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**Participation of affected women in post disaster
responses particularly livelihoods strategies –
reality or myth**

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Abstract

Women are usually among the worst affected segments when a disaster hits an area. Several researchers and writers have reiterated that women have certain capacities and capabilities but which the postdisaster responses hardly take into account. Likewise, several theoretical as well as legal frameworks and guidelines substantiate the importance of affected women's participation across different phases of the developmental as well as humanitarian program cycle management. Nevertheless, evidence shows that real participation of women in general and the most vulnerable of them in particular is hardly ensured at the critical stage of needs-assessment. The lack of involvement at needs-assessment stages has further implications on gender sensitive programming. Hence, the literature review as well as the analysis on selected humanitarian response-plans suggest drastic improvement in livelihood's strategies from the perspective of vulnerability and gender sensitivities. Moreover, the post-disaster needs-assessments should take good care of the pre-existing gender gaps. This gender-balanced analysis should translate that the post-disaster response strategies, particularly livelihoods, are designed based on equity approach to address the gender and vulnerability issues in a more systematic way.

Key Words: Women, Participation, Strategies, Livelihood, Disasters, Vulnerability, Needs-Assessments, Humanitarian Action, Agriculture, Conflicts and Frameworks,.

List of Acronyms

ACAPs	Assessment Capacities Project
CAP	Consolidated appeal process (UN)
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CHAP	Cumulative Humanitarian Action Plan
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CP	Cash Programming
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECHO	European Commission's Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FES	Fuel Efficient Stoves
FEWS	NET Famine Early Warning System Network
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDACS	Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System
GID	Gender in Development
HEA	Household Economy Approach
HNO	Humanitarian needs overview (UN OCHA)
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
ILO	International Labour Organization
MiRA	Multi Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment
NFI	Non Food Items
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPP	Orangi Pilot Project
SAAD	Sex and Age Disaggregated Data
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
UN	United Nations
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence against Women
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development

Contents

Acknowledgement	1
Chapter 1: Introduction	2
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Problem statement.....	3
1.3 Research approach and methodology.....	5
1.4 Limitations of the research.....	6
Chapter 2: Relevant literature review	7
2.2 Setting the stage – why participation is important?	7
2.2.1 Why and whose participation?	7
2.2.2 ‘Participation’ from legal perspective:.....	10
2.2.3 Typology of participation:	11
2.2 Assessments and involvement of women:	13
2.3 Humanitarian Livelihoods strategies and affected women:	16
CHAPTER 3: Results and Discussions: Selected HRPs.....	18
3.1 Introduction:.....	19
3.2 Evolution of the planning processes and affected women:	20
3.3 Needs assessment and considerations for vulnerabilities:	22
3.4 Involvement of affected women in needs assessment:	23
3.5 Response strategies and affected women:.....	24
3.6 Livelihoods strategies and women empowerment:	27
Chapter 4: Conclusion and Recommendations:	29
4.1 Conclusion	29
4.2 Recommendations.....	32
Bibliography:	33

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Neelofar Shahzad

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Women, particularly in developing countries, are considered to be more vulnerable than their male counterparts. Varying from context to context and social groups, their low literacy rate, less employment opportunities, gender role (expectations to fulfill home-based responsibilities), lack of organization and lack or no participation in decision-making processes can be counted upon as major responsible factors (Dijkhorst & Vonhof 2005). The issue of women-marginalization and their lack of participation have drawn some attention in the recent years. The discourse gained further agency since the introduction of concepts such as “Women in Development (WID)” back in 1970s with its considerable refine with the passage of time. As a result of such efforts, women are somehow included in the development initiatives and projects (Vijayamohanan et al. 2009). This was also not without challenges. The level of participation also differed from context to context and one social group to another. Even development actors have had different ways to approach women participation in their programs (Vincent 2011). The period 1990s and onwards witnessed drastic changes in the global development landscape. The increasing conflicts and so called natural disasters across the globe not only produced devastated effects, especially for under developed countries (Global Humanitarian Forum 2009), but also shifted the focus away from development. It is important to note that the effects of these events were not alike for everyone, as some social and age group suffered more than others. Empirical data shows that women compared to men suffered more from such disasters (Goh 2012). Similarly the effects on women are not similar across the board. The one more exposed to hazards, with less or no capacities and hence less resilient, tend to suffer the most (Ciampi et al. 2011).

The disastrous events, which have highlighted the agenda of humanitarian action, raised the questions of how to meaningfully include all the marginalized groups in needs assessment and disaster responses. Organizations like International Labour Organization (ILO) admit and admire women as resourceful actors in crises because of their local community knowledge, strong social networks and key roles in families. But it also admits that this potential is neither appropriately utilized nor are women recognized as “front-line” responders during such disasters (Green 2012).

The humanitarian responses potentially could produce far-reaching positive effects and there are instances where the responses have filled some gaps (Dijkhorst & Vonhof 2005). However, the general perception remains that these responses being immediate and short term, may have failed to involve the most vulnerable judiciously. Hence the strategies they may design may prove less productive or even counterproductive (Jamieson Hall 1995).

Problem statement

The importance of participation of affected population is a no-denial fact. Practitioners and academia share almost the same opinion that participation of affected population can improve the response and avoid doing further harm (Miller 2005). Moreover, the involvement of affected population can contribute to their own empowerment process provided that they are involved in the true sense (UN-OCHA 2011). Unluckily the real participation of affected population in general, let alone the affected women, is not the case in majority of humanitarian responses. Data shows that often the meaningful participation of affected population especially vulnerable groups including women is a neglected area (Sen et al. 2007). Urgency, short duration, socio-cultural practices barring women from participation in decision making processes and so on are among the usual justifications provided for less or no participation of the affected women (Nellemann et al. 2012). It is important to note here that often women, given their vulnerabilities and high level of exposure to disasters, are the most affected. Women being largely dependent on disaster prone livelihoods sources such as agriculture, livestock rearing etc. are the first to receive any such shock and hence their involvement is of paramount importance (Armah et al. 2010). Likewise, though involvement of women in post-disasters livelihood-strengthening programs is of more crucial nature but is hardly ensured. Analysis on response strategies of humanitarian actors presents that their full participation during needs assessment and later response strategies is a problematic area (Reindorp & Wiles 2001). The same rhetoric of cultural barrier is often the justification provided. More specifically, the organization argue that breaking the cultural barriers for trust building with communities in the conservative social setup is crucial for women participation. But this is a time taking process and is not something humanitarian organization can always do as the responses are normally of short duration (Haider 2009). The lack of active participation is further complicated in case of the most vulnerable groups including single women, women headed households, widows and women with disabilities as they are normally

the most ignored segment of such societies (Ciampi et al. 2011). On top, it has also been observed that in some contexts these groups hardly have documentation to be eligible for humanitarian assistance and access remains constant issue both from the perspective of their physical inabilities as well as social barriers (Rehn & Sirleaf 2002).

Nevertheless, there is an increasing awareness among humanitarian actors concerning the involvement of vulnerable groups including women. Different global frameworks with emphasis on participation of vulnerable groups are being developed and practiced (Carpenter 2005). Furthermore, the consultation leading to upcoming World Humanitarian Summit 2016 also points to the fact that ‘the only lasting solutions are ones that build on the capacity of local actors, including women and youth, and empower them to take leadership roles’ (IFRC 2015). All this emphasizes over the role women can play; therefore there is a need that response strategies of humanitarian actors involve women in the process right from needs assessment. It is worth noting that the response strategies catering to the needs of women affected from any disasters should be built around their existing and potential capacities (Blaikie et al. 1994).

In order to address the problematic areas, this research strives to find answer to the following main as well as sub-research questions:

Research Questions:

How humanitarian actors¹ ensure participation of affected women in their needs assessment as well as response strategies particularly livelihoods strategies?

And more specifically:

- What is participation? Is it instrumental for women empowerment and if yes to what extent?
- How the individual agency’s as well as Multi-cluster Inter Agency Rapid Assessment (MiRA) mechanisms involve women in needs assessment processes?
- To what extent the humanitarian responses in general and their livelihoods strategies in particular cater for the needs of affected women?

¹ Humanitarian actors are a wide range of organizations, agencies and inter-agency networks that all combine to enable international humanitarian assistance to be channeled to the places and people in need of it. They include UN agencies, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Humanitarian Coalition member agencies, military institutions, local government institutions and donor agencies. The actions of these organizations are guided by key humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality. (<http://humanitariancoalition.ca/media-resources/factsheets/the-humanitarian-system>)

Research approach and methodology

The research adopted qualitative approach to review relevant literature and different theoretical frameworks underpinning the importance of women participation and the hurdles in its way. Besides, it also helped to determine the extent to which humanitarian responses practically involve affected women in different phases of the humanitarian disaster management cycle. Two specific considerations; firstly from the perspective of contexts where women culturally don't take active part in social life and secondly women participation in livelihoods strategies. In doing so, this research reviewed a wide range of available literature primarily to identify gaps. Besides, the research particularly studied global frameworks for participation from development, legal as well as humanitarian perspectives. Furthermore, the research analyzed selected consolidated response plans coordinated by UNOCHA with a critical gender lens.

The research adopted a two-pronged methodology to situate the existing phenomenon of women participation in the global literature with a more practical perspective on how the same is reflected within humanitarian response plans. The global literature review was mostly desk-based review. Variety of published and unpublished literature including books, reports, articles, journals, guidelines and legal frameworks were studied. The literature was mainly reviewed under the following thematic areas:

• Historical and legal perspective of women participation	• Typology of participation and their impact on women empowerment
• Importance and hindrances to women participation in needs assessments	• Existing tools and their effectiveness for effective involvement of women
• Importance of women participation and existing livelihoods frameworks	• Livelihoods strategies and their impact on women empowerment

The research selected three different contexts with different nature of disasters with diverse geographic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Firstly, the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Haiti in response to 2010 earthquake (UN-OCHA 2010), (UNOCHA 2015), (Humanitarian Country Team 2016). The case of Haiti was selected for two main reasons; firstly, it represents natural disasters with devastating effects and secondly the humanitarian actors have had theoretically learnt a lot from this response (Margesson & Taft-Morales 2010). The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) transformative agenda is believed to be largely inspired from the learning of this context (IASC 2016). Another important consideration was that this case allowed for reviewing the CAP process compared to the recently in-placed HRP process (IASC Secretariate 2011).

Secondly, Sudan. This selection was primarily based on its decade-long history of conflict coupled with extreme poverty as well as peculiar social structure (IFAD 2007). This allowed understanding the extent to which different gender mainstreaming tools can be effectively applied in a context where socio-cultural structure of the society suggests for clear segregation between men and women (United Nations 2002a).

The third context is about the ongoing Syrian conflict. The selected was primarily based on protracted nature of the conflict and its severity particularly for women population (UN Human Rights Council 2013).

Within the selected plans, this research alongside reflecting on transitioning from CAP to HRP process, focused on three main areas. These included; needs assessments and considerations for vulnerabilities, involvement of affected women in needs assessments and involvement of women in strategies in general and livelihoods strategies in particular. Under each of the aforementioned areas, this research painstakingly reviewed the techniques employed and how they positively or negatively impacted women status in that particular context. The data thus analyzed is mainly presented under 'results and discussions' section of this research. Furthermore, this allowed for drawing possible comparison the literature review as well. Importantly, based on the review of literature and the analysis on the selected plans, this research could draw certain conclusions and put forward few humble recommendations.

Limitations of the research

The research carries certain limitations. The most obvious among them is the shortage of time for conducting a research on a topic which requires a deep dive to understand different cultural perspectives and to dig out relevant materials. This research only reviewed publically available materials. All such materials cited are properly acknowledged and professionally referenced. Besides, the research did not conduct any interviews or employed other method of conducting primary data which might have raised ethical issues. The time constraint coupled with dearth of resources to travel and collect first-hand information from affected population including women from the selected three cases was another limitation. Had the time limitation not been there, I would have loved to interview those affected from disasters and made it part of the analysis.

Moreover, being a woman myself, I may have had a bit of bias to approach the issue of women participation. On top of this, the scarce availability of relevant materials online in general and concerning the selected plans in particular posed certain challenges and limitations.

Chapter 2: Relevant literature review

2.2 Setting the stage – why participation is important?

2.2.1 Why and whose participation?

Participatory approach emphasizing involvement of local communities is mainly originated from development sector. With Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) pioneering the subject, the decade of 1980s is of particular importance as this is considered to be the decade of ‘participation’ (Botes & Rensburg 2000). During this period, the renowned scholar Robert Chamber introduced different participatory approaches for community participation with an overarching objective of empowerment (Chamber 1994). Similarly, the emergence of right based approaches in the 1990s, considering participation as a right of women, further augmented the agenda of ‘participation’ (Kindornay et al. 2012). The later particularly emphasized that development should be people-driven and that people should have the ability and opportunity to hold duty-bearers accountable (Nussbaum 2001). Evidence suggests that any such development is cost-effective and the local people tend to own it compared to top-down developmental outcomes (Mansuri & Rao 2003).

With the increasing importance of ‘participation’ in its generic sense, the agenda of women participation came to forefront. The emergence of concepts such as Women in Development (WID), back in 1970s, called for addressing women related issues in development (Rodriguez 2003). Later, the arrival of concepts such as Gender in Development (GID), and more specifically Gender and Development (GAD), advocated largely for gender relations rather than looking at women issues in isolation (Razavi & Miller 1995). This necessitated that women are not only involved in the process rather they are the one suggesting solutions and leading the process of their own development.

The participatory approaches for community development and empowerment of local population including women have no doubt a buy-in from development practitioners across the board (Karl 1995). Donor communities, international NGOs and even national NGOs not only implemented but innovated and adapted the approaches to best suit the conditions in a particular context

(Asian Productivity Organization 2002). Evidences show that real participation of the local population has positively impacted cost effectiveness, ownership and sustainability of the benefits of the interventions (Green 2008). Alongside general participation, the participation of women in different livelihoods initiatives have brought evidently drastic changes in their lives and contributed to the society at large. Grameen Bank Bangladesh and Rural Support Programs in Pakistan are among such examples where women participation in livelihoods activities has yielded far reaching effects on their living conditions (Mansuri & Rao 2015).

Participation for planning in general and social planning processes in particular has no doubt attracted appreciation from different scholars (Bandana & Mangala 2004). Nevertheless it has drawn criticism as well. The critique is predominantly on grounds that participatory approaches are time consuming and may lead to unwanted delays (Waisbord 2008). Similarly, there is a possibility that if the power dynamics within the community are not appropriately understood and taken care of, participatory approaches may bring further harm to vulnerable groups (Schenk & Williamson 2005). The same holds true for power relations in a family unit as evidence substantiate that initiatives involving women and promoting their participation in livelihoods program in particular have resulted in the increase of gender based violence. Over-burdening women population particularly in livelihoods program can be another negative effect of such strategies if the daily work calendar of women engaged in livelihoods intervention is not taken into consideration (Sparling & Gordon 2011). Nonetheless, substantive evidence is available that real community participation may not necessarily cause delays, rather ensures low cost, high quality solutions to the problems communities are facing. The example of low cost solutions to the sanitation problem by Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) of Karachi Pakistan is one such examples of hundreds and thousands (Zaidi 2001).

Compared to development, ‘participation’ of crisis affected population during humanitarian responses is further challenging. Unlike ‘participation’ in development where the target population is supposedly involved in all stages of the process, the ‘participation’ during humanitarian process needs to be understood and approached differently (Bloom & Betts 2013). In development settings, the practitioners call for community participation across the different phases of assessment, design, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of the development initiative. On contrary, guide on participation during humanitarian responses titled ‘Participation handbook for humanitarian aid workers’ clearly suggests for an adaptive participation. The

handbook mentions that participation in humanitarian situations should be understood as “*the involvement of crisis affected people in one or more phases of a humanitarian project or programme*”. The handbook, cognizant of the diversity and complexity of humanitarian situations, further explains that the degree and even essence of participation will vary from situation to situation (Groupe URD 2009). This definition of the participation in humanitarian settings seems realistic as the urgency, social structure in a particular context or even the short term intervention may not allow for full participation of affected population especially women. However, the first thought coming to mind would be the way the humanitarian actors can best address the needs of a particular group, especially women, in conservative societies if their aspirations were not taken into consideration during assessment phase. Their lack of involvement at assessment level would simply mean that their real needs are not ascertained. Any intervention based on the findings of such assessment can potentially create further harm. Particularly the livelihoods interventions may either neglect their aspirations or further overburden women and hence may put them at additional protection risk.

Participation of affected population in itself is not an end. World Disaster Report (IFRC 2015) while considering participation as a step towards ownership considers that the participation of local communities alone will not fulfill the purpose. Moreover, it will require high degree of commitment, time and greater creativity on the part of involved actors. The report while referring to a case in Myanmar mentions:

“The target groups were engaged in design consultations, consolidation workshops and a pilot, each with a strong deliberate emphasis on active participation. However, the trade-off was that this approach required a much longer timescale, with more time to engage and build trust with stakeholders. This kind of approach needs careful planning to ensure that adequate time is available and does not result in project slippage, which typically means that a measure of flexibility on the part of the donor is also required” (IFRC 2015 Pp 44)

Deliberating on the concept of participation necessitates for understanding this concept from the legal perspective as well. The next section explains positioning of the concept from the perspective of international laws both in times of peace and during humanitarian crisis situations.

2.2.2 'Participation' from legal perspective:

The right of everyone to participate, especially underprivileged groups including women, is well grounded in international legal instruments. Number of Declarations and Conventions specifically refer to the importance of this basic human right. The universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) accord the right to freedom of opinion and expression to everyone without interference. Similarly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (1979) calls upon state parties to eliminate discrimination and ensure that women has the right to participate in public and political life of the country. Likewise, the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1996) states:

“The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.”

The UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1996) considers the right to development an ‘absolute’ human right (United Nations 2013). This entitles every human being to participate in, contribute to and enjoy all types of development for their full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedom (Verma 2005).

The aforementioned instruments emphasize participation of everyone including women from a legal perspective in time of peace and stability. Nevertheless, there are other instruments referring to their participation specifically at time of crisis situation. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Declaration on the Right to Development considers a policy or program more likely to be ineffective if it was conceived without the active participation of affected population. According to the report of UN committee on economic, social and cultural rights, *“participation in humanitarian action is also linked to a person’s rights and related to the use of and access to information”*(CESCR 2001). The UN Guiding Principles on internal Displacement (1998) alongside provision of basic services in emergencies particularly emphasizes on the full participation of women not only in the distribution but at the planning stage as well (OCHA 1998). In line with to this, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) reaffirms the participation of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as their full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of peace. The Resolution lays

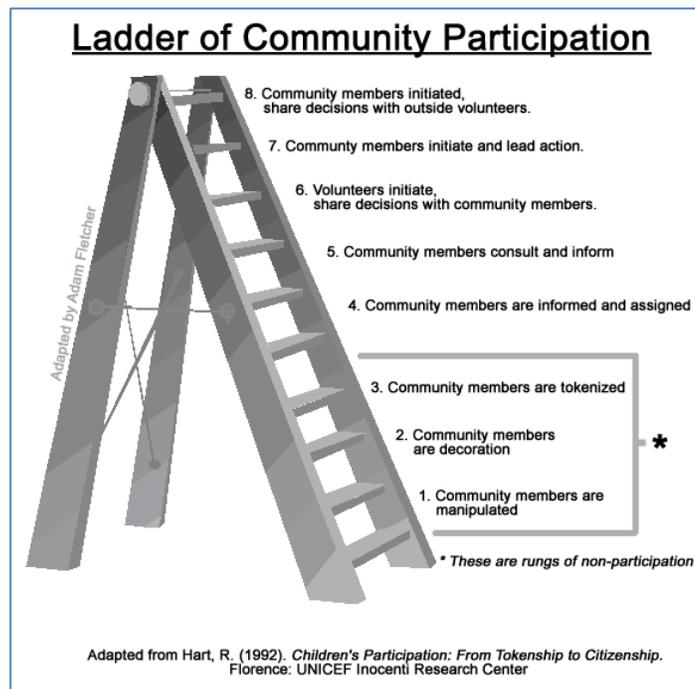
emphasis on highlighting the need to increase women decision-making role with regards to conflict prevention and resolution (United Nations 2002b).

Likewise, the Sphere Humanitarian charter and minimum Standards in Disaster Response emphasizes on their participation at different levels. The Guide has a common standard on Participation ensuring affected population to take active part across different stages of the project/initiative (Sphere Project 2011).

Highlighting the legal aspects of participation in development as well as humanitarian settings, necessitate for reviewing different participation models in-placed in both developmental and humanitarian settings. The next section explains the typology of participation.

2.2.3 Typology of participation:

Participation is a variedly used term and differently approached concept. Its use in political processes denotes different meanings whereas the meaning and approach to participation in development setting may not carry the same meaning in humanitarian settings. The broadness or ambiguous connotation associated with the concept demands that the organizations using the concept must clarify on what exactly they mean by participation, whose participation, why and how? Among others, Sherry Arnstein's 'ladder of citizen participation' and Sarah White's (1996) contribution on the 'forms and functions of participation' are worth referring to (Karsten 2012). The Sherry Arnstein's 'ladder of citizen participation' (Figure 1) has eight steps representing different levels. The ladder explains the level of participation from bottom to top, with the top most as the highest degree of participation in the process.



The Sherry Arnstein's 'ladder of citizen participation' (Figure 1) has eight steps representing different levels. The ladder explains the level of participation from bottom to top, with the top most as the highest degree of participation in the process.

The ladder is considered to be a useful tool for referring to participation in programmes and policies. It identifies eight different rungs, of which two levels at the bottom are level of non-

participation, followed by three tokenistic participation and the top three levels related to citizen's power. The ladder though providing a great insight on topic of participation and different levels is criticized for being modeled on participation in urban settings and hardly addresses the issue of participation in semi-urban and rural settings. Similarly the rungs on ladder do not suggest progression from one level to another (Connor 1988)

Pretty (1995)'s typology of participation is another useful tool, mainly concerned the development organizations as users of participatory approaches. It focuses the participation from the perspective of developmental agencies the way they launch their initiatives and how these organizations promote community participation. Pretty's typology, like Arnstein's ladder is normative with a continuum from passive forms to active forms of participation. 'Manipulative participation' is the lowest level whereas 'self-mobilization' is the highest level of participation in the typology (Bass et al. 1995) (See Table 1)

Table 1: Pretty's Typology of Participation

Level	Type	Characteristics of each type
1.	Manipulative Participation	Participation is simply pretence: people's representatives on official board but they are unelected and have no power
2.	Passive Participation	People participated by being told what has been decided or has already happened: involved unilateral announcements by project management without any listening to people's responses; information shared belongs only to external professionals.
3	Participatory by consultation	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions: external agents define problems and information gathering processes, and so control analysis; process does not concede any share in decision-making; professionals under no obligation to account for people's views.
4	Participation by material incentives	People participate by contributing resources (e.g. labour) in return for food, cash or other material incentives: farmers may provide fields and labour but are not involved in testing the process of learning; this is commonly called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end
5	Functional Participation	Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs: people may participate by forming groups to meet project objectives; involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but tend to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents; at worst, local people may still only be co-opted to serve external goals.
6	Interactive Participation	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and strengthening of local institutions: participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals; the process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and use systemic and

		structured learning processes. As groups take control of local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures and practices.
7	Self-Mobilization	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems: they develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over resource use; self-mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.

Source: Pretty (1995) in 27(Cornwall 2008)

Unlike Arnstein's eight rungs and Pretty's seven levels of participation, Sarah White suggests for four forms of participation: nominal, instrumental, representative and transformative. She argues that at nominal and instrumental level participation, the powerful actors endeavour to give legitimacy to their development plans and use skills of some of participants in their developmental initiatives. Whereas the representative form involves community members in decision making process while the transformative results in the empowerment of local population (Karsten 2012).

White's work helps in understanding the power dynamics within the relationships among different actors in the process. It further highlights the differences as well as compatibilities between top-down and bottom – up approaches which elucidates the politics of participation. The actors advocate top-down approach though talking of participation tend to maintain the status quo whereas the transformative participation emphasize on real involvement of less powerful in the decision making processes (White & Pettit 2004). Drawing on the fact that women participation is the key to their empowerment, this holds particular importance at the assessment stage during any humanitarian crisis. Therefore, the next section presents an analysis of how existing mechanisms for rapid assessment take into consideration women involvement while assessing needs of disasters affected population.

2.3 Assessments and involvement of women:

The effects of crisis, be it natural or manmade (e.g. armed conflict), is not uniform across the affected population. They disproportionately affect the weakest segment of society. Women, particularly in developing countries, form part of the marginalized group along with other socially and economically deprived groups such as children, elderly, socially or racially marginalized people. Hence they tend to be among the most vulnerable. Among several others, a prominent reason for their marginalization is lack of access to or needed control over resources

to cope, withstand or overcome crisis situation (Tutnjevic 2003). Oxfam in one of its policy notes also refers to varied effects of disasters over women and men. Based on which the paper argues that the humanitarian interventions should be planned with gender dynamics in mind to adequately meet the needs of those most at risk. The policy note thus considers the gender equality central to humanitarian action (OXFAM 2013).

Similarly evidence shows that crisis exacerbate risks to women and girls mainly due to weakening of social structures that can protect them, security situation restrict their mobility and assuming new roles which can potentially put them at additional risk (DFID 2013) .

Drawing on the fact that based on their vulnerabilities and exposure to risks disaster affect women, men, girls and boys differently and thus may have different needs. The assessment conducted by individual humanitarian as well as joint assessments such as MiRA fully recognize gender analysis during assessment phase as one of the important considerations (IASC 2012b). Among several tools, the IFRC developed “Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) is one such tool (Mercy Corps 2011). EMMA aims at better understanding of the market systems in emergency situations with anticipated results of efficient use of resources, less risk of prolonged dependency and contribution in economic recovery. The tool appropriately recognizes issues of power and specifically refers to different roles and responsibilities of women and men. The tool also deals with these differences and the different power dynamics within market system (EMMA 2012). Another well acknowledged analysis tool i.e. Household Economy Approach (HEA)² specifically mentions to include women as respondent during the assessment process. Besides individual assessments, the IASC’s Multi-cluster/sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MiRA) also ascribes greater considerations to gender dynamics while assessing the needs of affected population. The manual specifically mentions that needs of different social groups such as women, men, girls and boys be identified. Furthermore, the MiRA mechanism stresses on gender balanced teams with an in-depth understanding of the local culture and power dynamics (IASC 2012b).

Theoretically, the above and numerous other individual as well as joint assessment mechanisms recognize gender analysis and involvement of women at assessment stage as an important area. However, when it comes to practice, their real involvement and hence ascertaining their needs is

² HEA is a tool jointly developed by Save the Children, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) with the primary to find a method that could indicate the likely effect of crop failure or other shocks on future food supply.

not without challenges. Cultural barriers, low literacy rate, lack of social organization of women and short nature of humanitarian responses are normally the supplied justification for their lack or less involvement at assessment stage (DFID 2013). Empirical data shows that the very definition of gender is not uniformly understood across the humanitarian actors (Olivius 2016). Integrating gender relations as a factor in disaster vulnerability and response is another challenging areas. On top of this, neither governments and nor NGOs consider women as equal partner in the planning at community level (ILO 2003).

Similarly, a thorough look of the assessment mechanisms from practical perspective highlights number of weaknesses with regards to effective involvement of women in needs assessment process. A review of EMMA highlights that this tool does not systematically conduct household profiling rather it ideally assumes that this information has been gathered by other needs assessments. Therefore, this tool can hardly capture the gender dynamics and most importantly who has access and control over resources within a household unit. Similarly, analysis on cultural practices within the household will be another neglected area. Besides, the review also highlights weakness in the timing of announcing EMMA's results. While quoting a case of Pakistan the review highlights, that at the time the EMMA results were produced, the programme decisions had already taken place. This certainly has limiting effect on EMMA's use in incorporating its findings in the response mechanism (Brady 2012). The delayed sharing of findings of the MiRA post floods 2010 in Pakistan is another example of the lack of effective involvement of women at the stage of needs assessment (ACAPS 2016). While confirming this, the DFID's briefing paper notes that the initial humanitarian reports lacked data on women needs. This certainly has further implications for availability of funding for addressing women needs as the paper further notes that of the overall US\$2 billion requests for humanitarian funding, less than 1% mentioned GBV. Referring to the cultural aspects, the paper highlights that post floods 2010, reporting cases of VAW was seen as taboo (DFID 2013).

ACAPS review of the multi-sectorial needs assessment where highlighted some strengths, has specifically mentioned that over the last ten years the assessment reports only carried 44% of the required information. Similarly the review highlights that about 40% of the reports did not provide Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD) whereas only 20% provided SADD data on one sector only (ACAPS 2016).

The above brief analysis show that humanitarian actors largely recognize needs of affected women and theoretical mechanisms are in place to contribute in making the assessment processes gender-sensitive. However, from a practical perspective, much requires to be done at the individual as well as joint assessment mechanisms, which so far has failed to fully involve affected women and ascertain their real needs. Drawing on this conclusion, the next section walks us through existing livelihoods strategies/frameworks and how do they ensure women participation particularly during post disasters livelihoods assistance programs.

2.4 Humanitarian Livelihoods strategies and affected women:

In Comparison to men and boys, disasters affect women and girls disproportionately. Evidence substantiates that mortality ratio for women during disasters are higher than men. Asian tsunami 2004 is one such unfortunate event where data suggests that females in parts of Indonesia and India accounted for 70 percent of the dead. Similarly the Oxfam Humanitarian Policy Note while quoting a study conducting in 141 countries, highlights that more women than men, particularly in developing countries, were killed during disasters (OXFAM 2013) . Similarly, empirical data shows that disasters often have worsened the already fragile livelihoods conditions of women particularly in under developed countries. Among others, their dependence mostly on disaster prone sectors such as agriculture and livestock are the primary reasons for their fragility of livelihoods (FAO 2015). The unequal power relations and certain cultural practices further expose women to violence particularly during and post disaster situations. In adherence to cultural practices of serving food first to men and boys, women and girls, particularly during post disasters' livelihoods disruption, live on the left over. This has particular implications for lactating women. Similarly the joblessness of men as a result of disaster has reportedly ensued violence against women (ILO 2003). Like the so called natural disasters, the disproportionality of effects of armed conflicts on women is also a documented fact. Alongside usual ill effects of wars, women and girls are reportedly targeted as a strategy of war. Rape and sexual violence are conducted as instrument of war with a primary objective of weakening family unit and destroying social fabric of the community. Similarly as a result of armed conflicts, women face problems particularly in accessing social services and face protection and security issues (Browne et al. 2014). ECHO fact sheets while confirming increasing miseries of women during and post armed conflicts highlights that conflicts often further overburden women and girls due to men's participation in hostilities (Commission Européenne 2013).

The above mentioned inequalities in gender relations and cultural practices making women more vulnerable to disasters are largely recognized areas within humanitarian action. Alongside other response mechanisms, number of livelihoods strategies/frameworks, designed to effectively respond to humanitarian situation pay particular attention to gender relations and strengthening women livelihoods. Of the many, DFID's Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) (DFID 2008) and USAID's Household Livelihoods Framework are worth mentioning (Woller 2011). The DFID's asset based SLF approach emphasizes on influencing processes including law, policies, institutions and culture for strengthening the five main assets; human, social, natural, physical and financial. Similarly the overall framework relies on participation of target population with specific attention to gender issues (Morse & McNamara 2013).

Unlike DFID's SLF, the USAID's framework mentions six main assets with addition of 'political assets'. The latter is rather more encompassing as it, while explicitly referring to intra-household issues with livelihoods, clearly mentions that shocks may create inequalities or worsen the existing one in terms of resource allocation at household level. This framework further refers to the different sensitivities of vulnerable groups such as women, children and the disabled and alerts that the shocks, owing to their vulnerabilities, may put them at higher risk of food insecurity (Woller 2011)

Cash Programming (CP) is another livelihoods response strategy, increasingly used in emergency responses. Depending on the modalities (cash transfer or voucher for the purchase of services and goods), CP primarily aims at protecting affected population from drawing down on left over assets or adopting negative coping strategies by quickly injecting cash or assets into affected economies and markets. CP as one of the social protection tool is used in almost every new emergency across different sectors. Theoretically this approach takes into considerations all aspects of gender issues ensuring that the assistance is appropriate to local context and does not create or worsen protection risks for affected population particularly women participants (Lee 2014).

Contrary to theoretical aspects of the livelihoods strategies, which cover almost all aspects of gender in livelihoods strategies, the practical application of the livelihoods programming is faced with certain challenges. A USAID commissioned research while referring to the difficulties at assessment stage mentioned that GBV risks are not systematically captured at the level of assessments as well as designing livelihoods strategies. The research further highlighted that

though risks being at the core of protection assessments, these are hardly considered while conducting assessments for livelihoods programs. Instead the focus is on market distortions. The Research also highlighted that though further research is needed but there are increasing chances that CP may invoke violence against the participants and increase their vulnerabilities (Lee 2014).

Similarly, Evaluation of World Food Program (WFP) –being one of the leading agency for livelihoods support during and post emergency, highlights certain grey areas with regards to gender equality. Of the 32 evaluations addressing the issue of gender quality in the Agency’s programming, only 56% were rated satisfactory with regards to their effectiveness from the perspective of gender equality. The evaluation however noted some successes concerning gender equality such as providing SADD, identification of key contributing factors on gender equality and contribution to enhancing women and girls visibility as critical contributor to household and community food security (CIDA 2012).

Another identical case is of DFID livelihoods’ funding in Yemen. The end evaluation report of the project, alongside identifying certain strengths of the program, has highlighted a number of areas for improvement. Specifically, the evaluation mentioned shortterm project based approach, implementation in areas with less needs and lack of full understanding of the local context as major areas of improvement. On top of this, the report shockingly highlighted that since the project design had not fully taken into considerations the gender dynamics, the evaluation could not ascertain the effect of cash transfer on gender dynamics within the target area (Ajel et al. 2013). An evaluation of Oxfam’s urban livelihoods programing during emergency, where highlighted several positive aspects, also highlighted two principal shortcomings. Firstly, supply of insufficient information on the activities and secondly some respondents’ complaint about the harsh labour conditions for women and their ill-treatment by one of the implementing partner (Macauslan Lan & Laura 2012).

Drawing on the clarity of importance of women participation, their positioning from different perspectives and in-depth understanding of their level of involvement at assessments as well as livelihoods programming, the next chapter explains situation across different humanitarian response plans. The next chapter titled “Results and Discussions” will explain, in relation to literature review, that to what extent the humanitarian response plans takes into considerations the needs and aspirations of affected women during post crisis responses.

CHAPTER 3: Results and Discussions: Selected HRPs

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter analyzes humanitarian response plans of three different contexts and different geographic regions. The primary objective is to understand the extent to which these plans have involved affected women in pulling together the plans and to what extent the plans are reflective of their needs. Furthermore, this chapter specifically analyzes selected plans to see the way the response strategies particularly livelihoods strategies of humanitarian actors, correspond to the needs and aspirations of affected women. As explained in detail in the methodology of this research, three different plans i.e. CAP 2010 earthquake Haiti, HRP 2015 Sudan, and the HRP 2016 Syria were selected for the purpose. The selection of diverse contexts with different crises allowed for understanding the phenomenon of participation of affected women in needs assessment as well as response strategies from various perspectives.

The analyses are presented around different topics more prominently; did the overall assessment take into consideration vulnerability criteria, how affected women were involved in the needs assessment/analysis processes and were the projects in the plans reviewed against any gender mainstreaming tools such as “gender marker³” etc.? Besides, the analysis under response strategy presents the way the response strategy involved affected women and whether the proposed projects take gender and vulnerability aspects into consideration. Additionally, this section also analyses whether the indicators of different sectors sufficiently represent needs of women and other vulnerable groups. Importantly, this section finds out the livelihoods strategies planned for empowerment of affected population, particularly women.

It is worth noting that the chapter does not merely present analysis of the plans, rather it crosschecks this with the main findings of the literature review to generate debate. The debate, in turn, would lead to certain conclusions which would enable the research to put forward some recommendations.

³ The IASC Gender Marker is a tool that codes, on a 0-2 scale, whether or not a humanitarian project is designed well enough to ensure that women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally from it or that it will advance gender equality in another way. If the project has the potential to contribute to gender equality, the marker predicts whether the results are likely to be limited or significant <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/topics/gender/page/iasc-gender-marker>

3.2 Evolution of the planning processes and affected women:

Initially Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) was introduced to provide a framework for joint planning and response mechanism in the wake of any disaster. The UN General Assembly through a resolution 46/182 established the concept of consolidated appeal for emergencies requiring coordinated response (OCHA 2011). Accordingly, the UN Secretary General was required to issue the appeal which was prepared in consultation with humanitarian organizations and affected states. The CAP process provided the humanitarian actors to monitor the funding process as well (Groupe URD 2008). Similarly, the Humanitarian Coordinator in close coordination with inter-agency team in the country was responsible to monitor and review the overall process (IASC 2015). Since its creation, the CAP process evolved and CAP guidelines 1994 proved instrumental in defining CAP as programming process instead of merely being an appeal document. Likewise, the technical guidelines developed in 1999 are another addition in the process which provided a framework for the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) (UNOCHA 2002). The guidelines also included different reporting templates to help the humanitarian actors on the finalization of the CAP document (UNOCHA 2002). Coordinated by Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, the CHAP used to be collaborative effort among different humanitarian actors at headquarters as well as at field level. It was a coordinated process to achieve shared goals targeted in analysis of humanitarian needs (short term as well as long term), enabling as well as constraining factors, gaps and capacities of the humanitarian actors. The CHAP's goals and objectives were based on different sectors. The Plan also used to carry analysis on transitions across different phases of disaster management cycle. Importantly, the CHAP included prioritization of needs and funding requirements (WHO 2016).

It is important to note that in line with the IASC Transformative Agenda, the CAP process was discontinued from September 2013 onwards (IASC 2011). Since then, Humanitarian Programming Cycle (HPC) is followed as a way to organize appeal process (OCHA 2016). The HPC consists of inter-linked tools enabling the humanitarian country team to better prepare, prioritize, steer and monitor the collective response. Furthermore, the HPC inevitably focuses on collective as well as evidence-based planning process for improved accountability of all relevant actors. The HPC consists of key six elements viz.; preparedness, Needs Assessment and Analysis, Strategic response planning, implementation and monitoring, Resource mobilization and Peer review and evaluation. Besides, 'coordination' and 'information management' are

considered to be the two main enablers for the overall process. The aforementioned elements and enablers, knitted together in a sequential logic, combine into a strategic process which allows the actors to define the overall response (IASC 2015).

The HPC lays down specific emphasis on preparedness as well as joint risk analysis and needs assessment of the actors. Furthermore, it also advocates on the possibility of partnership with national authorities and development actors for undertaking any such risk analysis and needs assessment. The planning process should also take into account new information for adapting and updating the plans with a further focus on ensuring evidence based decision making (UNHCR 2016). Moreover, the HPC highlights the needs for early setting of the objectives, advocating for field base decision making processes, period monitoring and review of the plans for possible adjustments and planning of exit strategy (UNOCHA 2011). The laid down HPC process stresses on the inter-agency commitment and with clearly defined and circulated roles and responsibility for enhanced ownership of the process. It also emphasises that the process be accessible to all relevant stakeholders and cost effective (IASC 2015)

The transition from CAP to HPC has certainly resulted in number of improvements particularly emphasizing on involvement of stakeholders in the planning process (IASC 2012a). Likewise, the HPC advocates for a more devolved and closetofieldbased planning and emphasises on making the Humanitarian Plan a living document (Dyukova & Chetcuti 2014). The ACAP⁴ review of 105 multi-sectorial needs assessment reports during 2005 to 2015, also suggest an improvement in terms of completeness of the information. The review suggests that compared to 40% relevant information in 2005, the assessment reports in 2014 carried 56% of the required information. The review further highlights an important weak area concerning reporting on Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD). According to the findings of the review, except a joint NGO assessment in Pakistan during the year 2009 which provided SADD data of all sectors covered in the round, around 40% of the reports did not provide SADD data at all. Likewise, only 20% provided SADD for only one sector (ACAPS 2016).

A thorough look at both the CAP and HPC processes further highlights that the technical guidelines mention the vulnerability in generic terms but does not specifically recognize women vulnerabilities compared to their male counterparts(UNOCHA 2002). Similarly none of them make specific reference to women empowerment as a result of the response strategies

⁴ ACAPS was established in 2009 with the aim of supporting the humanitarian community with all aspects of humanitarian needs assessments.

(UNOCHA 2002). Likewise, as highlighted in the findings of the literature review of this research, the aforementioned planning processes make a generic reference to vulnerable groups without specifically referring to certain grave vulnerabilities such as women headed households, widows, the elderly and women with disabilities etc. Ironically guidelines for neither CAP nor HRP refer to ‘do no harm’ approach which are of specific importance while catering to the needs of affected women in certain socio-cultural settings (IASC 2015).

3.3 Needs assessment and considerations for vulnerabilities:

All the three selected plans have approached the needs assessment and analysis process differently. Given the urgency of the situation, the CAP for Haiti was developed mainly at respective headquarters of humanitarian actors. Similarly, the appeal process estimated the number of affected population based on Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS)’s estimation of 444 persons per square kilometer. Furthermore, the CAP used USAID's maps from Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET), Population Explorer and the United States Geological Survey' to ascertain the number of population living in the hard-hit areas. Pertinent to mention that even the age and gender segregated data referred to in the plan was based on Landscan and country’s demographic data (UN-OCHA 2010).

Unlike the Haiti CAP 2010, the Sudan HRP 2015 mentions that the plan was developed through a consultative process involving key stakeholders including partners, affected population and relevant government counterparts. The primary data complemented by review of secondary sources of information provided basis for HNO. The HNO’s findings further guided the development of the plan (UNOCHA 2015). The HRP 2016 Syria follows almost the same process as that of Sudan. The HNO developed by UN agencies and other humanitarian actors underpins the HRP 2016. Nevertheless, the document, without mentioning other actors, specifically refer to the consultation with government of Syria for the development of the plan which sets out the framework for humanitarian actors to respond to the needs of affected Syrian population (Humanitarian Country Team 2016). Please refer to the table below for summarized overview of the nature and requirements outlined in each of the selected plans.

Table 2 Summarized overview of the nature of disasters and requirements of the selected plans

Name of affected country	Total population during the year of disaster	Nature of disaster and year	Total affected population	Total required funding (US\$)	Plan development process	Clearly defined vulnerability criteria
Republic of Haiti	10 million	Earthquake 2010	3 million	575 million*	At HQs level	No
Republic of Sudan	37.2 million	Post conflict 2015	4.5 million	1.3 Billion	Consultative	Yes
Syrian Arab Republic	18.55 million	Protracted crisis 2016	13.5 million	3.18 Billion	Consultative	Yes

* for six month period (above table is developed based on data from selected plans)

The analysis on all the three selected plans presents that these plans consider all the mentioned affected population vulnerable. This is true as all those affected from disasters carry certain level of vulnerabilities. However, the fact remains that within affected population, there are certain group who tend to be more vulnerable than others given their high level of exposure to the disaster or lack of capacities to withstand the shock or even both (Birkmann et al. 2012). The plans however do not specifically ascertain needs of such groups, affected women usually being one among them (GenCap 2015). Similarly engagement of host governments is inevitable to secure their buy-in but this is not without risk, particularly when the state is or perceived to be party to conflict (Egeland et al. 2011). The high involvement of state in such context may further increase vulnerabilities of certain groups, hence risk putting the core humanitarian principles at stake (Schweizer 2004). The case of Syria HRP 2016 is one such example where even some of the humanitarian actors criticize the plan for being highly influenced by the regime (Mrotimer 2016).

3.4 Involvement of affected women in needs assessment:

‘Needs assessment & analysis’ and ‘response strategies’ are two main components of both the CAP and later HRP documents. As noted in the aforementioned section, the plans to a certain degree take into considerations general vulnerability of groups and geographies during the assessment phase. Nevertheless, none of the selected plans specifically mention women participation at the stage of needs assessment. Likewise, except Haiti CAP 2010 which mentions specific sectoral needs of certain women groups including pregnant women and adolescent girls,

⁵ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=SY>

the rest of the two selected plans did not even refer to the term ‘women’ for a single time in their needs assessment sections, let alone making reference to their participation. Important to mention here that this does not mean that the ‘response strategies’ of the selected plans don’t completely ignore women needs.

This seemingly simplistic analysis on lack of women involvement in the needs assessment and analysis stage endorse the “problematic” referred to in chapter 2 of this research. Their lack of involvement raise questions on how best a response strategy can fulfill the aspirations of affected women, if the document fails to refer to their participation for a single time in the needs assessment stage. Secondly, how the response strategies can build on the existing capacities of this important group if these were not evaluated at the needs assessment and analysis stage. This finding is in full conformity with the ‘problem statement’ of this research which highlights that vulnerable groups (including women) are often ignored in needs assessment processes (Sen et al. 2007), (Reindorp & Wiles 2001). Similarly, the lack of recognition of their existing capacities echo with the ILO’s finding that though women have certain capacities but they are hardly acknowledged and appreciated (Green 2012). Any such inability to build on their existing capacities is not only against the DnH approach but may contribute to duplication of resources as well as negatively affect effectiveness of the response.

3.5 Response strategies and affected women:

Grounded in immediate lifesaving and protection interventions, the Haiti CAP 2010 strategized to respond to the needs of affected population across 13 main sectors with the addition of ‘environment’ as a cross-cutting one. The sectorial response is quite well structured outlining name of the thematic area, lead/co-lead agencies, sectorial objectives, strategy & activities as well as expected outcomes. Furthermore, the document also provides a comprehensive list of all the projects along with estimated budgets proposed by individual humanitarian actor. Of the total 14 sectors presented in the plan, only seven of them could make at least a reference to women in their response strategies. Whereas the remaining seven including important sectors such as early recovery, Food Aid etc. do not refer even a single time to ‘women’ in their response strategies. Of these seven, some actors excluding UNICEF have mentioned responding to the needs of girls as part of their response strategies (UN-OCHA 2010).

The Sudan HRP 2015 presents a different layout. Starting with the strategic objectives, the document organizes the response under four main strategic objectives one each for ‘emergency

relief’, ‘humanitarian protection’, ‘food security and nutrition’ and ‘resilience and durable solutions’. Furthermore, the plan presents a couple of indicators for each strategic objective along with baseline and targets for each of the set indicator. At strategic level the plan carries a total of 23 indicators. Except one indicator under ‘humanitarian protection’ which reads “*number of children by age and gender (pre-school aged, primary school aged, and adolescents) accessing protective learning*”, none of the 22 indicators specifically referred to women or girls. This section is followed by 10 detailed sector plans with the addition of two chapters one each titled ‘Refugee response chapter’ and ‘Abyei chapter’. It is worth noting that sectorial plans under each thematic sector not only carry information on thematic strategy but also include write up on targeting assistance at specific needs as well as accountability to the affected population. Furthermore, the document under each thematic sector presents couple of strategic objectives of the sector along with objective level indicators, followed by different activities/projects, locations of the project, indicators for the project/activities as well as baseline and targets. This makes the structure of the plan user-friendly. Moreover, review on response to the needs of women and girls reveal that except three sectors i.e. ‘Recovery, Return and Reintegration’, ‘coordination and common services’ and ‘logistics and emergency telecommunication’, the rest of the seven sector plans referred to women and girls. It is pertinent to note here that an important sector such as ‘health’ did not make any specific reference to women at indicators level whereas ‘Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL)’ only carried one indicator for training chapter on refugee response only referred to girls once, under the indicator for improving quality of education, whereas, the Abyei chapter referred to women under nutrition indicator only. The document did not carry any information women on use of Fuel Efficient Stoves (FES). Similarly, the additional that the projects proposed under the plan were reviewed using any gender lens (UN-OCHA 2015)

Unlike the two selected plans of Haiti and Sudan, the Syria HRP 2016 is organized differently. The response strategy is organized around three main parts; part 1: Strategic objectives and response strategy, Part II: operational strategy whereas Part III carries all the annexes. With the three main objectives of ‘saving lives and alleviating sufferings’, ‘protection by promoting respect for IHL and IHRL’ and ‘supporting resilience of affected population’, part I explains the way state strategic objectives will be achieved. Likewise, this part reflects on operational capacity, humanitarian access and monitoring aspects of the plan as well. Part II of the plan

organizes the sectoral plan into 12 main different sectors. Under each sector plan, the document carries key information using dashboard relevant to the sector. It mainly highlights sector analysis, response strategy, prevention and risk mitigation and linkages with other sectors. Besides each sector plan also carries contacts details of relevant persons. Similarly the annexures (part III), carries information on indicators for each strategic as well as sectorial objectives including separate columns for overall caseload, baseline and targets (Humanitarian Country Team 2016).

The strategic objectives (Part I), under the Plan though, don't specifically refer to women needs. However, the response strategy for the achievement of these objectives particularly the cross thematic sectors of 'protection' and 'gender' make specific references to importance of addressing needs of affected women and girls. Under part II (the sectorial plans level), two of the sectors i.e. 'coordination and common services' and 'logistics and communication' do not refer to addressing women needs in particular. Whereas the 'food security and agriculture', 'early recovery and livelihoods' as well as 'shelter and NFI' sectors refer to the needs of women-headed households only. Likewise, part III where indicators for strategic as well as sectorial objectives are provided also present a mix approach; some objectives and sectorial objective generously referring to women while others don't. Among indicators for the three strategic objectives, only 'resilience' related objective refer to women whereas the rest of the two do not include specific indicators for women needs. Similarly, a close look at the indicators for sectorial plans represents, out of the total 12 sectors, half including 'WASH', 'health', 'food security and livelihoods', 'logistics', 'CCM', and 'telecommunication' don't carry any indicators pertaining to women needs in particular. Moreover, an important sector like 'early recovery and livelihoods' referred to women only in one of the indicators for vocational training.

Analysis on the selected plans shows that though the plans refer to addressing needs of certain vulnerable groups; fail to systematically include needs of the women group. Furthermore, except few instances where the sectorial plans refer to certain vulnerabilities such as women-headed households and pregnant women, the plans don't clearly identify all such vulnerable groups among the bigger women group. Likewise, no or partial participation of affected women would simply mean that the plans don't systematically exploit their existing capacities and potentials. Moreover, the lack of appropriate gender analysis and power dynamics at the stage of needs

assessment and analysis, there is high probability that the response strategies may further exacerbate the existing inequalities (IFRC and RCS 2010).

3.6 Livelihoods strategies and women empowerment:

Alongside other sectors, livelihoods form part of the important interventions during emergency responses. The interventions under this sector, if planned judiciously, can produce far reaching effects not only in relieving miseries but can even help address the pre-existing conditions in any given humanitarian context. All the three selected Response Plans pay particular attention to such interventions and, as usual, these plans include a special sector with designated lead agency and quite good number of humanitarian actors to respond to the needs of affected population under this sector. Following table carries important figures concerning livelihoods interventions planned under the selected plans.

Table 3 sector wise details of livelihoods component under the selected humanitarian response plans					
Country	Name of the cluster(s)	Lead Agency	Estimated beneficiaries	Estimated budget (m/USD)	%age share against the overall budget
Haiti	Early recovery	UNDP	2 million	41.2	7.1%
	Agriculture	FAO	1 million	2.3	4%
Sudan*	Food Security and Livelihoods	FAO	4.6 million	357	27.46%
	Recovery, Return and Reintegration	UNDP	0.7 million	26.9	2%
Syria	Early recovery and livelihoods	UNDP	3.6 million	148.4	4.77%
	Food Security and Agriculture	FAO	7.5 million	1203	38.70%

* other than these two clusters, the plan under additional chapters of “refugee support chapter” and “Abyei chapter” also planned some livelihoods activities.

The above presented data shows that except Haiti, the other two plans have planned considerable portion of the overall estimated cost for livelihoods related interventions. However, it is important to ascertain the way the humanitarian actors had planned to address different gender needs under their livelihoods strategies. Analysis on the response strategy of Haiti CAP 2010 for ‘agriculture sector’ though referring to the provision of assistance to affected vulnerable groups including women, does not particularly commit to address certain vulnerabilities. Similarly, the

‘early recovery’ only mentions the creation of job opportunities with a consideration for gender balance. This at least specifies, to a certain extent, the way the response will meet the needs of affected women through the creation of jobs. It is important to note however, that given the wide disparity in labor participation ratio between male and female (male: 82.9 and female: 57.5) for the year 2009 in Haiti, a gender balance approach will merely exacerbate the pre-existing gender disparity and negatively impact their empowerment process (UNDP 2011). Therefore, an equity based approach will be required to address the gender needs of affected men and women groups with a primary objective of filling the gaps instead of exacerbating the inequalities.

The response strategy presented in Sudan HRP 2015 is not encouraging either, particularly concerning women empowerment through livelihoods interventions. The strategy uses a generic term of most vulnerable groups but fails to elaborate on it. The only specific reference to women needs under ‘food security and livelihoods’ sector is to train 5000 women on use and production of Fuel Efficient Stoves (EFS). A closer look of this intervention, however, shows that the proposition of such intervention represents a typical stereotype of women role in a particular context. Moreover, the absence of an in-depth analysis on the basis of which this intervention was proposed, is making it hard if not impossible to predict on its positive or negative impact on gender relations within the context of Sudan. The absence of proper analysis of different gender roles also implicates ascertaining the impact of such interventions from environmental conservation perspective. In case, men are the one running businesses, requiring high use of fuel such as restaurants, it would have been more sensible to train equitable number of affected women and men than women alone. Besides, the proposed interventions such as rebuilding of livelihoods and asset of affected population through provision of agricultural inputs, livestock support services, food for asset building are no doubt critical activities in post disaster situation. However, unfortunately the fact remains that Sudan offer a context where women, pre-disaster, had very limited access to land with further restrictions on the type of land use and modes of transfers (OECD 2013). The provision of inputs and services in such situation would simply mean a disproportionate assistance to a particular group at the cost of leaving behind affected women who are usually the one suffer the brunt of disasters the most (Nelson 2011). Same analysis holds true for interventions proposed under ‘Recovery, Return and Reintegration’ sector of the plan. The proposed strategy and interventions thereof hardly refer to women needs under such an important sector. This certainly has implications in terms of doing further harm or at

least exacerbating the pre-existing inequalities. Recovery, return and reintegration without appropriate considerations for women needs as well as their capacities might prove a daunting task (UNHCR 2012).

Compared to the two selected cases, the Syria HRP 2016 planned considerable chunk of over 40% of the total estimated cost for livelihoods related interventions. Likewise this plan, contrary to the two other selected plans, specifically refers to certain vulnerabilities of women groups such as women-headed households in its response strategy for 'early recovery and livelihoods'. Nevertheless, the pre-crisis data presents of the country presents that rural women, in spite of their significant contribution in agricultural production, remained the most economically disadvantaged groups. During pre-crisis, the rural women of the country constituted 65 % beneficiaries of the development interventions which show that they were the neediest group. Alongside agriculture dependent women, landless women and adolescent girls with no permanent employable skills and high dependency ratio formed part of the most disadvantageous group (Buecher & Aniyamuzaala 2016) . Similarly another study of the labour force in 2008 referred to the historically low women participation in labour market. According to the survey findings 75% women were not employed mainly due to illiteracy, cultural barriers, land rights and inadequate access to financial services. The study found that female-headed households having further limited opportunities were among the most vulnerable (ACAPS 2013).

Similarly, findings of another survey highlighted that the post crisis response strategies have positively impacted women engagement in livelihoods sector, identified certain protection concerns. The survey findings warned of a probability of high risk of domestic violence as a result of changing power relationships within households due to women economic empowerment (Browne et al. 2014). Given the aforementioned and numerous other pre-existent situations, the proposed plan of Syria 2016 should have planned for more gender balanced livelihoods strategies. The strategies fully grounded in local realities ensuring that the pre-existent inequalities are not exacerbated.

Chapter 4: Conclusion and Recommendations:

4.1 Conclusion

Considering women participation as a starting point, the literature review part of this research suggests that women participation is instrumental to their empowerment. Likewise, based on

review of a variety of scholarly work, the research further concludes that the real participation of local population (including women) contribute to low cost high quality solutions to the problems a given community is faced with (Mansuri & Rao 2015). The findings further suggest that alongside participation in developmental interventions, women participation is equally important in humanitarian response cycle management. They are not mere victims of the disasters rather they often have better understanding of the local context and carry certain capacities. The fact however remains that contrary to development practices, where women are involved across all the stages, women participation in all stages of humanitarian response cycle might not be without challenges. Therefore, the humanitarian actors, based on local culture and nature of the disaster, may opt for an adaptive approach to women participation (Groupe URD 2009). Besides, this research based on the literature review draws another important conclusion which fully substantiates that women participation in post disaster responses has solid legal basis (United Nations 2002b), (OCHA 1998), (Sphere Project 2011).

Likewise, the literature review as well as all the three selected HRPs confirms that disasters affect women and men differently. Women, particularly in developing countries that are more prone to variety of disasters, tend to suffer higher compared to their men counterparts. Moreover, the effects of disasters for the affected women may vary as well- the most disadvantaged such as widows, elderly, chronically ill, women with disabilities as well as pregnant and lactating may suffer disproportionately. The research further concludes that the affected women have not only vulnerabilities but they carry certain capacities as well. Therefore, the individual agency as well as joint assessments mechanisms such as MiRA recognize gender analysis during assessment phase as one of the important considerations (IASC 2012b).

Drawing on the findings of literature review as well as analysis of the selected HRPs, this research suggests that though number of useful mechanisms and tools including the MIRA are in-placed. These, if timely and appropriately applied, may contribute in making the assessment processes gender sensitive. However, from a practical perspective these mechanisms have not considerably succeeded in ensuring full participation of affected women. Therefore, failed to ascertain their real needs (Brady 2012), (DFID 2013), (ACAPS 2016). The involvement of most vulnerable groups such as women headed, elderly, women with disabilities and pregnant and lactating women proved rather more challenging (Jamieson Hall 1995).

Linked to the aforementioned conclusion, the analysis of the selected HRP's highlighted that the plans were either developed at headquarters level (UNOCHA 2010) in consultation with prominent stakeholders such as humanitarian actors, host governments and affected population (UNOCHA 2015)(Humanitarian Country Team 2016). However, none of them specifically referred to the involvement of affected women, particularly the most vulnerable.

Another important conclusion of this research is about the inappropriate or lack of judicious considerations for 'do no harm' approach. The analysis on all the three selected cases highlighted that none of them has systematically taken into account the pre-existing inequalities in those contexts. Therefore, there is a high probability that even a gender balanced approach to address the local needs might further widen the gender gap between male and female (UNOCHA 2010) (Humanitarian Country Team 2016) (UN-OCHA 2010).

Besides, participation in general and women participation in needs assessment in particular, this research draws important conclusions concerning effects of disasters on livelihoods of affected women. The research referring to variety of sources concludes that disaster disproportionately disrupts the already fragile livelihoods sources of women population in underdeveloped countries. This is primarily due to their dependence on disaster prone sectors such as agriculture and livestock (FAO 2015). Similarly, the pre-existing inequalities in power dynamics and certain cultural practices further expose women to violence during and post disaster situations. Any such consideration is critical to the development of livelihoods strategies. However, analysis on the selected plans suggests that the assessment processes did not systematically undertake analysis on distribution of gender roles within the family units. Therefore, there is a high likelihood that the livelihoods interventions may further overburden affected women. Similarly, both literature review and analysis of the selected plans conclude that the lack of systematic analysis of power relations within family may cause protection concerns for women participating in livelihood activities. This is particularly true for cash-based programming where the possibility of affected women to access and control resource have evidently put them at risk of domestic violence (Lee 2014).

The research particularly based on the analysis of the selected plans, highlights that the lack of an in-depth understanding of the pre-existing gender inequalities in those contexts is an evident factor. Drawing on which the research concludes that the lack of any such analysis would simply mean that a very gender balanced livelihoods strategy may contribute to exacerbating the pre-

existing inequalities. On the basis of the aforementioned conclusions, the research put forward a few very humble key recommendations.

4.2 Recommendations

Affected women are not mere victims of the disasters rather they carry local knowledge and certain other capacities. The humanitarian responses need to fully involve them particularly at needs assessment as well as designing the strategies. Their participation in livelihoods strategies is of particular importance.

The literature review presents that the needs assessment processes have improved considerably. There is, however, still a need for more concerted efforts that the needs assessment processes, while involving all affected population including vulnerable women, judiciously analyze the context from the perspective of pre-existing gender inequalities.

The needs assessments phases should pay particular attention to the existing gender roles and power dynamics within the given contexts. It is important to mention here that any such analysis may not be taken as an excuse for excluding certain interventions which can empower women, rather should help the humanitarian actor better plan their strategies in addressing those inequalities through their responses.

Drawing on the fact that certain pre-existing gender inequalities may exist in majority of the humanitarian contexts, therefore, the humanitarian actors should endeavour to design their livelihoods strategies based on equity approach rather than equality.

The humanitarian actors should carefully conduct risks analysis while designing livelihoods strategies particularly cash- based modalities. Any such risk analysis will allow them to design interventions with lower level of risk or alternately invest in creating conditions where affected women can be protected from protections concerns.

The humanitarian actors may endeavor to use livelihoods strategies as entry points for more gender responsive/transformational programming to influence cultural and structural barriers that bar women from effective participation.

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