

## ANNEX 3: EXAMPLES OF BARRIERS AND RISKS

Below are **examples** of barriers women and girls may face in humanitarian contexts. The barriers are only examples and are not an exhaustive list. The examples have been taken from the [Emergency Preparedness and Response guidance \(2020\)](#).

### WASH

- **Lack of available WASH facilities and services:** a lack of latrines (barrier) for example can promote open defecation. Women and girls may even delay eating on time just to avoid open defecation.
- A lack of access to water could for example contribute to tension and domestic violence among community members particularly in water-scarce or drought-affected areas. Queuing for extended periods increases the time that women and girls are out collecting water, which can create tensions at the water points and at home. Women, girls and sometimes boys may have to walk long distances to collect water or to find water to do laundry. At times they must walk to remote locations. They may even use unsafe routes including passing through heavily militarized terrains to access WASH facilities or services. Without adequate hygiene supplies, women and girls in reproductive age may not participate in group activities because they cannot afford dignity/hygiene supplies.
- **Unsafe WASH facilities/services:** women and girls may not be consulted in the design of facilities. WASH facilities/services that are designed can be insensitive to the gender dynamics of a given society or cultural context. For example the location of facilities, materials used, and design can all influence the safety of women and girls. Due to certain social norms, women and girls may wait to use existing latrines after dark, for example if they should not be seen outside the home and/or without a male companion, or if they feel unsafe accessing services. Vice versa, facilities in the dark can also be unsafe which may lead women and girls to not use them.
- **Lack of women and girls' participation in WASH programming:** men providing WASH services may be potential perpetrators of GBV and SEA and might not be aware of the specific needs of women and girls.

### NUTRITION

- **Existing gender inequalities and social norms:** social norms/cultural practices may impede women and girls from making decisions about what to eat and when. During displacement resulting from conflict or natural disaster, food may be lacking or scarce. Where food is available, men often are the ones to decide on food which has significant impact on pregnant and lactating women. Men may trade family food for personal reasons. Where child marriage or polygamy are practiced, adolescent girls or women with special needs may have increased barriers accessing food on time. Cultural eating practices differ, and in some contexts women and girls can be among the ones to eat last and less nutritious scraps. In addition, barriers for women to own land may also limit their access to food. Female headed households tend to have less access to food and markets as in many contexts women should not be in public without a male companion.
- **The Lack of basic needs including** food may push women and adolescent girls to engage in negative coping mechanisms, including survival sex. Child marriage rates can also increase due to food insecurity
- **Design of nutrition facilities and services:** locations wherein nutrition facilities are located can put women and girls at risk. It is often women who take children to facilities, the route to and from facilities can be dangerous. At the facility itself, there should be checks for safety,

including safe WASH facilities. The waiting time at facilities can be another risk factor if women and children take too long to return home.

- **Behavior and attitude of nutrition personnel:** during emergencies, personnel are often recruited quickly to life-saving interventions. If not trained on protection, this may increase potential for sexual exploitation and abuse.

## **EDUCATION**

- **Existing gender inequality and social norms:** Boys can be favored over girls to pursue education. In some contexts, girls may only be able to go to school up to a certain age (usually before adolescence), or not at all, as it is deemed unnecessary for girls to pursue education.
- **Lack of learning spaces:** existing learning spaces may be unavailable or damaged/destroyed by conflict or disaster. Armed groups can occupy learning spaces. When learning spaces are located far away, children may have to go dangerous routes to access school which exposes them to risks including GBV. The unavailability of learning spaces means children will have to stay at home. After long periods of staying at home, it is more difficult for girls to return to school. Girls in particular can be married off earlier when not attending school, child protection risks for both boys and girls increase outside school.
- **Loss of legal documents:** during emergencies, children may lose their legal documentation including school documents. This may affect them accessing education services in displaced settings.
- **Language barriers:** language barrier may also deprive children from accessing education services in some displaced settings.
- **Unsafe design of Education facilities/services:** Education facilities and services may be designed without community inputs thus increasing safety risks for children, particularly girls.
- **Limited basic needs:** the loss of livelihoods, family and community support network can make life difficult for adolescent girls. In many cases, they may not be able to meet their needs of clothing, shoes, etc. to go to school. This may in turn increase their vulnerability to sexual abuse.