

LIVELIHOODS

THIS SECTION APPLIES TO:

- Livelihoods coordination mechanisms
- Livelihoods actors (staff and leadership): NGOs, community-based organizations (including National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies), INGOs and United Nations agencies
- Local committees and community-based groups (e.g. groups for women, adolescents/youth, older persons, etc.) related to livelihoods
- Other livelihoods stakeholders, including national and local governments, community leaders and civil society groups

Why Addressing Gender-Based Violence Is a Critical Concern of Livelihoods Programmes

In the face of severe economic hardship that humanitarian emergencies and associated displacement often cause, many affected populations have limited opportunities to support themselves and their families. Refugees living in camps, for example, are often not legally allowed to work outside of the camps—and some not even within the camps. Refugees living in urban contexts may also be prohibited from working. Displaced men are at times forced into unemployment due to prevalent assumptions that they may engage in harmful activities if they are free to move and seek work.



ESSENTIAL TO KNOW

Defining 'Livelihoods'

The term 'livelihoods' refers to the capabilities, assets and strategies that people use to make a living. Livelihoods programming encompasses a variety of activities, including:

- asset restoration (livestock, tools, equipment)
- training and placement programmes
- building in-camp economies
- agrarian interventions
- market interventions
- microfinance
- income-generating activities (IGAs)
- enterprise development
- Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs)
- cash programming (such as food for work; unconditional/conditional cash grants; cash for work [CFW]; vouchers; etc.)

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INTRODUCTION

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Finding work can be difficult for both males and females in humanitarian settings; however, women, adolescent girls and other at-risk groups¹ often face particular obstacles related to gender or cultural norms. These norms may inhibit women from working outside the home, or relegate them to work that offers lower income than traditionally male jobs. Laws and practices prohibiting females from owning or accessing land and property can further limit their ability to generate income. Stigma and discrimination may exclude LGBTI persons, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups from economic opportunities. Single heads of households may be unable to work outside of the home if they do not have childcare.

Lack of safe and lucrative livelihoods opportunities not only increases economic dependence on others, but can also elevate vulnerability to violence. For example:

- Economic vulnerability can increase the risk of exposure to sexual exploitation by aid workers, family and community members. In order to support themselves and their families, women, girls and other at-risk groups may enter exploitative work environments, become dependent on and trapped in abusive relationships, or be forced or coerced into prostitution.
- In the absence of formal jobs, many women, adolescent girls and other at-risk groups will find work in the informal economy (e.g. collecting and selling firewood or charcoal; running small-goods kiosks; selling goods door-to-door; or engaging in domestic work with receptor or host communities). These activities may force them to travel through unsafe areas or during dangerous times of day or night.
- Women, girls and other at-risk groups are particularly susceptible to exploitation, harassment and abuse from customers, suppliers and market administrators, especially in unregulated markets and when they must borrow money, negotiate prices or manage a shop alone.

At the same time, introducing livelihoods programmes into humanitarian contexts without taking gender and cultural norms into account can create backlash and inadvertently heighten the risk of violence against participants, particularly females. For example, domestic violence can increase if partners or family members feel threatened by or resentful of women's economic independence—especially in humanitarian settings where male family members may not be able to meet their traditional responsibilities as 'breadwinners'. In IDP/refugee settings, livelihoods initiatives that exclusively target displaced populations can increase tension with receptor/host communities, which may perceive displaced persons as taking away economic opportunities or receiving extra benefits. In addition, if new resources are not distributed or managed in safe ways, they can make recipients the target of violence and theft.

If effectively designed, however, livelihoods programmes can mitigate these risks.

Programmes that include built-in protective mechanisms to monitor and address potential risk factors can help to reduce participants' exposure to violence and exploitation, while empowering them with skills training and social and financial capital. Such programmes can:

- Provide women, girls and other at-risk groups with safe alternatives for generating income.
- Enhance their knowledge and skills base of micro-enterprise, financial management, natural resource management and leadership.

¹ For the purposes of this TAG, at-risk groups include those whose particular vulnerabilities may increase their exposure to GBV and other forms of violence: adolescent girls; elderly women; woman and child heads of households; girls and women who bear children of rape and their children born of rape; indigenous people and ethnic and religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons; persons living with HIV; persons with disabilities; persons involved in forced and/or coerced prostitution and child victims of sexual exploitation; persons in detention; separated or unaccompanied children and orphans, including children associated with armed forces/groups; and survivors of violence. For a summary of the protection rights and needs of each of these groups, see page 10 of this TAG.



SEE SUMMARY TABLE ON ESSENTIAL ACTIONS

Essential Actions for <i>Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience and Aiding Recovery</i> throughout the Programme Cycle	Stage of Emergency Applicable to Each Action			
	Pre-Emergency/ Preparedness	Emergency	Stabilized Stage	Recovery to Development
ASSESSMENT, ANALYSIS AND PLANNING				
Promote the active participation of women, girls and other at-risk groups in all livelihoods assessment processes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assess the level of participation and leadership of women, adolescent girls and other at-risk groups in all aspects of livelihoods programming (<i>e.g. ratio of male/female livelihoods staff; participation in positions of leadership; strategies for hiring and retaining females and other at-risk groups; etc.</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assess community norms and practices related to livelihoods, with a focus on the barriers faced by women, adolescent girls and other at-risk groups to accessing safe livelihoods opportunities (<i>e.g. gender norms that exclude women from certain types of work; gender-based discrimination against women in the workplace; etc.</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Conduct market analyses in partnership with those at risk of GBV to identify profitable, accessible and desirable livelihoods activities that do not exacerbate the risk of GBV	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assess the physical safety of and access to livelihoods programmes to identify associated risks of GBV (<i>e.g. safety travelling to/from work; childcare during the workday; exploitation by employers, clients or suppliers; work hours and locations; backlash from family or community members when women start earning money; safe strategies for storing earned money; etc.</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assess awareness of livelihoods staff on basic issues related to gender, GBV, women's/human rights, social exclusion and sexuality (<i>including knowledge of where survivors can report risk and access care; linkages between livelihoods and GBV; etc.</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review existing/proposed community outreach material related to livelihoods to ensure it includes basic information about GBV risk reduction (<i>including prevention, where to report risk and how to access care</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION				
Develop proposals for livelihoods programmes that reflect awareness of GBV risks for the affected population and strategies for reducing these risks	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prepare and provide trainings for government, humanitarian workers, women's groups and community members engaged in livelihoods work on the safe design and implementation of livelihoods programmes that mitigate the risk of GBV	✓	✓	✓	✓
IMPLEMENTATION				
► Programming				
Involve women and other at-risk groups as staff and leaders in livelihoods programming (<i>with due caution where this poses a potential security risk or increases the risk of GBV</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
In consultation with women, girls, men and boys, implement livelihoods programmes that are accessible to those at risk of GBV (<i>e.g. address logistical and cultural obstacles that prevent their participation</i>)		✓	✓	✓
In consultation with women, girls, men and boys, implement livelihoods programmes that minimize related GBV risks (<i>e.g. sensitize community members about GBV; work with local authorities to increase security measures; engage men and boys as supportive partners through workshops and discussions on gender issues; work with receptor or host communities to reduce competition over employment or natural resources; etc.</i>)		✓	✓	✓
Promote the economic and professional empowerment of participants through business development, agricultural trainings, value chain integration, vocational skills training, capacity-building and education		✓	✓	✓
Implement strategies that allow participants to control their assets in ways that mitigate the risk of theft or financial exploitation		✓	✓	✓
Implement all livelihoods programmes within the framework of building sustainable livelihoods that are ongoing beyond the crisis stage (<i>e.g. develop culturally sensitive exit strategies to lessen the risks of GBV; link short-term livelihoods programmes with longer-term economic empowerment strategies; etc.</i>)		✓	✓	✓
► Policies				
Incorporate GBV prevention and mitigation strategies into the policies, standards and guidelines of livelihoods programmes (<i>e.g. standards for equal employment of females; procedures and policies for sharing protected or confidential information about GBV incidents; agency procedures to report, investigate and take disciplinary action in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse; etc.</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support the reform of national and local laws, policies and plans that hinder women, girls and other at-risk groups from economic and professional empowerment, and allocate funding for sustainability	✓		✓	✓
► Communications and Information Sharing				
Consult with GBV specialists to identify safe, confidential and appropriate systems of care (i.e. referral pathways) for survivors, and ensure livelihoods staff have the basic skills to provide them with information on where they can obtain support	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that livelihoods programmes sharing information about reports of GBV within the livelihoods sector or with partners in the larger humanitarian community abide by safety and ethical standards (<i>e.g. shared information does not reveal the identity of or pose a security risk to individual survivors, their families or the broader community</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Incorporate GBV messages (<i>including prevention, where to report risk and how to access care</i>) into livelihoods-related community outreach and awareness-raising activities, using multiple formats to ensure accessibility		✓	✓	✓
COORDINATION				
Undertake coordination with other sectors to address GBV risks, ensure protection and identify livelihoods opportunities for women, girls and other at-risk groups	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seek out the GBV coordination mechanism for support and guidance and, whenever possible, assign a livelihoods focal point to regularly participate in GBV coordination meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
MONITORING AND EVALUATION				
Identify, collect and analyse a core set of indicators—disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other relevant vulnerability factors—to monitor GBV risk-reduction activities throughout the programme cycle	✓	✓	✓	✓
Evaluate GBV risk-reduction activities by measuring programme outcomes (including potential adverse effects) and using the data to inform decision-making and ensure accountability		✓	✓	✓

NOTE: The essential actions above are organized in chronological order according to an ideal model for programming. The actions that are in bold are the **suggested minimum commitments** for livelihoods actors in the early stages of an emergency. These minimum commitments will not necessarily be undertaken according to an ideal model for programming; for this reason, they do not always fall first under each subcategory of the summary table. When it is not possible to implement all actions—particularly in the early stages of an emergency—the minimum commitments should be prioritized and the other actions implemented at a later date. For more information about minimum commitments, see **Part Two: Background to Livelihoods Guidance**.