## 1.2.2 International labour standards

International labour standards – both legally binding conventions or protocols and recommendations with non-binding guidelines – are applicable in all settings, including those characterized by fragility, conflict and disaster. Out of the 190 conventions, 6 protocols and 206 recommendations, several focus specifically on gender equality and women's rights in the world of work.<sup>6</sup> In addition, the ILO adopted landmark recommendation No. 205 in 2017 on employment and decent work for peace and resilience.

- ▶ **The Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)**<sup>7</sup> offers guiding principles for taking measures to generate employment and decent work in crisis situations, and presents a phased multitrack approach to promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience. The Recommendation highlights the need to recognize that crises affect women and men differently, and the critical importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience. Among other things, Recommendation No. 205 calls on Member States to apply a gender perspective in all crisis prevention and response design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the conventions and recommendations mentioned in this section, further conventions, protocols and recommendations related to gender equality are available [here](#).

<sup>7</sup> Recommendation No. 205 supersedes the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944 (No. 71). See also the brochure about Recommendation No. 205 [here](#) and the ILO resource page for Recommendation No. 205 [here](#).

- ▶ **The Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951** call on Member States to promote and ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value.
- ▶ **The Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958** present principles on equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination of such kind.
- ▶ **The Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Recommendation (No. 165), 1981** urge Member States to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.
- ▶ **The Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183) and Recommendation (No. 191), 2000** provides rules for the adoption of national legislation for the promotion of health and safety of the mother and child, including the protection for pregnancy, the right to a maternity leave period, maternity benefits, and the right to return to the same position.
- ▶ **The Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189) and Recommendation (No. 201), 2011** call on Members to ensure effective promotion and protection of the human rights of all domestic workers, and respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work of domestic workers.
- ▶ **The Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019** request Member States to adopt, in accordance with national law and circumstances and in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizations, an inclusive, integrated and gender-responsive approach for the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.

### 1.2.3 Frameworks for disaster risk reduction

The ILO **Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all** (2015) recognize that the world of work faces major challenges in the transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies. These challenges include the need for enterprises,

workplaces and communities to adapt to climate change to avoid the loss of assets and livelihoods and involuntary migration. One of the guiding principles highlights the need to take into account the strong gender dimension of many environmental challenges and opportunities in policies and programmes. Specific gender policies should be considered in order to promote equitable outcomes. The Guidelines also urge governments and social partners to promote equal access to opportunities for skills acquisition and recognition for all, in particular for young people and women, among other groups.

**The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030** (2015) aims to achieve a substantial reduction of disaster risk; to reduce losses in lives, livelihoods and health, and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries; and to strengthen their resilience. One of the framework's four priorities states that "public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance economic, social, health and cultural resilience [...]. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation." Women's participation and leadership during disaster response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases as well as in designing, resourcing and implementing gender-sensitive policies, plans and programmes are central in the Sendai Framework. In addition, the framework mentions the need for adequate capacity building measures to empower women for preparedness as well as to build their capacity to secure alternate means of livelihood in post-disaster situations.

**The Paris Agreement** (adopted at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015 and entered into force in 2016) is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change and limit global warming. The agreement takes into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities. Article 7 of the agreement recognizes that adaptation efforts contribute to the global climate change response to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems. The same article also highlights that adaptation actions should be gender-responsive and participatory, and consider vulnerable groups. When addressing climate change, parties should respect, promote and consider their obligations on gender equality and the empowerment of women, among other aspects.



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### 1.2.4 Frameworks for conflict prevention and peacebuilding

**The UN Sustaining Peace Agenda** stresses the importance of comprehensive approaches that include the entire UN system to prevent the outbreak, escalation, recurrence or continuation of violent conflict, creating durable peace and prospects for economic development. The Agenda is based on the sustaining peace resolutions adopted in 2016 and 2020<sup>8</sup> and is reinforced by other agreements and reports, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It reaffirms the importance of women's full, equal and meaningful participation in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding efforts. The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, has stated that "we need to increase women's representation in a systematic and meaningful way that goes far beyond tokenism. Women must be in decision-making roles at all levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict" (UN 2018).

**The UN Secretary-General's Prevention Agenda** focuses on taking early action to counter emerging risks, targeting the root causes of vulnerabilities and building resilience to external economic shocks, including by promoting job-led growth. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated that women's empowerment is essential in prevention efforts, and upholding gender equality contributes to making societies more resilient.<sup>9</sup>

**The UN Secretary General's report, Our Common Agenda** (2021) presents the Secretary-General's vision on the future of global cooperation through an inclusive, networked, and effective multilateralism. It is an agenda of action, designed to strengthen and accelerate multilateral agreements – particularly the 2030 Agenda – and make a tangible difference in people's lives. Our Common Agenda contains 12 commitments. One of these is to place women and girls at the centre, a commitment that includes facilitating women's economic inclusion, including investment in the care economy and support for women entrepreneurs.

8 Twin resolutions of General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/262 (2016), Security Council resolution S/RES/2282 (2016) and the twin resolutions adopted at the end of the end of the 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture; General Assembly resolution A/RES/75/201 (2020) and Security Council resolution S/RES/2558 (2020).

9 For more information see [www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/meeting-prevention-challenge](https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/meeting-prevention-challenge) and [www.un-ilibrary.org/content/journals/15643913/54/3/1](https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/journals/15643913/54/3/1).

**The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States** (2011), which include peacebuilding and state-building goals, provides guidance on the country-level implementation of peacebuilding priorities in fragile contexts. One of the goals focuses on creating employment and improving livelihoods as an economic foundation. The New Deal recognizes that the empowerment of women, youth and marginalised groups are key actors for peace and at the heart of successful peacebuilding and statebuilding.

### 1.2.5 Frameworks for gender equality

**The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, and entered into force as in 1981. Article 11 of the Convention calls on States to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment. This includes adopting measures to prevent discrimination against women on grounds of marriage or maternity. While the convention does not focus specifically on conflict or disaster settings, it does recognize that development, welfare and peace require women's equal participation in all fields. In addition, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has adopted several general recommendations that are particularly relevant when working in fragile settings, including the following:<sup>10</sup>

- General recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. It offers guidance on measures to ensure women's human rights are protected before, during and after conflict, including access to education, employment and health;
- General recommendation No. 37 (2018) on gender-related dimensions of DRR in the context of climate change. The recommendation provides guidance on ensuring women's participation and empowerment, and that human rights of women are respected, in all stages and levels of change climate change and disaster prevention, mitigation, response, recovery and adaptation.

**The UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security** reaffirms the importance of women's full and equal involvement, representation and participation in the promotion of peace and security, including in prevention, management and resolution of conflicts as well as in peacebuilding and peacekeeping initiatives. In addition, it encourages parties to take into account the particular needs of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings. It also calls on parties to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

Resolution 1325 (2000) and ten subsequent resolutions form the core of the women, peace and security agenda. The succeeding resolutions offer further guidance on the impact on women and girls and their specific needs in conflict and post-conflict contexts, as well as their essential role in peace-building efforts. While employment and decent work generally are not mentioned in these resolutions, resolution 1889 (2009) recognizes that the particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations include, among other needs, ways to ensure their livelihoods, land and property rights, employment, as well as their participation in decision-making and post-conflict planning, particularly at early stages of post-conflict peacebuilding.

On a country level, more than 80 countries have adopted national action plans for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, outline national priorities, objectives and activities. In addition, the resolutions on youth, peace and security are important to take into account as they are closely related to and interlinked with those on women, peace and security.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For further general recommendations adopted by the Committee, of which many are relevant for the world of work and/or fragile settings, see [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, [www.un.org/peacebuilding/policy-issues-and-partnerships/policy/youth](http://www.un.org/peacebuilding/policy-issues-and-partnerships/policy/youth) and UN Women, 2018, Young Women in Peace and Security: At the intersection of the YPS and WPS agendas.



# 2

## Recommendations and guidance for gender-responsiveness in peace and resilience promotion

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In fragile settings, the long-standing approaches of the ILO to job creation, fundamental principles and rights at work, social protection and social dialogue are essential building blocks in preventing and responding to crises. Nonetheless, interventions do not automatically contribute to gender equality, nor peace and resilience, and if they are not well-designed, they can increase gender inequalities and do harm. It is therefore essential to integrate gender-responsiveness and conflict-sensitivity into any work done in a fragile context and, where possible, to identify how the work can contribute to sustainable peace and resilience.

This section contains general recommendations, practical guidance for analyses, assessments and interventions, and guidance on some specific policy areas of the decent work agenda for promoting gender equality while building peace and social cohesion and enhancing resilience.

## 2.1 General recommendations

There are certain general recommendations that apply across decent work technical areas in different spheres, from analyses to project design and from implementation to upstream policy initiatives. For instance, regardless of the area of work concerned – whether enterprise or skills development, occupational health and safety or social protection – it is important to recognize that women, men, boys and girls are differently affected by crises, to take into account issues such as intersectionality or the situations of gender and sexual minorities, and to use a rights-based approach and leverage social dialogue.

The recommendations below – based on Recommendation No. 205 and other key frameworks – could be drawn upon in contexts affected by fragility, conflict and disaster to enhance the impact of action both in terms of gender equality and peace and resilience.

- ▶ Recognize that crises affect women and men differently, and the critical importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling sustainable recovery and building resilience, in line with Recommendation No. 205 (see box 2.1). Build on women's capacities and empower women and promote women's equal and meaningful participation and leadership at an early stage, including in decision-making roles at all levels, in the area of the project as well as where possible in work and processes linked to related to peacebuilding, social cohesion, DRR and climate change adaptation (see section 1.2 and Picard 2021). Importantly, the equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women in all their diversity should be promoted, including women of different age groups, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, indigenous and tribal women as well as women with different socio-economic status, religions and migrant, refugee or displacement status.
- ▶ Anticipate and monitor gender biases in the access of vulnerable groups to services. Women's effective access to relief is often restricted by differences in social power, social esteem and physical mobility. Gender-specific needs and traditional work patterns have to be recognized.
- ▶ Avoid viewing men's and women's roles in crises as adversarial, and communicate the benefits of women's empowerment and implement a strategy to gain men's support for such empowerment.



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- ▶ Support positive gender-related changes that may have occurred in the labour market. The “window of opportunity” for social change after crises can expand non-traditional work for women and men, with long-lasting positive consequences. In order to leverage this potential, it is essential to support ways of ensuring the sustainability of such changes beyond the crisis, and also to ensure they are accompanied in parallel shifts in male identities and roles.
- ▶ Avoid stereotypical portraying of women, men, girls and boys. This includes paying attention to not portraying women as victims per default and to always also identify and leverage their high potential, contributions and capacities in various areas and at all levels. Similarly, it is important to look beyond stereotypical gender roles and acknowledge that women may also be perpetrators and supporters of violence and conflict in different ways, and to recognize that men can also be victims, including of sexual violence. Stereotypical gendered impressions can also lead to stigmatization or a failure of those affected to seek out or receive support.
- ▶ Work with men. Addressing gender inequalities and strengthening women's empowerment, participation and leadership cannot be done by working with and for women only. Including men and working on gender and patriarchal norms in an inclusive way is critical to achieve positive and sustainable change.

- ▶ Always take into consideration that women, as well as men, are not a homogeneous group and that different personal characteristics such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, indigenous or tribal belonging and others may intersect resulting in compounded discrimination. For example, non-binary, gender fluid and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other (LGBTQIA+) individuals are often subject to specific types of negative discriminations and violence because of their gender and/or sexual identity/identities. Having an intersectional approach will strengthen the understanding of vulnerabilities, risks and implications of fragility, conflict and disaster in a specific context. It is crucial to work in an inclusive, non-judging and non-discriminatory way, taking different needs, roles, situations and capacities into account. The principle of do no harm should be always considered in dealing with different aspects considered sensitive by a given context.
- ▶ Leverage the institutions of work and social dialogue. Employers' and workers' organizations can play a vital role in disaster prevention, preparedness and response and in supporting resilience building as well as contributing to peace and social cohesion; at the same time, they are often instrumental in promoting gender equality and addressing workplace discrimination by offering relevant services and policy guidance to their members. Efforts to promote gender equality in fragile, conflict and disaster affected settings can further leverage social dialogue and the convening power of the most representative employers' and workers' organizations and, as appropriate, of relevant civil society organizations, including ones working on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- ▶ Give due consideration to the interconnectedness of conflict, environmental degradation and climate change, and gender inequality, and ensure interventions leverage the mutually reinforcing dynamics of gender, peace and resilience.
- ▶ Work at both upstream and downstream levels, and consider the needs for both immediate job creation-, income- and livelihoods support and for action to build long-term resilience, sustain peace and bring about transformative change in terms of gender equality (see box 2.2).
- ▶ Ensure there is no trade-off between the speed of action and gender considerations. This is important as a principle of human rights, but also as disregarding inequalities may jeopardize the effectiveness and sustainability of response and recovery initiatives.



► **Box 2.1 Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), paragraph 15(a)–(e)**

In responding to discrimination arising from or exacerbated by conflicts or disasters and when taking measures for promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience, Members should:

- (a) respect, promote and realize equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men without discrimination of any kind, taking into account the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951, and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958;
- (b) pay special attention to single-headed households, in particular when they are headed by children, women, persons with disabilities or elderly persons;
- (c) take measures to ensure that women who have been employed during a crisis and have assumed expanded responsibilities are not replaced against their will when the male workforce returns;
- (d) take measures to ensure that women are empowered to effectively and meaningfully participate in decision-making processes in the context of recovery and building resilience, and that their needs and interests are prioritized in strategies and responses, and that the human rights of women and girls are promoted and protected;
- (e) prevent and punish all forms of gender-based violence, including rape, sexual exploitation and harassment, and protect and support victims.

► **Box 2.2 Promotion of rights at work and social dialogue for peace, resilience and gender equality in Somalia**

Following a campaign by social partners, notably the Federation of Somali Trade Unions (FESTU), Somalia ratified the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) and six more ILO Conventions in March 2021, highlighting the the desire of the Somali people for equality, peace and good governance.

Convention No. 190 calls on ratifying States to respect, promote and realize the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment and, to this end, adopt an inclusive, integrated and gender-responsive approach for the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.

The ratification of the Conventions will hopefully also contribute to peace, as noted by ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder: “Promoting peace, preventing conflict, enabling recovery and building resilience often start at the workplace. With the early ratification of Convention No. 190, Somalia recognizes the critical importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace.” Among the Conventions ratified by Somalia in 2021 were also the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144). With support from the ILO, social dialogue and tripartism have been embraced by tripartite constituents in recent years. A conducive working relationship based on consensus, confidence and trust building between the Government and trade unions has opened the door for the establishment of the first formal tripartite structure, the Somali National Tripartite Consultative Committee to deal with labour issues including policies of relevance to post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The ratification of these international labour standards highlights the importance of equality, fundamental rights, and social dialogue for nurturing and sustaining peace and resilience.

Source: ILO. 2021d. “Somalia recognizes decent work for women and men as the foundation of peace and resilience”, 19 April.

**Notes:**

1. ILO, COVID-19 and the world of work: a focus on indigenous and tribal peoples, 2020.
2. The most important international human rights and labour standards include The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), 2007; ILO Convention No. 169 (1989), ILO Convention No. 111 (1958), ILO Convention No. 190 (2019), and ILO Recommendation No. 205 (2017). Despite their central role in food production, in most cases indigenous women from the research countries have no independent entitlements to the land they use recognized in law or in practice. They have therefore little voice, if any, in decisions concerning the overall management of the land and receive no compensation in case of evictions.

### ► Box 2.3 Ensuring the participation of indigenous women

Indigenous women are among the hardest hit by crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.\* In crisis situations, the participation of indigenous women is essential to formulate responses that are inclusive and responsive to the specific needs, vulnerabilities and risks of all people affected. As holders of traditional knowledge and actors with key roles in livelihoods and resilience, their involvement in the design of national responses is thus critical to ensure a sustainable recovery.

The findings of the research undertaken for the study “Exploring and Tackling Barriers to Indigenous Women’s Participation and Organization” (ILO 2021e) reaffirm that addressing barriers to indigenous women’s organization and participation require an integrated approach. This means being mindful of for example the multiple vulnerabilities of indigenous women related to their gender, indigenous identity and socioeconomic status. Under this approach, the priorities, cosmovision and cultural identity of indigenous women should be respected and given due consideration. The findings of the study point to the importance of indigenous women’s leadership in the design and implementation of any strategy aimed at strengthening their organization and participation. The study suggests that any such strategy should include at least three main areas of action:

- **Strengthening the policy, legal and institutional framework concerning indigenous peoples’ rights** (including addressing the security situation affecting certain indigenous communities, paying particular attention to the distinct vulnerabilities to harassment and violence of indigenous women; preventing and addressing gender-based violence against indigenous women, in consultation with them; and preventing and addressing land-related conflicts in full observance of indigenous peoples’ rights and women’s rights)\*\*
- **Supporting indigenous women’s participation and organization** (such as supporting the creation and functioning of indigenous women’s organizations and networks; promoting dialogue and collaboration among indigenous women and trade unions and employers’ organizations; and providing capacity-building to indigenous men and women and their traditional leaders relating to indigenous peoples’ and women’s rights).
- **Enhancing indigenous women’s economic empowerment, through access to decent work and social protection** (including supporting and strengthening indigenous women’s livelihoods in consultation with them by providing, for example, access to relevant skills development, market facilities and productive resources and inputs, including technology and financial services, and access to information, facilities and technical assistance).

The findings of the study confirm that women’s economic empowerment and their participation are profoundly linked and, as such, they should be addressed jointly. Indigenous women should have access without discrimination to education and occupational training that is culturally appropriate and relevant to their own aspirations and demands, as well as equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation, in line with the guidance provided by ILO Convention No. 111 (1958).

**Source:** ILO. 2021e. *Exploring and tackling barriers to indigenous women’s participation and organization: A study based on qualitative research in Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cameroon and Guatemala.*

**Note:** \* ILO. 2020. *COVID-19 and the world of work: a focus on indigenous and tribal peoples.*

\*\* The most important international human rights and labour standards include The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), 2007; ILO Convention No. 169 (1989), ILO Convention No. 111 (1958), ILO Convention No. 190 (2019), and ILO Recommendation No. 205 (2017). Despite their central role in food production, in most cases indigenous women from the research countries have no independent entitlements to the land they use recognized in law or in practice. They have therefore little voice, if any, in decisions concerning the overall management of the land and receive no compensation in case of evictions.

## 2.2 Practical guidance for analyses, assessments and interventions

Gender is a critical element that should be mainstreamed in all ILO initiatives at various levels, also in actions that are not focused specifically on gender equality and women’s empowerment. This includes the analysis or assessment that is usually conducted in the initial phase of a project, programme, policy or other initiative, as well as the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

### Gender-responsive analyses and assessments

All analyses and assessments, such as peace and conflict analysis and situation analyses and collaborative and policy area-specific assessments should be gender-responsive. If a gender perspective is not incorporated into all steps of any initiative, this has severe short- and long-term implications for the affected population. Box 2.4 includes brief information about key analyses and assessments, and figure 2.1 shows the links between these.

▶ **Box 2.4 Brief information about key analyses and assessments**

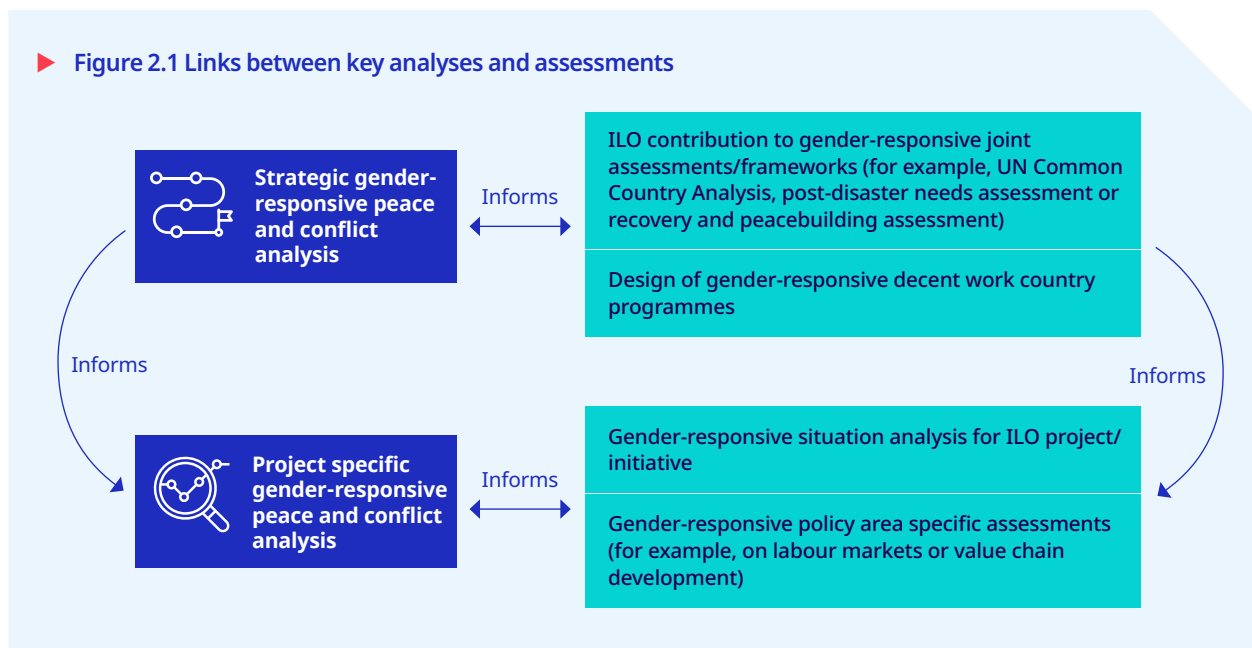
- ▶ A **peace and conflict analysis** deepens the understanding of peace and conflict dynamics and their interactions with decent work issues, and it articulates how ILO initiatives can purposefully contribute to peace and avoid exacerbating conflict. It is used to inform collaborative assessments, the design of Decent Work Country Programmes or projects, or the adaptation of ongoing projects. It is an integral part of the programme or project design process, and where a situation analysis is conducted, the peace and conflict analysis is also conducted. For more information, see the [Peace and Conflict Analysis Guidance for ILO's programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts](#) (2021).
- ▶ A **situation analysis** is conducted as part of the project cycle. The analysis provides an understanding of the existing situation, what the problem to be addressed is, what its causes and consequences are, whom it affects, and what other key stakeholders are involved. For more information, see the ILO Development Cooperation Internal Governance Manual (2021, section 4.1.2), available on the ILO Intranet.

The ILO takes part in various **collaborative assessments**, including the following, and ensures that employment decent work issues are addressed as part of the response and recovery:

- ▶ **UN Common Country Analysis (CCA)** - The UN CCA is the UN system's independent, impartial and collective assessment (that is, a description of a country situation) and analysis (that is, a description of causes and their implications) of a country situation for its internal use. It examines progress, gaps, opportunities and bottlenecks vis-à-vis a country's commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda, UN norms and standards, and the principles of the UN Charter, including as reflected in the Cooperation Framework Guiding Principles. For more information, see the [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance](#) (2019, section 2.1.2).
- ▶ **Post-disaster needs assessment** is an internationally accepted methodology for determining the physical damage and economic losses caused by major disasters, and the costs of meeting recovery needs. Undertaken at the request of – and led by – the government of a disaster-affected country, with technical and financial support from mainly the specialized agencies of the UN as well as the World Bank and the EU. For more information, see the [Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Guidelines, Volume A](#) (Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, United Nations Development Group and European Commission, 2013) as well as the [Employment and decent work in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#) guide (2021, chapter 6) and the [ILO post-disaster needs assessment tools and documents](#) [Dropbox folder](#).
- ▶ **Recovery and peacebuilding assessment** (previously known as post-conflict needs assessment), offers countries a standardized and internationally sanctioned approach to identify the underlying causes and impacts of conflict and crisis, and to help governments develop a strategy for how to prioritize recovery and peacebuilding activities over time. Undertaken at the request of the government. Like the post-disaster needs assessment, RPBA is conducted under the Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning signed by the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union. For more information, see the [Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments – A practical note to assessment and planning](#) (EU, World Bank and UN, 2017) and the [Employment and decent work in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#) guide (2021, chapter 6).

The ILO also conducts a range of **policy area specific analyses and assessments**, including [market systems and value chains analyses](#) and [rapid market assessments](#), as well as tools developed to assess the impact of COVID-19, such as [Rapid diagnostics for assessing the country-level impact of COVID-19 on the economy and labour market](#), [Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries](#) and the [Assessment of the needs of enterprises resulting from COVID-19](#).

► **Figure 2.1 Links between key analyses and assessments**



In short, a gender-responsive analysis and assessment considers how the crisis impacts women, men, girls and boys differently and looks at what is needed to address structural inequalities and to involve women fully and equally in the response. It also analyses whether gender inequality contributes to tensions and it tries to identify opportunities for transformative change in gender relations, with positive dividends for peace and resilience. Importantly, any analysis and assessment has an intersectional approach and considers the different impacts on women and men in all their diversity as well as age groups, such as older people, infants, children and youth, as well as people with disabilities, people living with HIV, or indigenous or tribal peoples. Socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, cultural background, migrant, refugee or displacement status and geographic location are other intersectional aspects influencing the impacts of a crisis on women and men, and the needs and contributions of women and men. Analyses and assessments can be guided by the following questions to ensure gender-responsiveness (taking intersectional dimensions into account for each question). For examples of other questions that can be used and disaggregated by gender, see Annex 1 in *Peace and Conflict Analysis – Guidance for ILO’s programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts* (ILO et al. 2021).

#### Drivers, dynamics and violence

- How are the drivers of and factors contributing to conflict/fragility/disaster vulnerability related to gender norms and masculinities, including those in the world of work? What are the drivers and dynamics experienced by women and men?

- In conflict settings, who are the key actors and what is their gender composition?
- What types of violence, if any, and has there been or is there sexual and gender-based conflict and/or disaster-related violence, including domestic violence? If yes, who are the victims and who are the perpetrators?

#### Impacts, consequences and needs

- How do fragility, conflict and disaster affect women and men in different ways? What are the impacts related to gender in the world of work (the formal and informal economy), including access to livelihoods, employment and decent work? How does people’s gender, or other social or identity markers, affect their access? How has the division of labour between women and men been affected?
- What are the effects of fragility, conflict and disaster on the gender division of access to, and control over, resources (financial resources, agricultural land, water and so on)?
- How do fragility, conflict and disaster impact gender inequalities, including in the world of work and in relation to care needs?
- What are the short, medium and long-term needs, including livelihoods, social, cultural and psychological needs, of women and men?

#### Response, recovery and/or peacebuilding

- How are women and men coping with the situation and how do they engage with and contribute to the response, recovery and/or peacebuilding? How

can existing mechanisms for peacebuilding, social cohesion and resilience be strengthened?

- ▶ What opportunities are there for strengthening gender equality, women's empowerment and women's leadership in the world of work as well as in peacebuilding, DRR and climate change adaptation?
- ▶ What affect has there been on the capacity of ILO constituents and other partner organizations to conduct inclusive social dialogue and promote gender equality, women's rights and workplaces free from violence and harassment? What are the opportunities to strengthen their capacity and actions in this area?

While conducting the analysis/assessment, it is important to not assume that everyone's needs are the same. This includes recognizing that psychological, social and cultural needs may be just as important in ensuring peoples' survival as the physical needs for food and shelter, and that meeting these can save lives too.

For tips on how to integrate gender when planning and conducting the analysis or assessment, see box 2.7.



### Integrating analysis/assessment findings into design efforts

It is crucial that the gender-related findings and recommendations of the analysis or assessment inform the design of the programme, project or initiative in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, including crisis response and recovery actions. Naturally, the

findings should also be taken into account during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation in the case of a project and other initiatives that include those steps. It is also a good idea to think of whether other – ongoing, new or upcoming – ILO initiatives in the concerned country or area can benefit from the outcomes of the analysis or assessment.

The assessment findings can help to identify if and how the project, programme or initiative can contribute to strengthening gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership in a conflict-sensitive way. For example, take into account the specific challenges and constraints of women and men caused by the conflict, disaster or fragility and identify how these can be addressed in order to ensure effective gender-responsive implementation of the initiative. For advice on specific policy areas, see section 2.3. Imagine that one of the assessment findings showed that, at the country level, relevant national plans or policies – related to peace and social cohesion – were undergoing a revision. The revision process may be used in programme design to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment.

Importantly, programme designers should identify if and how the policies or activities – both generally and those relating specifically to gender equality and women's empowerment – can go further and contribute to peace, social cohesion and/or resilience.<sup>12</sup> By increasing women's employment and decent work opportunities and responding to women's practical and strategic needs in a long-term perspective, interventions contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. Through enhanced social justice, cohesion and contact, and reduced grievances linked to unequal access to resources and opportunities, such measures will also have positive dividends for peace and strengthen women to act as agents of peace. Likewise, improved and equal preparedness, response capacity and social protection, and more secure working conditions and livelihoods for everyone, will positively contribute to both gender equality and DRR and resilience.

As part of this process, the findings of the analysis or assessment can also be used in the dialogue with development partners, some of which have specific gender-related criteria. The process could also point to the opportunity for strategic resource mobilization in the area of gender, peace and resilience. For one example of a funding opportunity related to gender and peace, see box 2.5.

<sup>12</sup> For more information, see ILO and PBSO, 2021, [Sustaining Peace through decent work and employment](#); ILO, 2021, [Employment and decent work in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#); ILO, 2019, [How to design, monitor and evaluate peacebuilding results in Jobs for Peace and Resilience programmes](#); ILO, 2021, [Peace and Conflict Analysis: Guidance for ILO's programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts](#).



### ► Box 2.5 Funding opportunity: The Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative

The Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative supports the empowerment of women and the advancement of gender equality and recognizes the important and positive role young people play in peacebuilding. Among other things, the Gender Promotion Initiative supports innovative projects that focus on gender equality and women's empowerment and have potential for catalytic effects and peacebuilding outcomes.

The annual call for proposals is usually held in May and the eligible countries and priority themes are announced at the same time. Peacebuilding Fund projects within the priority area "Revitalization of the economy and generation of immediate peace dividends" support employment and equitable access to basic services. The ILO has made several successful project proposals. Since 2018, for example, the ILO (as a lead or collaborating agency) has implemented projects with funding from the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative in Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan.

General information is available on the [Peacebuilding Fund website](#). Partnering for Development (PARDEV) and the ILO Coordination Support Unit for Peace and Resilience (CSPR) can provide ILO-specific information and advice as well as support. For information about resource mobilization in fragile settings, see ILO, 2021, [Employment and decent work in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#), ch. 8.

### Gender-responsive project results frameworks in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster

In order to make sure that women, men, girls and boys benefit from interventions in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, it is important to ensure that the formulation of outcomes, outputs and activities takes into account the findings of the analysis or assessment, including the differences in the situation and needs of women and men in all their diversity, and addresses these differences.

In the immediate term, project activities need to be designed in a way that enables women to participate (for example, by providing childcare services and ensuring the location and timing of activities suit everyone). In the long term, the design and content of the interventions should ensure that women's practical and strategic needs are met (for example, in the field of infrastructure investments, by prioritising maintenance of or new infrastructure that alleviates women's unpaid care work, such as health centres, schools or crèches, and facilitates their productive work, such as roads or bridges that are important for women's business operations). Interventions should aim at enhancing gender equality and see how this can contribute to peace and resilience.

The below extracts from results frameworks give examples of outcomes, outputs and indicators, and do not come from real-life projects. It is good to know that during project appraisal, proposals are classified by the

appraisal unit of Partnering for Development (PARDEV) regarding their gender responsiveness using so called gender markers. The markers enable assessments of how well projects integrate gender considerations. It sets out a coding system based on minimum standards for incorporating gender considerations into project proposals on a 1–3 scale.<sup>13</sup> Box 2.6 contains examples of gender specific outputs.



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<sup>13</sup> See [this intranet page](#) for a guidance note on the gender markers.



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#### ► Box 2.6 Example of a results framework extract in a disaster setting promoting resilience

Background: Major flooding took place in one region of country X. The post-disaster needs assessment, for which the ILO led the employment and livelihood sector, included a summary of the damaged infrastructure, including the level of damage. In the participatory project planning process, during which women and men from the affected region were consulted, it was found that rehabilitation of one specific road was of particular importance for and prioritized by both women and men. The project is focusing on rehabilitating this road in a way that makes it more protected from or resilient to negative impacts of future flooding.

*All indicators referring to individuals should be disaggregated by age, gender, location and disability.*

Development objective: Inclusive and decent jobs in the infrastructure sector created and contribute to disaster and climate resilience.

Outcome: Affected women and men benefit from job creating and disaster and climate resilient infrastructure

- Output 1: Inclusive and employment intensive infrastructure programme to rehabilitate flood protected road for the affected communities.
  - Indicator: Number of decent work days created for women and men (of at least 50 per cent for women), including youth and people with disabilities
  - Indicator: Number of rehabilitated kilometres of road protected from the negative impacts of future flooding.
  - Indicator: Percentage of women and men in the affected communities who feel that the rehabilitated road enhances their economic resilience in relation to climate change and disasters.
- Output 2: Inclusive employment intensive approaches in relation to resilient infrastructure investments adopted by the government
  - Indicator: Inclusive employment intensive approaches included in the National Employment Policy in relation to resilient infrastructure investments
  - Indicator: Number of trainings on inclusive employment intensive approaches for resilience conducted for government officials and other key stakeholders
  - Indicator: Additional government measures targeting women's economic resilience through inclusive employment intensive infrastructure approaches (for example, financial support to care and market for women entrepreneurs' infrastructures to participate in the markets, inclusive planning and design processes).

### ► Box 2.7 Example of a results framework extract in a conflict setting promoting social cohesion

Background: A long-lasting conflict has been resolved by a peace agreement, but tensions between conflicting groups persist. A peace and conflict analysis conducted by the ILO found that economic grievances and a feeling of discrimination and injustice among the conflicting groups contribute to these continuing tensions. The analysis also showed that women entrepreneurs have not been able to access business development services, resulting in them having particular difficulties to operate businesses in the context of the crisis. The project aims to address this and make a positive contribution to social cohesion through enhanced contact between the conflicting groups in one region.

*All indicators referring to individuals should be disaggregated by age, gender, location, disability and conflicting groups.*

Development objective: Inclusive and decent jobs in cooperatives and SMEs created and contribute to peace and social cohesion.

Outcome: Existing and new cooperatives and SMEs, including joint ones across different groups, benefit from access to conflict-sensitive and peace responsive support services

- Output 1: Strengthened business-continuity management skills for women and men entrepreneurs, including youth and people with disabilities, in order to continue business operations during conflict
  - ▶ Indicator: Number of new business continuity plans developed (following training)
  - ▶ Indicator: Change in perception among women and men participants on fair access to business development services (such as business-continuity management training)
  - ▶ Indicator: Change in perception among women and men participants on fair treatment of women by business continuity service providers
- Output 2: Joint enterprises and cooperatives between different groups and genders established
  - ▶ Indicator: Number of new joint enterprises and cooperatives created
  - ▶ Indicator: Percentage of participants who feel increasingly comfortable working alongside and who are willing to interact with members of “opposing” group at the workplace
  - ▶ Indicator: Percentage of participants who feel increasingly comfortable working alongside and who are willing to interact with other genders

### ► Box 2.8 Examples of gender-specific outputs

As shown in the above results frameworks, gender should be integrated in any outcomes and outputs, but specific outcomes related to the protection of fundamental rights and the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment and leadership can also be developed. Below are some examples of outputs and indicators:

Output: Improved access to day care facilities for women and men participants of the programme

- ▶ Indicator: Proportion of those in need of day care facilities who have timely and affordable access to these.

Output: Measures to ensure pay equity in the programme developed and in place

- ▶ Indicator: Proportion of women and men participating in the programme who receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Output: Measures to prevent and address gender-related and sexual abuse, harassment, exploitation and violence and protect victims developed and in place for participants in the programme.

- ▶ Indicator: Proportion of programme participants who feel highly protected against sexual abuse, harassment, exploitation and violence.

Output: Gender-equality and women’s empowerment and leadership integrated in the world of work-related crisis response, recovery and prevention, including through ILO constituents.

- ▶ Indicator: Number of actions to promote and/or ensure gender-responsiveness in activities led or co-organized by the ILO in work promoting peace and resilience (for example, awareness raising workshops or campaigns).

Output: Participatory and inclusive strategic planning and civic space platforms strengthen the positive perception and active support of women’s role as agents of change and leaders for peace and/or resilience by the communities, including men.

- ▶ Indicator: Change of perception of community leaders (men and women) of women’s meaningful participation in peace and/or resilience processes.

▶ **Box 2.9 Practical tips for planning and implementing analyses, assessments and interventions**

Gender must be integrated in the planning and the implementation of the analysis or assessment, as well as throughout the process of any programme (including the Decent Work Country Programme), projects and initiatives in contexts characterized by conflict, disaster or/and fragility. Below are some things to keep in mind, in addition to the general ILO guidance on mainstreaming gender\* and advice and recommendations for specific policy areas (see section 2.3).

- ▶ **Mainstreaming throughout the process:** Make sure that the gender lens is included in all steps, including when formulating the purpose. Incorporating gender from the very start facilitates mainstreaming throughout the process. The same should be done to ensure resilience and peace-responsiveness throughout the process.
- ▶ **Budget and timing:** Ensure that the budget and workplan incorporate the need to include gender throughout the process (for example, hiring or consulting with a gender specialist, consulting with women's groups in a conflict-sensitive way, looking for sex-aggregated data).
- ▶ **Risk management and mitigation:** In the initial phase, identify potential gender-related risks (for example, gender-based violence, sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation), both internally and externally, and take actions to mitigate and prevent those.\*\*
- ▶ **Conflict-sensitivity and do no harm:** Keep in mind conflict-sensitivity and the "do no harm" approach in all phases (for example by not jeopardizing anyone's safety and not designing initiatives in such a way that they can exacerbate tensions between groups, increase gender inequalities, or undermine state-society relations).
- ▶ **Team composition:** Make sure that the team composition is conflict-sensitive and consists of both women and men and at least one gender specialist (preferably from the affected country/area). When conducting a peace and conflict analysis, for example, if the staff or consultant leading the analysis is not a gender specialist, ensure that the gender lens is incorporated in the analysis through close collaboration with other staff or/and local organizations who have this expertise. Conduct internal workshops and meetings in a way that ensures everybody's voices in the team are heard.
- ▶ **Conducting workshops, consultations or interviews and other activities:** Ensure that both women and men from the affected population(s) and from relevant stakeholder groups are consulted and included. As the crisis may keep women inside their homes more than at normal times, this "invisibility" should be addressed by strategies to actively seek in a safe setting, their opinions, needs and inclusion in activities. Arrangements, including careful choice of location and timing, for all activities should be made to allow everyone to participate fully (for example by ensuring disability-access, where relevant by providing on-site childcare arrangements and so on). For consultations, and where relevant also other activities, women and men should if possible be consulted together and in sex-segregated groups. Female interviewees may however not be comfortable with participating in a mixed-sex focus group or being interviewed by a male interviewer, and in order to create a safe space for voicing in a genuine way their needs and opinions, women respondents should where possible be interviewed by women.
- ▶ **Consulting and working with other organizations:** Consult, and where possible and relevant, partner with, national and local institutions as well as international and local organizations with proven experience of working with and for women, girls, youth and men, including men's violence against women (including social partners and organizations working on inclusive DRR, peacebuilding and so on).
- ▶ **Data compilation and analysis and monitoring and evaluation:** Quantitative and qualitative demographic and sectoral pre-crisis sex- and age-disaggregated data should be compiled, analysed and used to inform especially the design and planning stages of recovery and response. Where such data are unavailable, consultations should be held with national institutions as well as academics and civil society representatives advocating for women's and youth's rights. Indicators should be formulated at different levels (overall impact, outcome and output) with sex-disaggregated data as well as some specific to gender to enable measurement of the gendered impact (see examples in the log frames above).
- ▶ **Flexibility and adaptation:** In situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, changes of different forms often occur rapidly as well as over time. These can include national or local political and economic changes as well as migration flows, increases in child labour, altering divisions of labour and so on. It is crucial to continue to monitor the situation, analyse the gender dimensions of the changing environment with an intersectional lens and be ready to make necessary gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive adaptations. It is also important to carefully consider the long-term impacts and try to ensure throughout the process that positive outcomes (in technical areas as well as in areas contributing to gender equality, women's empowerment, peace and resilience) can be sustained to the greatest extent possible despite changes in the environment.

\* For example the ILO Development Cooperation Manual (2021), 'How to' guide number 15 on gender mainstreaming in development cooperation, 'How to' guide number 18 on inclusion of people with disabilities (2021), all available on the ILO Intranet, and Good practices in promoting gender equality in ILO technical cooperation projects (2007), the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Gender mainstreaming strategies in decent work promotion: programming tools (2010), and the Resource guide on gender issues in employment and labour market policies (2014).

\*\* For more information on the ILO policy and procedures on, and prevention of, sexual harassment, kindly see, among other resources (available on the ILO Intranet), the ILO intranet page on an ILO free from sexual harassment, the Office Directive IGDS Number 568 (2000) on prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, the Circular Number 543 (2004) on sexual harassment and procedures, the Collective Agreement on the prevention and resolution of harassment-related grievances (2001) between the ILO and the ILO Staff Union, and the course "Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse" in ILO People. For UN tools on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, kindly refer to [this UN webpage](#). The IASC has developed a [brief](#) on six core principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse (2019) and the IASC strategy on protection from and response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Sexual Harassment (2018) can be found [here](#).

### ► Box 2.10 Good practices and lessons learned from Sierra Leone

The project “Creating Peaceful Societies through women’s improved access to management of natural resources, land tenure rights and economic empowerment in Sierra Leone”, supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, was implemented by the ILO and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations between 2019 and 2020. The peace and conflict analysis identified gender-discriminatory and fragmented land governance as an underlying cause of conflict in Sierra Leone, leading to women’s political, legal and economic marginalization, underutilization of land and food insecurity. To tackle the causes of conflict, the project interventions focused on more effective and gender-inclusive land tenure governance and economic empowerment of women through skills, knowledge, gender sensitive financial services and organizational capacity. Thanks to the project, women’s access and ownership to land and other productive assets increased, as did their participation in decision-making on land-related issues, and their business development, entrepreneurship and finance skills.

The following are some of the good practices and lessons learned from this project.

**Importance of peace and conflict analysis:** With help of the analysis that was conducted in the initial stage of the project, within its limited geographical area and given time frame, the project successfully contributed to address two of the key conflict drivers (gender-discrimination and fragmented land governance).

**Including men and authorities:** The project particularly worked with men (especially traditional leaders) as key change agents for women’s land rights. The inclusion of traditional authorities in all phases of the project implementation contributed to make the interventions accepted by the communities. In addition to awareness raising and capacity building, local leadership was provided recognition incentives for being gender sensitive in their communities through the global UN-initiated [He4She initiative](#). Inclusive trainings of the project design were very positive, as well as the mixture of both men and women in the project activities.

**Importance of transparency and inclusiveness:** While the project was inclusive and strengthened social cohesion and trust by bringing both families and communities to work together, the fact that the project focused on women made some of the youth in gangs and cliques feel left out. Some of these youth groups continued to destabilize the communities. This observation from the project informed the design of a new project to empower youth at risk through sustainable livelihoods opportunities and capacity development on peace building.

**Representation does not equal participation:** While women are empowered, know their rights and increasingly represented in discussions and decision-making structures, more work (and time) is needed to build women’s confidence to speak up and take the front seat during meetings and consultations. Initiatives such as rearranging seating, and where relevant, nominating specific women to speak, can support women’s active participation.

**Working closely with local civil society and authorities:** By working with local civil society and authorities (including the Ministry of Lands), the project built on and strengthened local knowledge. Project implementation was both easier, more effective and sustainable by working with partners who already operated in the communities, were trusted by them and who continue to work in the areas following the end of this project. Furthermore, the Ministry of Lands’ role in the project implementation was a key strategy for sustainability.

For more information about the project, see the ILO Dashboard [project page](#) and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund [project webpage](#).

## 2.3 Guidance on specific policy areas

This section includes a table on the challenges relating to gender equality and actions that can be taken to address them in different decent-work policy areas. It also includes box 2.9 and box 2.10 on gender mainstreaming in projects implemented in disaster settings and conflict settings.

The table should be read in conjunction with the general recommendations and the section on analyses,

assessments and interventions, as these contain guidance that should be applied across policy areas.

It should be noted that the table also covers some challenges that are relevant in stable, peaceful settings. In situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, these challenges are often heightened, and furthermore, also have a limiting impact on peace- and resilience-building. Addressing them is thus equally, if not more, important as in non-fragile settings. It should also be noted that gender-related challenges are context-specific and some may be more likely in disaster settings, while others in conflict contexts.



## Employment intensive investments

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

(Re)construction works may not prioritize infrastructure needed by women: for instance, large infrastructure such as roads or ports to reach external markets may be prioritised while infrastructure to improve the accessibility to local services used by mostly women and children (for example, smaller footpaths, care service facilities, schools and so on) may be neglected. Since women could be absent during the identification of reconstruction works, this may be the case. However, women could benefit from paid jobs if women are recruited and work with the (re)construction project.

Projects may also risk ignoring women's inner relationship to and knowledge of natural resources, which would be important for the management and sustainability of (re)construction projects.

Women's access to job opportunities in (re)construction may be limited due to discrimination or due to practical obstacles such as their disproportionate share of care work, which may have increased or shifted due to the crisis and its consequences.

Women's work in (re)construction may be characterised by decent work deficits: they may face discrimination, pay inequity, or sexual harassment, for instance.

The possible unsafe and uncertain environment in crisis situations (for example, increased risk for sexual violence) can affect women's safety and/or their willingness to take up employment in certain areas or if far from home, particularly if usual means of transport are affected due to the disaster or conflict environment (linked to the two above).

Women's access to paid jobs in (re)construction may be limited to the specific project or length of time during the crisis context, namely only immediate to short-term benefits.

In conflict situations, young/men could be more affected in terms of injuries or mental health, limiting their participation in infrastructure works and increasing the care burden of women.

### What can be done?

Infrastructure rehabilitation/(re)construction initiatives should be based on a participatory planning process to assess the needs of women and men at the local level, and investments made should meet women's needs. It is also essential to involve women in all steps and all levels of the project.

Measures such as quotas or targets of a minimum number of women workers, or practical arrangements such as childcare facilities or/and help with transport to and from the workplace can help to provide women access to job opportunities in employment intensive infrastructure initiatives. Note that even when the workforce is mainly composed of men, announcing the provision of childcare support can provide a powerful message in terms of transforming gender relations.

Non-discrimination, equal pay, and anti-harassment/violence policies in employment intensive infrastructure programmes are essential.

Crisis settings can be an opportunity to re/construct or create productive infrastructure increasing women's long-term decent work opportunities and involvement in sustainable livelihoods. Appropriate infrastructure identification makes sure that everyone's needs and perspectives in infrastructure projects at national and local level are taken into account in post crisis and economic recovery (including labour-based methods and skills components at policy-level and in projects to improve stakeholders' employability).



## Enterprise and cooperative development

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Micro and small enterprise and cooperative support is often used as a strategy for women's economic empowerment, in particular in crisis situations. However:

- ▶ When designed with short time horizons or the need for simple wins, programmes may more likely focus on promoting women's entrepreneurship in low value, saturated, often female-dominated sectors, which can limit enterprise sustainability, perpetuate gender inequality and poverty or the working poor.
- ▶ Women may find it more difficult access to support services than men. For instance, it may be more difficult for them to participate in training due to mobility constraints or childcare responsibilities (both of which are accentuated in times of crisis), and they may potentially have limited or no access to information.
- ▶ Appropriate business development or financial services may not be available (for example, insurance products for extreme weather events are not yet widely provided by financial service providers targeting women). Availability and access close to services may simply not exist as these tend to be concentrated in urban areas.
- ▶ New challenges that women may face in situations of crisis may not be recognized or addressed by support programmes (such as harassment and violence against women cross-border traders when law enforcement crumbles during crisis, as well as general increased insecurity).

In crisis settings, as women's unpaid care work burden is exacerbated, the time that women can devote to their businesses or participating in a cooperative is limited.

Crisis settings can also exacerbate stress for entrepreneurs and cooperators, which can have negative consequences on the health and well-being of both men and women.

In fragile countries, many enterprises are informal in nature and those that operate in the formal economy may be at risk of sliding into informality. Women are over-represented among informal entrepreneurs, with negative implications on their access to support services, productivity, and capacity to develop and grow their business.

In terms of business ownership/enterprise structure, the specificities of different business forms and implications for crises should be kept in mind. For instance, while cooperatives can further equality due to their democratic and member-based structure, enhance resilience because of their focus on mutual assistance, and contribute to peacebuilding by increasing trust within communities, gender inequalities in/among cooperatives persist and can be particularly difficult to overcome during crises.

### What can be done?

Carry out thorough, gender-sensitive assessments of the enabling environment/ market systems/ sectors (as applicable) to understand the opportunities and needs in relation to support for women's business start-up and development.

In terms of service content for business development services, ensure that:

- ▶ Women's (cooperative) entrepreneurship is not only promoted in typical female-dominated sectors (and the opposite, for men), and that it is based on skills, market needs and opportunities, rather than in which sectors men/women usually work. This requires an extension of the time horizons for sustainable change to materialize, especially in crisis situations.

(Cont. next page)

- ▶ Skills gaps between women and men are assessed and addressed.
- ▶ Support services for women and men entrepreneurs/cooperators include crisis-related support, such as capacity-building on business continuity management.

In terms of service content for financial services, ensure that:

- ▶ Specific constraints that women may face in accessing finance are addressed (such as exploring alternatives to traditional collateral requirements and so on).
- ▶ Specific constraints to women keeping their business finances safe should be addressed. This could include designing programmes that help reduce women's potential distrust in financial organizations, ensure their earnings are safely kept and accessed in simple ways, and are provided the skills and knowledge (namely financial education) to better engage with the financial service providers.
- ▶ Supporting e-banking and e-money could be an avenue to help women reduce pressures from her environment to make use of her business earnings and also provide additional security as she would not need to carry large quantities of cash (for example, Mpesa in Kenya has had an important impact on women and their ability and power to manage their finances).
- ▶ Support services for women and men entrepreneurs/cooperators include crisis-related support such as insurance against extreme weather events (this may require subsidies from government or the donor community if insurance companies cannot get enough clients to pull funds together to provide market based low-cost insurance).

In terms of business development service delivery, ensure that the needs for care services for workers with family responsibilities are taken into account, that policies are in place to ensure non-discrimination of service users and the special targeting of women users, that the services are safe (for example, in well-lit places, close to where women live, where service providers may be in touch or able to refer the women to safe places and so on) and that training providers include women trainers. Service providers, in consultation and collaboration with women, may review and consider information and communications technology options that may help women access services or remain connected. These would need to cater to what women have access to and use.

Business development and financial services support should therefore be complemented by care services for women entrepreneurs, which, if delivered by other local businesses (including cooperatives), can simultaneously help those who have lost their livelihood due to the crisis.

Where relevant and needed, business development and financial services support can also be complemented by psychosocial support for entrepreneurs and cooperators. This support should be inclusive and service providers may need to use different strategies to reach different groups (for example, both men and women may be reluctant to seek help, but sometimes for different reasons) and may need to partner with other organizations to provide such targeted support.

Fostering peer support groups and community savings groups among women may be additional avenues to support women in crisis situations.

Evidence-based enterprise formalization measures which make formalization easier and increase enterprise productivity should be gender responsive: women entrepreneurs could be targeted with financial support in conjunction with formalization and business registration procedures should be designed with women's possible mobility constraints in mind (for example, simplified procedures, one-stop windows, bringing registration offices to women at places they usually attend). Sensitization on formalization for women should include information on benefits, especially if related to social protection.

Support for realizing gender equality should be tailored to each enterprise type, such as enhancing gender equality in mixed-sex cooperatives by reviewing by-laws, setting targets for women in management positions and so on, and specific assistance (business development services, finance) for strengthening women's cooperatives.





## Employment Services

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Due to mobility constraints, cultural restrictions, concerns about safety and so on, women and men may have unequal access to information about employment service centres, even though women's need for such services may be particularly high in crisis settings which may have resulted in destroyed or decreased livelihoods.

Women and men may be channelled into jobs by employment service centres which perpetuate gender stereotypes. Gender-based discrimination towards job seekers may also occur.

The rapid assessments of local labour markets and collection of labour market information that are often conducted in crisis settings by emergency public employment services may not adequately reflect differences between men and women.

Paid care work (by both men and women) is essential for reducing women's unpaid care work (which tends to increase during crises), but it may not be prioritized by employment service centres.

Absence of tailored support for women (and men) that would enable them participate in the labour market such as childcare, transport money, basic income for food, and so on.

Employment services offer and delivery are gender neutral and hence do not address particular challenges of men and women.

### What can be done?

Put in place measures that ensure women have equal and safe access to employment service centres (namely equality, non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and measures). The centres should actively try to reach different groups and employment service centre staff should be capacitated to deal with gender issues and to promote equality in their work. Engage social partners and opinion leaders to influence change of perceptions and values towards more participation of women.

Ensure that career guidance and the linking of job applicants to opportunities avoid confirmation of gender bias and stereotypes (that is that women and men are encouraged to engage in work that does not perpetuate gender stereotypes).

Ensure that data collected in labour market assessments is sex-disaggregated, but also that it explicitly aims to identify differences between women and men in terms of their labour market situation and delves into issues of specific concern for both women and men. In these assessments, it is especially important to consult both women and men informants.

Employment services should also assess the need for and facilitate job-matching in overlooked sectors (for example, care work). Encourage men to take up care duties to free up women for paid work outside the care sector.

Provide referral services to social assistance and social welfare services or provide them in house if feasible.

Where necessary, after a situation analysis and mapping of services, develop tailor-made services for women and other disadvantaged groups.



## Skills development

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Women and men may be offered courses in gender-stereotyped professions in response to crisis-related livelihood and job needs.

Training curricula can give the wrong messages about gender equality, display stereotype images, or gender equality may not be included in curricula.

There is a risk of disruption of training due to participation in combat, new care duties or economic hardship; when families have to choose who can participate in training, they may prioritize male family members (although some crises have also provided new opportunities for women to take part in training due to men's participation in combat).

There may be high education requirements for eligibility for training, and an assumption of no prior skills, which may affect women more than men where they have not had the same opportunities for formal education.

It may be difficult for women to participate in training due to childcare responsibilities, socio-cultural mobility constraints or costs and limited or unsafe mobility due to violence, unsafe environments (for example, lack of lighting or lack of washrooms for women), as in other policy areas.

### What can be done?

Introduce career guidance, awareness raising among communities, targets and other measures (for example, scholarships) for women's and men's participation in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) across sectors to break stereotypes.

Raise the capacity of teachers, trainers and curriculum developers to revise training materials, introduce gender-sensitive training methodologies to ensure women and men have equal access to peacebuilding and DRR-related training.

Integrate gender equality, social cohesion and other subjects that can help to promote equality (for example, legal literacy) as topics in technical, peacebuilding and DRR training curricula.

In terms of the training organization:

- ▶ Assess specific barriers to training for women, skills gaps and training needs of women and men
- ▶ Facilitate access to childcare, for both male and female trainees (offering childcare in training centres with a heavily male participant base can help to transform gender roles)
- ▶ Ensure that potential participants are consulted on the timing, location and other aspects and that logistics choices respond to participant needs
- ▶ Make sure that training centres have policies and mechanisms in place to ensure non-discrimination in trainee selection, protection against harassment, and so on.
- ▶ Consider the need to expand the pool of female trainers, including in typically "male" fields, to serve as role models



## Fundamental principles and rights at work

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Labour law may be suspended during crises, labour administration systems, including labour inspection, are often weak in times of crisis, and law and enforcement of existing laws may be lacking.

Risks for human rights violations, and therefore also of fundamental rights at work, increase due to this legal vacuum. For instance trafficking and forced labour may increase. In addition, survival needs may push individuals and families into negative coping mechanisms. For instance, crises may lead to an increase in child labour due to job and income losses or due to additional care responsibilities.

Gender-related rights issues such as non-discrimination or equal pay for work of equal value may not be perceived as priorities and/or capacity to address violations may be limited in crisis situations.

Often in relation to crises, there is a focus on response, which is prioritized as compared to prevention. Preventing rights violations is equally important, and helps to pave the way to sustainable recovery.

Data on violations of rights at work may be unavailable and research capacity may be limited in times of crisis, despite the increased likelihood of such violations occurring.

### What can be done?

Promote gender equality while addressing human rights violations which include international labour standards violations, and ensure nobody is left behind, especially those individuals and groups made particularly vulnerable by the crisis.

If laws are revised or new laws/regulations introduced during or following crises, this represents an opportunity to ensure the legislation is gender-responsive (for example, by incorporating provisions on equality and non-discrimination, pay equity, maternity protection and support for workers with family responsibilities, and violence and harassment).

While action in acute phases of crises may be limited, when preparing for recovery, advocating for the ratification of ILO Conventions related to the fundamental principles and rights at work\* and related to gender equality\*\* pave the way for a more rights-based recovery and supports long-term peace and resilience.

Support should be provided to the labour inspectorate for their work on preventing and identifying rights violation as well as monitoring and enforcing legislation. This could include developing/reviewing monitoring tools to ensure they include a gender perspective, and awareness raising and capacity building of the labour inspectorate on gender issues.

In addition, other actors need to be involved. For example, police involvement may be needed since violations of fundamental rights at work may also constitute criminal offenses (such as in the case of worst forms of child labour and forced labour practices). Legal, psychosocial and other necessary support also needs to be available for victims of rights violations for their immediate and long-term recovery and to enable them to assert their rights and obtain reparation; therefore, the capacity of institutions and actors providing such support needs to be enhanced, including on gender-sensitivity.

Prevention at source is essential; therefore, awareness raising in families and communities, employment- and income support for parents, and so on are key.

Research and data collection on possible rights violations needs to go beyond sex-disaggregated data and explicitly seek to look into violations that may affect women and girls and boys and men differently.

\* ILO Fundamental Conventions: the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

\*\* Conventions focusing on gender equality and women's rights: the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189); and the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)



## Occupational safety and health

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Overall, in crisis situation occupational safety and health (OSH) considerations may be neglected due to urgency, lack of resources, weak enforcement mechanisms, and so on.

There may be a focus on protecting all men and women workers in all branches of economic activities, with special attention to jobs in most hazardous sectors, such as construction, which is critically important in recovery. During conflict and recovery periods, women may increase their participation in male dominated jobs and occupations. Lack of appropriate training together with absence of OSH control measures that meet women's biological and social needs increase their vulnerability and risk to work related hazards.

Violence and harassment at work and other psychosocial risks are often less visible than accidents or injuries. Addressing them may not be considered a priority in disaster or conflict-affected contexts, nevertheless, women entering non-traditional occupations are particularly at risk of sexual harassment and gender-based violence. At the same time, as law enforcement and access to protection is often limited by crisis, giving priority to these "invisible" issues is critically important.

Reproductive health is another matter that requires attention. After disasters, workers can be exposed to workers to chemical, biological and physical hazards, especially in reconstruction works. While protecting pregnant women and the foetus are a primary concern, men's reproductive health should also be considered as part of a gender sensitive approach, as certain hazards can also affect men.

### What can be done?

In all cases, it is critically important to consult different groups of workers, and to ensure participation of women and men to protect everyone.

In cases where legislation is revised or additional OSH decrees are introduced, ensure that all men and women are equally protected.

Ensure the involvement of both women and men in tripartite bodies, at the national level and in bipartite committees at the enterprise level. Make sure women participate in the identification of OSH priorities, as well as the development and implementation of OSH measures.

Assess and address specific occupational risks or hazards present in post-conflict and disaster situations (for instance land mines, polluted environments, outbreaks of infectious diseases or violence and harassment at work) from a gender perspective. For example, women and men may be differently affected by land mines, as their unpaid and paid work may involve movement in different areas and clearance may prioritize some areas over others.

Ensuring that OSH frameworks take into account the prevention of violence and harassment at work, as well as the interaction between work and home and ensures that all workers can have a reasonable work-life balance.

When supporting the local labour inspection authority and other stakeholders, for instance in control-specific functions, ensure that support includes awareness raising on gender-related OSH issues.



## Social protection

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

The Social Protection Floor Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) emphasizes the importance of ensuring the principles of “non-discrimination, gender equality and responsiveness to special needs” in building and extending social security schemes, including floors. Universal social protection floors through the four guarantees of basic income security for children, basic income security for older persons, basic income security for persons in active age and access to essential health care are inherently gender-responsive as they cover everyone, irrespective of their employment career. However, even when gender-related inequalities, risks and vulnerabilities are recognized in social protection policies, their implementation often does not include specific measures to address them, for example in relation to social risks such as gender-based violence.

Women are more likely to work in precarious and informal jobs, to assume a greater burden of unpaid care work and to face interruptions and inequalities in paid work. The coverage of existing social protection schemes, particularly contributory ones, is biased towards men, and women may face barriers to accessing social assistance programmes and social services.

Because gender inequalities intersect with other forms of discriminations, a single social protection instrument, such as a cash transfer, may not be sufficient to address multiple gender-related inequalities, risks, and vulnerabilities. This includes social protection for displaced and stateless people, including women, children, older people, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people, and indigenous and tribal peoples, who are among those most in need of protection.

How humanitarian cash assistance is delivered also has gender-related implications and challenges, including:

- ▶ Targeting women to receive cash transfers can reduce some inequalities but does not necessarily translate into transformative change for women and girls, if they for example lack control over how the cash transfer is spent.
- ▶ Targeting women may result in economic benefits for women and improvements in women’s empowerment and decision-making within the household. However, potential risks include intra-household violence against women, risk of increasing women’s time burden and security risks such as gender-based violence if manual payment collection is involved.
- ▶ Some targeted social assistance schemes, especially those conditional on or with soft conditions linked to children’s wellbeing may put an increased burden on women and lower their participation in the labour market.
- ▶ Women can have limited access to cash transfers and vouchers due to constraints on their mobility during crises, lack of identify cards or lack of safe access to public spaces.

However necessary for the implementation of social protection programmes, the registration and collection of data also opens the possibility for implicit or explicit discrimination based on for example ethnicity, religion, race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### What can be done?

Social protection plays a multi-functional role across the risks’ management cycle, from prevention (standard role) to shock absorption (response to crisis) and promotion/transformation (recovery). In all cases, a robust national gender-responsive social protection system is the best foundation to provide inclusive protection to all people affected by natural or man-made disasters, in coordination with humanitarian cash transfers or other emergency social transfers.

(Cont. next page)

Humanitarian cash transfers and other emergency social transfers should, wherever possible, link with and strengthen rights-based and state-owned gender-responsive social protection systems in order to allow for a post-crisis exit strategy and to sustainably maintain benefits for vulnerable populations.

Workers and employer and business membership organizations, along with civil society organizations, including women and girls' representatives, should be fully engaged in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection systems meant to address the transitions, vulnerabilities and risks facing them throughout their life cycle, including in situations of crisis.

Gender-responsive national social protection policies and related laws must be coordinated across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus with related policy areas such as DRR, peacebuilding and climate change adaptation, as well as the portability of the social protection rights of displaced people within and across countries' borders.

Ensure that women (and other vulnerable groups) can access existing or new social protection programmes by eliminating potential barriers (such as mobility constraints, limited access to information, illiteracy including digital, less access to mobile phones, bank accounts, or IDs), and by making sure that delivery of cash transfers is designed based on an awareness of gender dynamics and differences in the needs and situations of women and men within the target population.

Organize a gender-responsive outreach strategy to ensure that both men and women and other vulnerable groups in the affected community are informed on their social protection rights, including benefits and transfer modality, access, and use.

Organize where applicable a social and behaviour change communication campaign to ensure full access to social protection provisions and to mitigate the increased risks that women and other vulnerable groups face.

Consider the integration of gender-responsive social protection programmes with other relevant programmes and services (such as active labour market measures, public works, education opportunities and psychosocial support) while paying attention to the disproportionate burden it may put on women.

Prioritize access to adequate social protection for girls and women of reproductive age, including pregnant women and girls and new mothers.

Expand the coverage of social protection benefits and quality public services to women workers of all ages, including for those in informal, low-paid, and precarious work.

Ensure nationally defined minimum pensions in line with international social security standards for women, especially to include care credits to recognize and reward time spent caring for children or other family members.

Mainstreaming a gender approach into the social protection floor implies that it should include basic guarantees of a minimum level of income security and access to basic services as an individual rather than as a family-based human right.

In designing targeted cash or in-kind transfer programmes, it is important to consider in the determination of benefits the specific vulnerability of female-headed households due to reduced access to markets and services and economies of scale, among others.

Consider the gender implications of named recipients within the household (including in polygamous communities). If explicitly targeting women is deemed not to be feasible, it is better to ask households to nominate a named recipient rather than assigning this automatically to a household head, or to authorise multiple people in a household to carry out transactions.

The provision of caretaker benefits is important to reduce pressure on household resources, and consideration should be given as to whether additional top-ups can be given to households caring for sick members, elderly, or children; care work that often falls on women and girls.

Integrating gender into the monitoring and evaluation of social protection systems is essential to ensure that they effectively address the needs of everyone. This includes gender-responsive indicators and data, as well as the participation of beneficiaries and/or social partners and civil society organizations in monitoring and evaluation and accountability processes, such as accessible complaints and appeal mechanisms.

To prevent discrimination due to registration and collection of data, there is a need for a strong regulation of the use of personal data.



## Social dialogue with employers' organizations and workers' organizations

### Possible gender-related challenges in crisis situations

Employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs) and workers' organizations play a critical role in promoting gender equality and addressing discrimination, and social dialogue contributes to better working conditions, narrowing the pay gap, equal treatment and opportunities. When countries experience crises, the individual and collective efforts of social partners can be essential for recovery and building long-term resilience.

However, at the same time, EBMOs and workers' organizations may be weakened by crises; therefore, their capacity to realize and promote gender equality may be limited. Also, advocating for workers' rights, equality and non-discrimination may not be perceived as a priority in contexts of ongoing crises. During past crises (for instance the the 2008–09 financial crisis) gender equality policies have at times taken a back seat, despite the fact that some groups of women are particularly affected by the impact of such crises.

Generally, women are under-represented in EBMOs and workers organizations in decision-making positions, including negotiation teams and social dialogue institutions, while a balanced representation would enable decision-making processes to take into account diverse perspectives and needs, and eventually support a stronger recovery.

### What can be done?

It is important to promote inclusive crisis response, social dialogue as well as the representation and participation of women in social dialogue institutions at the national level. EBMOs and workers' organizations can work with governments to design gender-inclusive reconstruction and recovery policies and approaches to build back more resilient economies which empower women, enhance their full participation in decision-making and produce better outcomes for enterprises, workers and societies. Examples of action for EBMOs and workers' organizations include:

- ▶ Supporting gender equality within their own organizational structure by, for instance, adopting a gender diversity policy as a strategic goal, training staff on gender equality issues, introducing targets to reach gender balance at all levels, or reviewing EBMO membership criteria and encouraging more women-owned businesses to be members;
- ▶ Coordinating (or partnering) with women's organizations to help them bring their voice to the table and develop gender-inclusive policies;
- ▶ Generating data and knowledge, sharing good practices and promoting the inclusion and advancement of women in the workplace;
- ▶ Strengthening their advisory and training services for members on gender equality and non-discrimination.

It is also important to enhance the role and responsibilities of EBMOs and workers' organizations in crisis management. For example:

- ▶ EBMOs could collaboratively identify needs of enterprises and support them to establish gender-responsive policies and practices such as flexible work arrangements, child-care, respite care for overburdened caregivers, and other services to help crisis impacted workers and their families recover;
- ▶ EBMOs could support enterprises deliver gender-inclusive business contingency planning and develop business resilience strategies and enhance access to finance equitably to women and men (for instance by also targeting women-dominated sectors);
- ▶ Workers' organizations could lobby for workers' rights and raise awareness of possible violations of rights – including in relation to gender equality issues – in times of crisis.

► **Box 2.11 Gender-focused projects/gender mainstreaming in projects in disaster settings****Caribbean: “Building Effective Resilience for Human Security in the Caribbean Countries – the Imperative of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in a Strengthened Sector” (2019–2022)**

The [project](#) aims are: (i) to ensure gender-responsive and disaster risk resilient services, programmes and techniques are available with the sectors of agriculture and fishery; (ii) to make available gender responsive social protection, insurance and financial products; and (iii) to increase market access readiness and resilience for small farmers and businesses, especially women. The focus of the ILO is primarily on two areas of decent work: skills and capacity building; and helping to facilitate access to insurance and protection in the case of weather-related disasters. The focus countries are Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada and Saint Lucia, and project partners are UN Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UNDP.

**Sri Lanka: “Strengthening natural disaster resilience of rural communities and micro and small enterprises in the North and South West of Sri Lanka” (2018–2020)**

The objective of this [intervention](#) is to contribute to implement the national policy on building resilience and disaster mitigation measures by developing and demonstrating effective models in rural communities with special attention on the North and the South West of Sri Lanka where the recurrence of natural disasters is high.

As part of the project, “[Mainstreaming Disaster Resilience: Identifying Opportunities in National Policies and Legal Framework in relation to Rural Development](#)” was published in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka. It contains a desk review of policies, a literature review, and recommendations for future policy development. Gender is specifically looked at as a driver of community resilience.

**COVID-19 response and recovery projects focusing on women and gender equality**

In two disadvantaged regions of Tunisia, the [project](#) “Renforcement de la résilience et de la promotion du travail décent des organisations féminines de l'économie sociale (FORTER'ESS) post COVID-19 en Tunisie” (2020–2022) aims to strengthen the resilience of women-led social and solidarity economy organizations affected by COVID-19. The support will focus on improving workplace protections and the working conditions of women entrepreneurs and workers in women-led social and solidarity economy organizations to counteract the social, economic and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project will also contribute to establishing an inclusive and equitable social and solidarity economy ecosystem in Tunisia that encourages women's further participation in the sector.

In Albania, the [project](#) “Empowering Women against COVID-19” (2020–2021) supports women in the textile and footwear industry to withstand the negative impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on their livelihood and prepare the ground for a short-term return to work under safer and improved health and safety conditions.

In Asia, a [project](#) with J.P. Morgan on “Rebuilding Better: Fostering Business Resilience Post-COVID-19” (2021–2022) targets small businesses owned by women in the manufacturing, service and retail trade sectors in urban areas, all of which have been hard hit by COVID-19 restrictions and the economic downturn. The project will leverage digital tools to enhance women entrepreneurs' access to critical support services, such as financial resources, training, market information and networks.

**Mozambique: “MozTrabalha: Decent Work for Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Transformation in Mozambique” (the particular initiative below took place in 2019)**

The [initiative](#) aims to create and improve employment outcomes in urban and rural areas. It focuses on the implementation of investments in labour-intensive infrastructure, creates job opportunities and reduces the barriers faced by women and female-headed households while trying to access productive employment. In 2019, one part of the MozTrabalha project trained and employed women in gabion construction, which aims to stop erosion.



► **Box 2.12 Gender-focused projects/gender mainstreaming in projects in conflict settings**

**Afghanistan: “Road to Jobs” (2015-2020) and “Road to Decent Jobs for All Afghans” (2020-2021)**

The projects have focused on creating decent work opportunities for poor farmers, returnees, internally displaced people and host communities, with a particular emphasis on women’s empowerment. The Directorate of Women’s Affairs and the Afghanistan Women’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry are working on community sensitization, policy advocacy, entrepreneurship and management skills, access to information and finance, business coaching and financial literacy development to enable women to effectively participate in local economic development while contributing to social cohesion. So far, partnerships with the private sector have led to the creation of 860 decent jobs for women in carpet weaving, cell phone repair, poultry and handicrafts.

**Jordan: Employment Intensive Investment Programme (2016-2022)**

The project provides employment to Syrian refugees and host communities, and it has introduced measures to promote gender equality, including a minimum quota of female workers and a pay equity policy, awareness raising, and zero tolerance for sexual harassment. From 2016 to mid-2020, 15,094 Syrian refugees and Jordanians benefited from the programme, women’s participation reached 20 per cent (as compared to the quota of 10 per cent), and social cohesion between these communities increased (97 per cent of workers indicated that Jordanians and Syrians trusted and helped each other during the programme).

**Sierra Leone: “Creating peaceful societies through women’s improved access to management of natural resources, land tenure rights and economic empowerment in Sierra Leone” (2019–2020)**

This joint project of the ILO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was implemented in collaboration with the Government and social partners (for instance, the Sierra Leone Labour Congress) with funding from the UN Peacebuilding Fund. Gender-discriminatory land governance was identified as one of the underlying causes of conflict. The project therefore worked to enhance women’s access to land and productive assets and increase their participation in land-related decision-making. In addition, the creation of women-led cooperatives strengthened social cohesion through joint work.

**Somalia: Youth Employment Somalia (YES) project (2015-2020) and Youth for Change (Y4C) project (2014-2017)**

The projects were carried out in collaboration with UN partner agencies, and they show how gender equality can be mainstreamed into project design as well as the benefits of this approach. The YES project aimed to contribute to sustainable employment creation while providing immediate livelihood opportunities for young men and young women. It involved value chain development, capacity development through vocational and skills training, and the development of productive infrastructure through cash for work. The Y4C programme engaged youth who were involved in or at risk of becoming involved in violent activities, and it provided them with training to improve their employability and with work in employment-intensive projects. Gender inclusiveness was an integral part of YES and Y4C. A study of the impact of the projects found that they led to a reduction in prejudices and gender stereotypes. Young men and young women were trained together and active engagement with the other sex was a part of both life skills and technical training courses. The training improved the quality of interactions between men and women. The proportion of participants who described their relationship with members of other sex as “good” or “very good” increased from 78 to 97 per cent, the increase being bigger for women.

**Sri Lanka: “Empower: Building Peace through the Economic Empowerment of Women in Northern Sri Lanka” (2018-2020)**

ILO-World Food Programme project funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund aimed to enhance economic empowerment, social integration, and resilience of female former combatants and other disadvantaged and conflict-affected women in northern Sri Lanka by increasing their participation in economic livelihood and peacebuilding activities. These war-affected women are now engaged in income generating activities, cooperatives and businesses with partners beyond their own communities and ethnic groups in order to reinforce social contact and social and contact within the community but also between cooperatives in zones (North and South) that previously experienced conflict. The participants in the project are more likely to gain greater decision-making roles in their community and to be more involved in reconciliation and conflict risk mitigation.

# Annex. Glossary<sup>14</sup>

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- ▶ **Gender** – Gender refers to the socially constructed differences and relations between males and females. These vary widely among societies and cultures and change over time. The term “gender” is not interchangeable with the term “sex”, which refers exclusively to the biological differences between men and women, which are universal and do not change. Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society, community or other social group. They condition which activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived as appropriate to males and females respectively. Gender roles are affected by age, socio-economic class, race/ethnicity, religion, and the geographical, economic, political and cultural environment. Gender relations are also relations of power which affect who can access and control tangible and intangible resources.
- ▶ **Gender equality and women’s empowerment** – Gender equality refers to the enjoyment of equal rights, opportunities and treatment by men and women and by boys and girls in all spheres of life. It asserts that people’s rights, responsibilities, social status and access to resources do not depend on whether they are born male or female. It does not mean, however, that men and women are the same or must become the same, or that all labour market measures must arrive at the same results. Gender equality implies that all men and women are free to develop their personal abilities and make life choices without the limitations set by stereotypes or prejudices about gender roles or the characteristics of men and women. Women’s empowerment generally refers to the idea that women can take control over their lives, including setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing their self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome.
- ▶ **Gender mainstreaming** is defined by the 1999 ILO gender equality policy as “a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated”. Gender mainstreaming is not a goal in itself, but a means to achieve gender equality.
- ▶ **Gender-responsiveness** means intentionally employing gender considerations to affect the design, development, implementation and results of programmes and strategies, policies, laws and regulations, as well as collective agreements. This implies an approach that: reflects all girls’ and women’s realities; pays attention to their unique needs; ensures their participation in decision-making processes at all levels; values their perspectives; respects their experiences; and understands the developmental differences between girls and boys, women and men in all their diversity and throughout their life cycle. The ultimate aim is to empower girls and women, with a view to promoting gender equality in practice and achieving gender equity.
- ▶ **Disaster** refers to a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts. Disasters may arise from hazards (geological, biological, hydro-meteorological) or be induced by human processes (climate change, environmental degradation and technological hazards).

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14 Sources: ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross). 2008. “How is the term ‘Armed Conflict’ defined in international humanitarian law?”, ICRC Opinion Paper; ILO (International Labour Organization). 1999. *Gender equality policy*; ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205); ILO. 2021. Violence and harassment in the world of work: a guide on convention No. 190 and Recommendation No. 206. OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). 2011. *OCHA and slow-onset emergencies*, OCHA Occasional Policy Briefing Series No. 6; ILO and Interpeace. 2021. *Peace and Conflict Analysis – Guidance for ILO’s programming in fragile and conflict-affected contexts*; OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2019. *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, OECD/LEGAL/5019; OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2020. *States of Fragility 2020*. Paris: OECD Publishing; UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction). 2009. *Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*; UN Women (the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) and UN Global Compact Office. 2011. *Women’s empowerment principles: equality means business*.

- ▶ **Conflict** – While not every conflict is violent, a conflict can also turn into a violent and armed one. International humanitarian law categorizes armed conflict as either international armed conflict, when two or more states are involved, and non-international armed conflict, when the conflict is between a state and one or more non-state armed groups, or between nonstate armed groups, as well as other situations of violence that destabilize societies and economies. The majority of conflicts no longer take place between states but within them, and over the past two decades civil conflict and violent social unrest have increased.
- ▶ **Resilience** means the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.
- ▶ **Fragility** is a combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, system, and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks. Fragility can lead to negative outcomes, including violence, the breakdown of institutions, displacement, humanitarian crises, or other emergencies.
- ▶ **The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus** refers to interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions. The 2019 Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus of the OECD Development Assistance Committee states that a “nexus approach refers to the aim of strengthening collaboration, coherence and complementarity. The approach seeks to capitalize on the comparative advantages of each pillar – to the extent of their relevance in the specific context – in order to reduce overall vulnerability and the number of unmet needs, strengthen risk management capacities and address root causes of conflict.”
- ▶ **Disaster-risk reduction** refers to the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.
- ▶ **Preparedness**, as defined by UNISDR, refers to the knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.
- ▶ **Peace** consists of stability, and the security that stability brings, along with a society’s ability to anticipate, manage and resolve conflicts at all levels without violence, through its institutions, values, habits and behaviours. These in turn depend on inclusion and fairness: inclusive, fair access to work and livelihoods, and to the means of security, justice and other aspects of well-being such as health, education and decent living conditions. Peace also requires responsive and accessible leadership and governance, built on functional, trusting relations among citizens, and between citizens and those with authority over them (horizontal and vertical relations). Horizontal and vertical relations that are effective and imbued with mutual trust are the main ingredients of **social cohesion**. Peace is not static however: a peaceful society continues to develop, and must navigate the conflicts and dilemmas that progress entails.
- ▶ **Conflict-sensitivity and do no harm** – All actions and interventions in a fragile settings can potentially be harmful. Initiatives must always be designed and implemented in a conflict-sensitive way to ensure they do no harm to already volatile environments. Conducting a peace and conflict analysis gives a good understanding of the peace and conflict dynamics, including drivers of peace and conflict, and the potential interaction between the local context and the intervention. Integrating these findings in the project design and implementation increases the chances that interventions have positive impacts on peace and avoid exacerbating tensions and conflict.
- ▶ **Peace responsiveness** refers to the ability of actors operating in conflict-affected or fragile contexts to be conflict-sensitive and deliberately contribute to sustainable peace through their technical programming, in accordance with their mandates. This means deliberately addressing drivers of conflict and strengthening capacities for peace. A peace-responsive approach intentionally supports inclusive and locally led change and strengthens societal resilience to conflict and violence.

# Bibliography and key resources

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