

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
WORKING GROUP
IASC Subsidiary Bodies
Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action
Report on Activities in 2011
13 January 2012

I Report on Activities Undertaken in 2011

1.1 Achievements in line with the 2011 workplan

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action (Gender SWG) works to support the IASC and its members in the realization of the IASC Gender Policy (2008), which outlines its commitment to achieving gender equality, ensuring that the human rights of women, girls, boys, and men are equally promoted and protected in humanitarian action, and ensuring that they have equitable and safe access to services provided.

During 2011, the Gender SWG had an active year taking forward a number of key strategic initiatives in line with the 2011 workplan, including:

- **Strengthening the evidence base for gender-responsive programming in humanitarian action** including through the finalization and dissemination of the study on sex and age disaggregated data (in partnership with Tufts University) (Activity 1.1), and the completion of Phase I of a global study to assess the extent to which gender equality programming influences humanitarian outcomes (through a contract with Dara) (Activity 1.2). The recommendations of these studies will be shared with policy makers and practitioners to draw attention to practical ways that gender equality approaches can make a real difference to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response.
- **Strengthening the standardisation and consistent application of gender-responsive humanitarian action at the global and field level** primarily through the Gender Standby Project (GenCap), which is the de facto operational arm of the Gender SWG, and involves the deployment of gender advisors to support humanitarian actors at national, regional, and global levels (Activities 2.1 and 2.3).¹ Gender SWG co-chairs and member agencies supported continued distribution of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Handbook and its accompanying e-learning module (Activity 2.1).
- **Strengthening inter-agency response capacity to address gender in the early stages of rapid onset humanitarian crises** including through the development and dissemination of “Gender ABCs” – or tip sheets for humanitarian practitioners to consider in rapid onset emergencies (Activity 3.1). In 2011, Gender ABCs were developed for crises in Cote

¹ In 2011, GenCap deployed a total of 16 gender advisers on 21 assignments, totaling 140 months of deployments. This included the deployment of 10 GenCap advisers to 12 countries (Chad, Cote D’Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen, and Zimbabwe) to support Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) and provide technical support to cluster coordinators, national and civil society partners, and Consolidated Appeals teams. Regional GenCap advisers were also deployed to the Pacific and Southern African regions to provide technical support on mainstreaming gender in disaster preparedness, while global level GenCap advisers provided support to the global clusters (including direct support to the agriculture and the new food security cluster in Rome) and to the IASC gender marker initiative.

d'Ivoire, Libya, Horn of Africa and Somalia, and received positive feedback from field practitioners. To provide direct technical support on gender during rapid onset emergencies, a position was created for a roaming GenCap advisor to facilitate rapid deployment (Activity 3.2).

- **Strengthening the accountability framework for gender-responsive humanitarian action** including through roll out and application of the IASC Gender Marker (GM) which helps track the gender-responsiveness of humanitarian financing. A series of Gender Marker workshops were conducted at country, regional, and global levels with CAP, CERF, and Pooled Fund teams, as well as technical advisors. Sector-specific Gender Marker Tip Sheets were developed and translated into English, French, and Arabic to guide cluster coordinators on the application of the marker (Activity 4.1). Briefings on progress on these initiatives were presented to key stakeholders during ECOSOC and other briefings (Activity 4.2). Within the broader IASC framework, the Global GenCap actively engaged with other IASC Subsidiary bodies (i.e. the Needs Assessment Task Force, Information Management, and Cluster Approach teams) during 2011 to ensure that gender was mainstreamed into their work.

1.2 Opportunities and constraints faced by the subsidiary body

In 2011, the IASC Working Group (WG) approached the Gender SWG Co-chairs to discuss the strategic direction of the Gender SWG.² This created a timely opportunity for dialogue with WG members to better inform them of Gender SWG activities, as well to better design Gender SWG strategies and actions, so that they more directly and explicitly link to current IASC Priorities. These fruitful discussions informed the development of the 2012 Gender SWG annual work plan which clearly aligns with IASC priorities and more accurately reflects the scope and depth of work being carried out by the SWG. More regular and active dialogue with the IASC WG is foreseen for 2012.

The operationalization of UN Women (UNW) presents an opportunity for the UN System as a whole to more systemically address gender dimensions of humanitarian action. While in 2011 UNW was not officially a member of the IASC, and while its role in humanitarian response has yet to be defined, they have the potential to take on a more active role during humanitarian crises. The Gender SWG plans to remain actively engaged with UNW through 2012 and beyond, in the broader interest of improving humanitarian outcomes.

Among the constraints faced by the Gender SWG is limited participation from members (currently one-third of the 90+ members actively participate), a trend which is likely to continue through 2012, as several agencies are reporting downsizing as well as shifts in staff priorities that impact external commitments, including to the Gender SWG. The lack of a Geneva-based co-chair, which limits SWG direct engagement with humanitarian networks in Geneva, is an additional challenge that the Gender SWG is currently seeking to remedy. Finally, funding for the translation of the Gender E-learning course into French is still being sought, as are solutions for the long-term administration of the e-learning module.

² Recommendations by the WG included: (1) improving the alignment of the Gender SWG workplan to current IASC priorities; (2) encouraging more visibly diverse interagency leadership of the SWG; (3) more actively collaborating with other subsidiary bodies to maximize collective objectives; and (4) increasing the diversity of membership and participation.

II Status Update with Reference to Objectives Set in the 2011 Work Plan

Objectives	Activities	Focal point(s)	Timeframe	Status/Results
<i>MONITORING, EVALUATION and KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT</i>				
1. Strengthen the evidence base for gender-responsive programming in humanitarian action.				
	1.1 Analyse and disseminate the results of Study of the Collection and Analysis of Data Disaggregated by Sex and Age to Inform Effective Humanitarian Programming by Feinstein Intl. Centre at Tufts University for OCHA and CARE.	OCHA & CARE	Jan 2011	The SADD study was finalized and launched by OCHA and CARE at the ECOSOC meeting in July in Geneva. A second launch was held in New York in November 2011, and the study was shared with member states at the annual Gender SWG meeting in New York in October 2011.
	1.2 Commission an action-oriented study to measure the impact of gender-responsive programming on humanitarian outcomes and aid effectiveness (in partnership with relevant applied research bodies).	UNICEF, OCHA, UN Women	Jan-Sep 2011	Phase I of the research was carried out by the firm DARA in 2011 including field research conducted in South Sudan. The Phase I report will be finalised in February 2011 and funding is currently being sought to take forward Phase II of the study (which will involve field research in up to 5 additional countries).
	1.3 Develop and pilot an analysis framework, including a core set of indicators for measuring results, to support cluster-leads to incorporate gender equality into all aspects of their work, both normative and field-based.	Global GenCap	Jan-Sep 2011	A gender self-assessment tool, designed to help clusters assess their progress on gender equality, and to outline the support they need was piloted in Fiji, Niger, and Ivory Coast. Discussions are ongoing with the Performance Framework Working Group of the IASC Task Team for the Cluster Approach to see how to best apply these tools.
<i>CAPACITY BUILDING</i>				
2. Strengthen the standardisation and consistent application of gender-responsive humanitarian action at the global and field levels.				
	2.1 Continued roll-out of relevant gender programming tools including Gender E-Learning and the IASC Gender Handbook, targeting humanitarian workers.	OCHA, InterAction	Jan-Dec	Distribution of the Gender Handbook (in all languages) and the E-learning promotional materials is ongoing (OCHA). InterAction has circulated information about the SWG products throughout their NGO membership. Agencies – both UN and NGO – continue to roll out these products internally, including making the e-learning course mandatory for staff.

	2.2 Translation and dissemination of Gender E-learning into French (and possibly other languages, depending on available resources).	Co-Chairs of SWG	March-Sep	In collaboration with InterAction, a proposal for French-language translation has been developed. Donor funding is still being sought.
	<p>2.3 Continued capacity building of Clusters on gender through GenCap deployments at Global, Regional and Country levels (through GenCap) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and roll out Minimum Standards for Gender Equality per sector at global and country levels • Continued roll out of Gender Marker 	GenCap Secretariat	Jan-Dec	<p>In 2011, GenCap deployed a total of 16 gender advisers on 21 assignments, totaling 140 months of deployments. This included the deployment of 10 GenCap advisers to 12 countries (Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen, and Zimbabwe) to support Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) and provide technical support to cluster coordinators, national and civil society partners, and Consolidated Appeals teams. Regional GenCap advisers were also deployed to the Pacific and Southern African regions to provide technical support on mainstreaming gender in disaster preparedness, while global level GenCap advisers provided support to the global clusters (including direct support to the agriculture and the new food security cluster in Rome¹) and to the IASC gender marker initiative. One of these advisers also served in the role of a roaming GenCap to facilitate rapid deployment to emergencies (see Activity 3.2).</p> <p>Minimum Standards or Commitments for Gender Equality were developed per sector at global and country levels. To date, clusters in 4 countries have developed standards (Somalia, Ethiopia, Central African Republic and DRC).</p> <p>Roll-out of the IASC Gender Marker continued through 2011 at country level with the support of GenCaps. The gender marker will be mandatory for all CAP and pooled funds in 2012. Cluster-specific Gender Marker tip sheets were revised and workshops on the IASC Gender Marker were carried out at country, regional and global levels for CAP, CERF and pooled fund teams, as well as for technical advisors/desk officers.</p> <p>A new Gender Marker Tool Box was developed, which includes an FAQ sheet, a vetting form, a PowerPoint presentation with facilitator notes, and "tip sheets" for all sectors. The toolbox has reinforced consideration for GBV and PSEA and includes guidance on developing minimum standards on gender for clusters. The Tool Box is available on the One Response web site in English, French, and Arabic languages.</p>

<i>COORDINATION and PARTNERSHIP</i>				
3. Strengthen inter-agency rapid response capacity to address gender in the early stages of rapid onset humanitarian crises.				
	3.1 Develop Standard Operating Procedures/Protocol for interagency coordination on gender in rapid onset and ongoing emergencies, including distribution of ABCs for gender concerns in specific emergencies.	UNICEF, UNHCR	Jan- June	ABC Gender Tip sheets were developed and disseminated for Libya, Horn of Africa, Somalia, and Cote d'Ivoire. Templates have been established, with UNHCR electing to manage future ABC preparations in coordination with SWG members and co-chairs.
	3.2 Establish a 'Trigger Group' that will work through inter-agency processes to ensure technical expertise is deployed to an emergency within 72 hours as an alternative to or additional support for GenCap. Sub-activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current response capacity • Finalise mapping of existing gender coordination structures at country-level to inform coordinated response • develop Protocol (see 3.1 above) • develop generic TOR for Trigger Group Amend budget templates for country-level deployment and coordination	UNFPA	Jan- June	A draft ToR for a trigger group was developed. A roaming GenCap is positioned to respond to rapid onset emergencies, and this position will continue into 2012. UNFPA dispatched a staff member to Libya in the initial emergency phase.
	3.3 Support UN Women in clarifying their potential role in (i) leading country-level coordinated humanitarian response on Gender; (ii) influencing gender policies and monitoring gender accountability mechanisms through the UN system.	Co-chairs of IASC SWG	Jan- June	The Gender SWG co-chairs sent a letter to the head of UN Women (UNW) via ERC Valerie Amos, providing "Suggestions for the Role of UN Women in Humanitarian Action," to contribute to the strategic planning process of UNW as they became operational in 2011. UNW participated in the Gender SWG throughout 2011, including in bi-monthly conference calls, and in person at the annual planning meeting where UNW presented an overview of its current and forthcoming plans for work in humanitarian action.
	3.4 Organize regular meetings of the SWG (to be held Jan. 19, March 16, May 18, July 20, September 21, face-to-face meeting in October, November 30).	Co-chairs of IASC SWG	Jan-Nov	Regular meetings of the Gender SWG have been held as scheduled including an annual face-to-face work planning meeting in October.
<i>ADVOCACY for ACCOUNTABILITY</i>				
4. Strengthen the accountability framework for gender-responsive humanitarian action.				

	4.1 Continued advocacy for cluster-, institutional- and donor-level promotion and use of the Gender Marker, to help ensure equitable allocation of funding to gender-responsive humanitarian action.	OCHA, InterAction	Jan-Dec	IASC Gender Marker workshops were carried out in Geneva, New York, Washington, and Amman, to raise awareness with stakeholders at global and regional level about the tool. The IASC Gender Marker is now being rolled out in ERFs. Co-chairs and SWG members participated in meetings with USG representatives to promote the gender marker. ERC Valerie Amos stressed the GM's importance during the CAP launch. ECHO expressed interest in adopting the GM as part of its policy, and SIDA has agreed to adopt the GM to inform funding decisions.
	4.2 Provide regular briefings for donors, member states (ECOSOC), key stakeholders and other humanitarian actors on SWG achievements and challenges in order to engage them in promoting gender equality programming in humanitarian action.	Co-chairs of IASC SWG	Jan-Dec	The Gender SWG organized a panel on gender for the ECOSOC meeting. A member state luncheon briefing was held during the Gender SWG annual planning meeting.
	4.3 Provide support to SWG members to develop internal accountability systems, informing on the functioning and application of the AGDM accountability framework.	UNHCR	Jan-Dec	UNHCR provided a briefing on accountability systems during the SWG annual planning meeting.