



Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy: Implications for Humanitarian Response

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Introduction

The government of Sweden has announced that a feminist perspective will be applied to all aspects of Sweden's foreign policy, including in the area of humanitarian aid and development cooperation. The overarching objective of Sweden's foreign policy is:

Increased global gender equality and strengthened rights and empowerment of women and girls by systematically working with a gender perspective within all foreign policy areas.¹

Sweden's feminist foreign policy strives to counter gender inequalities, including in terms of the ability to exercise influence. The goal is not only to come to terms with structures that are unjust to women, but also to promote peace, stability and sustainable economic development through a more balanced approach to foreign policy. Sweden's feminist foreign policy is based on four pillars (the "4Rs"):

rights, realities and analysis, representation, and resources.²

The purpose of this policy brief is to outline the implications of Sweden's overall feminist foreign policy for the people they strive to assist, Sweden's own humanitarian policy and operations, and more broadly the whole humanitarian community, with a focus on gender equality and strengthening the rights and empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian crises. Indeed there are positive implications for the humanitarian community as a whole from Sweden adopting a feminist approach to humanitarian aid. Additionally, as Sweden is already one of the leading governments promoting gender issues in humanitarian and development aid response, it is well placed to serve as a catalyst for others to assume feminist approaches to humanitarian response.

Feminist Foreign Policy and Humanitarian Response: The 4 Rs

A feminist foreign policy compliments and strengthens the core principles of humanitarian action (Table 1).

Table 1. Complementarity of Core Humanitarian Principles and Feminist Approach to Humanitarian Principles

Principle	Core humanitarian principles endorsed by the UN General Assembly *	Feminist approach to core humanitarian principles
Humanity	Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.	<p>The purpose of humanitarian action is to address the suffering of women, girls, men and boys, to protect their lives, health, and to ensure respect for them as human beings.</p> <p>Humanitarian actors must be aware that women’s and girls’ marginalization within most societies leads to their reduced access to resources, livelihood inputs and basic services; increased family and social responsibilities; restricted mobility; unequal access to protective services and legal mechanisms; and inadequate political power at local and national levels. All of these factors influence women and girls’ ability to survive and recover from armed conflict and natural disaster.</p> <p>This requires humanitarians to have an awareness of gender-based power structures and their implication on women’s, girls’, men’s and boys’ needs, risks, vulnerabilities, resources and access to services.</p>
Neutrality	Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.	<p>Humanitarian actors must ensure that assistance is not influenced by political, racial, religious or ideological policies, beliefs or actions that discriminate against women and girls and or undermine their rights to protection and humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>Because of pervasive systematic and structural discrimination against women and girls in many societies, which is often exacerbated during crisis, this principle may be especially difficult to uphold, particularly in contexts in which state and non-state actors actively oppose women’s and girls’ equality and rights to protection and humanitarian assistance.</p>
Impartiality	Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief,	<p>Women’s and girls’ rights to protection and humanitarian assistance and response without discrimination are well established within international, national, customary and soft law.</p> <p>Gender and age research and analyses are essential to ensure risks, vulnerabilities, needs and access to services are best understood and responded to in situations of humanitarian crises, thus helping to ensure a needs based approach.</p>

class or political opinions.

Independence	Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.	Humanitarian action must never be part of political, economic, military or other objectives of any actor that undermine women’s and girls’ right to protection and humanitarian assistance, as well as their fundamental human rights.
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* The first three principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality are endorsed in United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182 (1991). The fourth key principle underlying humanitarian action is independence, endorsed in General Assembly resolution 58/114 (2004).

Sweden is among the global leaders in innovating gender-informed and rights-based humanitarian policy and response, which reflect best practice in a number of areas. Sweden’s creation of a wide-reaching feminist foreign policy should significantly bolster its commitment and efforts to realize best practice gender- and rights-based analyses, policies and response during and after humanitarian crises, and is thus of value to the larger humanitarian community.

This policy brief provides concise background on how each of the “4Rs” of Sweden’s feminist foreign policy is situated within an analysis of humanitarian response. The policy brief then presents a series of recommendations and implementation measures, broken into two subsections. The first subsection focuses on how a feminist informed humanitarian policy should intersect with other foreign policy areas and broader humanitarian, development and security action at the national and international level, thus providing important pathways to strengthen the approach of the larger humanitarian community. The second subsection presents specific recommendations and measures for humanitarian policy and practice.

Within each subsection, the recommendations and measures are listed in order to prioritize those that are most needed and can have the most impact, to those that are important to support and underpin the former.

Rights—ensuring universal application of human rights and equal rights between men and women

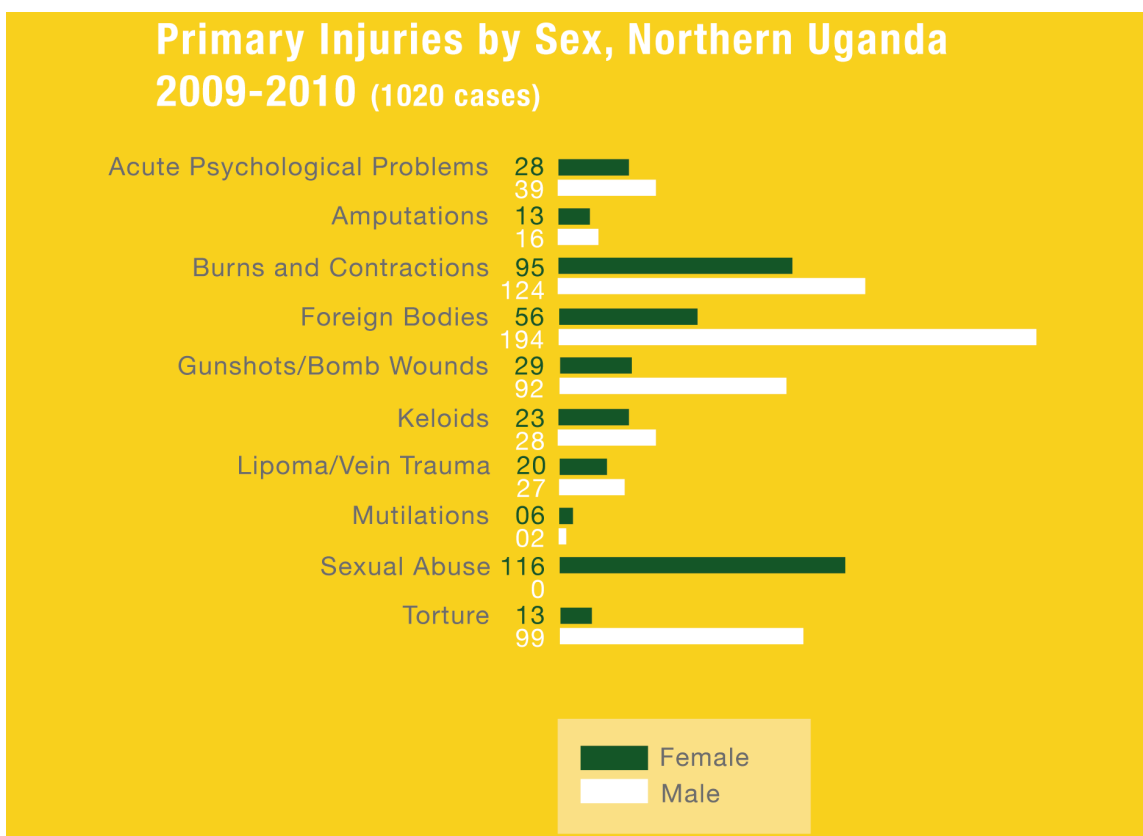
Background. Humanity, one of the core humanitarian principles, means that suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. “The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.”³ Women’s and girls’ rights to protection and humanitarian assistance and response without discrimination (reflecting

another core humanitarian principle of impartiality) in situations of armed conflict and natural disaster are well established within international, national, customary and soft law.⁴ Equal rights and equality before the law are among the basic principles articulated in various international laws on human rights, including the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Convention on the Rights of the Child; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; Basic Principles on the Right to Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Rights enshrined within these key international laws and declarations are essential to inform humanitarian response in situations of armed conflict and disaster, including the right to life; right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; right of detained persons to be treated with dignity; right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; right to freedom of opinion and of expression; right to adequate standard of living; right to health and health services; right to education; and right to remedy and reparation for serious crimes.⁵ During humanitarian crises, women and men experience violations of their rights differently due in part to their gender. Figure 1 illustrates how men and women experience different harms in the ways they are assaulted by parties to the conflict (this example coming from a medical group treating victims in northern Uganda).

Modern international humanitarian law (IHL) consists of both conventional and customary rules, and women and girls are covered by all the provisions of IHL. Like combatants and civilians, they come under the general rules of IHL, which provide protection during hostilities and when being held by an adverse party in the conflict. Women also receive extra protections in the form of special provisions applicable to them, such as those regarding pregnancy and having young children. However, no special provisions for women exist in rules determining the legitimate conduct of hostilities. In addition to the aforementioned protections, girls benefit from the special provisions of IHL dealing with the protection of children and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

Figure 1: Sex Difference in Injury Inflicted by Armed Actors against Male and Female Civilians



Source: Figure originally produced in Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, 2011, *Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies*. OCHA, Care International, Feinstein International Center: New York, p. 57.

Provisions within refugee law further strengthen the international legal regime protecting women and girls during times of armed conflict and post-conflict. Much of the protection of refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees is legally grounded within IHL, human rights, refugee and criminal law. Refugee doctrine and practice includes specific policy directives and guidelines on the protection of refugee women and children, on reproductive health, and against sexual violence, formulated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and others. In addition, CEDAW addresses the rights of women to economic opportunities, including the rights of refugees and the internally displaced.⁶

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people are entitled to the same international human rights as all other persons. These rights are outlined in the Yogyakarta Principles, a set of 29 guiding principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.⁷

Rights Implementation Measures

A. Intersection among Humanitarian and Other Foreign Policy Areas

- Continue defending and strengthening the development of international law (humanitarian, human rights, and criminal) and national and international systems that protect women's and girls' rights, including in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Criminal Court.
- Work to ensure that all new international normative and operative frameworks within humanitarian response, global development cooperation and sustainable development are guided by and uphold women's and girls' rights, LGBTI rights and gender equality.
- Gender equality and women's and girls' rights should be a central and integral part of political dialogues with official representatives of countries, multilateral organizations and other relevant actors. Humanitarian policy, development policy, trade policy, security policy and promotion should be part of an integrated approach where the parts are mutually reinforcing.
- Continue and strengthen working for the strengthening of gender equality and women's and girls' rights within the EU's security, defense and humanitarian policy work.
- Continue and strengthen the pursuit of gender equality in the work to develop international law on disarmament and non-proliferation, and build on work to include gender-based violence issues in disarmament and nonproliferation efforts.
- Actively draw attention to the link between gender-based violence and the spread of weapons as provided in the Arms Trade Treaty (i.e., armed exporting countries must conduct a mandatory risk assessment to determine if their weapons will be used in the commission of gender-based violence (GBV) and deny authorization of any sales that present an "overriding" risk). Assist in the implementation of State parties' obligations under the agreement.

B. Humanitarian Focus

- Work to ensure that the humanitarian and development analyses and responses take into account and reflect women's, men's, girls 'and boys' different experiences and needs in humanitarian crises. To maintain and strengthen leadership in this area, proper human and material resources should be allocated to state's embassies, ministries of foreign affairs and development aid, and these agencies should coordinate in their assessment and analysis of, and their policy and response to humanitarian crises.
- Recognizing that humanitarian crises increase the threat, risk and vulnerability of numerous types of violence and exploitation, continue and strengthen efforts to

work against all forms of violence against and exploitation of women and girls, including trafficking and prostitution, taking into account both immediate and long-term effects of the violence on victims and their families.

- Strengthen gender informed protection analyses and responses should be integrated throughout humanitarian response.
- Increase efforts to work against all forms of violence and exploitation against LGBTI persons during and after humanitarian crises.
- Support national and international efforts to combat impunity for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and violence against LGBTI persons, including drawing attention to the presence and condemning the use of SGBV during humanitarian crises; making clear the links between protection and addressing SGBV; involving men and boys in gender equality work and SGBV prevention; and promoting legal and other support of victims and witnesses, as relevant.
- In recognition of the indivisibility of rights, work for the strengthening of women's and girls' rights and access to land, property, assets, and inheritance, as well as their civil and political right during and after humanitarian crises as these are situations where their rights and access are often severely curtailed.
- Strengthen of girls', youth, and LGBTI persons' sexual reproductive health and rights during humanitarian crises.
- Advocate for and support the right to safe and legal abortion in humanitarian contexts, particularly in cases where the conflict involves rape.
- Continue and increase humanitarian cooperation with UN agencies with strength in gender analyses and response, including UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF, as well as its support of GENCAPs.
- Ensure that all these efforts are supported by engagement with civil society, in particular academia, human rights defenders and women's rights organizations, including from communities experiencing humanitarian crises.

Realities and Analysis—ensuring the regular production and integration of gender analyses into planning and reporting

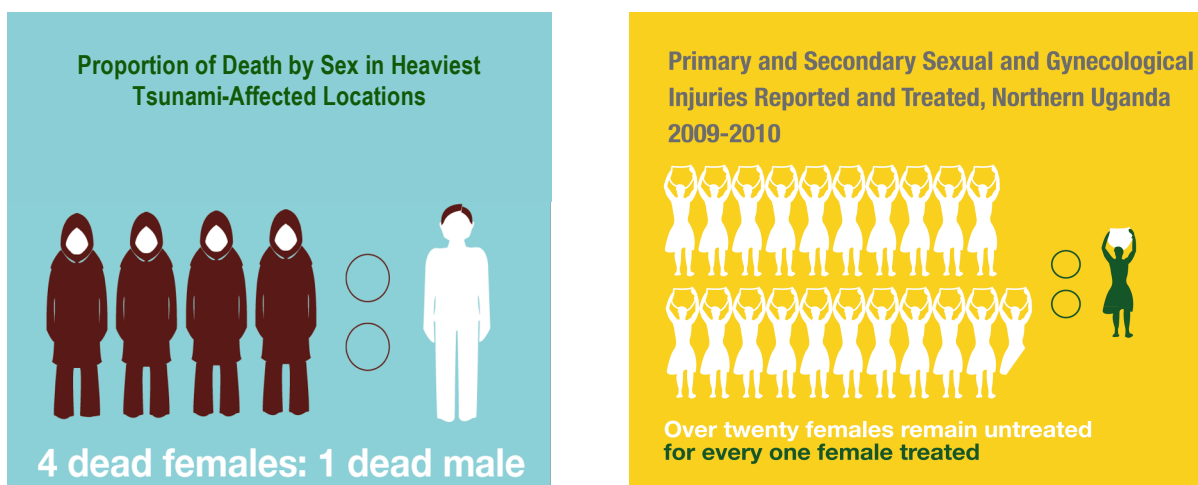
Background. Gender and age research and analyses are essential to ensure risks, vulnerabilities, needs and access to services are best understood and responded to in situations of humanitarian crises. Information gaps regarding how men, women, boys and girls are experiencing crises limit the effectiveness of humanitarian and development response in all phases of a crisis. Hence, gender and age research and analyses are essential

to ensure impartiality. Impartiality is a core humanitarian principle that asserts that assistance must be carried out based on need alone and without discrimination, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress.⁸ This cannot be done without analysis and needs assessment that proactively take into account all the categories along which crisis-affected population might suffer discrimination—including gender and age. Gender and age research and analyses also allows operational agencies to deliver assistance more effectively and efficiently. They furthermore bring attention to important protection issues, which can help integrate a gender-informed protection response in humanitarian action.⁹

Gender and age analyses show that despite legal equality and protection for women and girls, armed conflicts and natural disasters do not affect all people evenly; in fact, they are deeply discriminatory.¹⁰ “Pre-existing structures and social conditions determine that some members of the community will be less affected while others will pay a higher price” (Oxfam 2005: 2). Sex, gender and age are among the key factors that determine how natural disasters and armed conflicts affect women, men, girls and boys¹¹ (Figure 2).

Men, boys, women and girls experience many of the same phenomena during armed conflict and natural disaster. Yet how these phenomena affect them during and after conflict and natural disaster is influenced by their age and gender roles, as they intersect with ethnicity, livelihoods, race, class, caste, religion, sexual identity and expression, and disability. Conflict and disaster affect men, women, boys and girls in different ways because they have different physical bodies; they are targeted by perpetrators and experience harms differently; their losses and injuries have different social, economic and livelihood impacts; they have different responsibilities in their families and communities; and they have different livelihoods, access to the cash economy and ability to claim, own and inherit property and assets. Women and girls are marginalized within most societies and this leads to their reduced access to resources, livelihood inputs and basic services; increased family and social responsibilities; restricted mobility; unequal access to protective services and legal mechanisms; and inadequate political power at local and national levels.¹² All of these factors influence women and girls’ ability to survive and recover from armed conflict and natural disaster.

Figure 2. Death, Injury and Treatment Data Show Gender Influence in Crises



Source: Figures originally produced in Mazurana, Benelli, Gupta and Walker, *Sex and Age Matter*, pp. 19, 59.

Armed conflict directly kills and injures more males than females, since combatants are predominantly male, but direct fatalities fail to provide a realistic accounting of the human lives lost and blighted because of conflict. The so-called indirect consequences of armed conflict have the biggest role in shaping people's lives and livelihoods during and after conflict. The direct and indirect consequences of armed conflict combine to kill more women, and/or kill them at a younger age, than their male counterparts. The indirect effects of war are, in fact, the most deadly. These indirect effects include limited food and water access; poor sanitation and hygiene; malnutrition and disease; weak or collapsed health services; and increased displacement, family dislocation, family stress and domestic violence.¹³ During armed conflict, women and girls are specifically targeted for violence. Much violence against women and girls has instrumental purposes: to terrorize, subjugate and demoralize women and their communities, and to punish women or their male family members for political or autonomous activity. SGBV afflicting males and females includes abuse, torture, terror and mutilation that is specifically sexual in nature, or that targets reproductive and sexual parts, not infrequently causing irreparable damage and reproductive disability or inability. In addition to rape and other sexual abuse, sexual mutilation, forced prostitution, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization and sexual torture are reported in many contemporary conflicts.¹⁴ In societies where women and girls already face discrimination in terms of accessing food, resources and services, violent conflict exacerbates such discrimination and can make it even more deadly.¹⁵ All of these realities occur within the boundaries of humanitarian and protection response.

Globally, natural disasters such as droughts, floods and storms kill more females than males, and often at a younger age.¹⁶ A study of census data from 141 countries on the effects of natural disasters found that although both sexes and all ages are impacted, on average more females die, as well as have their life expectancies lowered.¹⁷ In the aftermath of a natural disaster, the pressure for women and girls to care for the ill and injured and provide for families greatly increases. This increases workload, stress, fatigue, susceptibility to illness and malnutrition.¹⁸ Furthermore, the World Disaster Report finds that “women and girls are at higher risk of sexual violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking, and domestic violence in disasters.”¹⁹ The more severe the disaster, the more severe the effects on women’s life expectancy compared with men’s. Importantly, this effect is strongest where women and girls have very low social, cultural, economic and political status.²⁰

During humanitarian crises, LGBTI people face the same risks of human rights abuses as the rest of the population. Due to harmful religious, cultural, social, political and legal regimes existing prior to, during and after crises, LGBTI persons also experience additional risks and increased difficulties in accessing emergency services. The result is that they are often excluded from “the basic protections and entitlements available to other emergency-affected individuals” contributing to their extreme vulnerability during humanitarian crisis.²¹

Of course, it is not only during humanitarian crises that gender inequality matters. In fact, gender equality has serious implications for a country’s likelihood to experience armed conflict. Studies find that norms of gender equality within a state are associated with attitudes and behavior toward violent conflict, including armed conflict.²² Greater gender empowerment within a state decreases states’ use of force internationally and reduces the occurrence of intrastate violence. Gender equality limits the escalation of violence during militarized interstate disputes. Gender equality decreases the severity of violence during crisis. Gender equality reduces the likelihood that a state will use force first in interstate disputes.²³ The greater the access of women to political power, the lower the likelihood that a state will engage in interstate disputes and in war.²⁴ Gender equity agendas make organizations involved in contentious politics more peaceful in their strategies and tactics and less likely to use violence.²⁵ (The issue of women’s meaningful participation is discussed further in the section on Representation below).

Beyond the state, research finds that societies that are more gender-inclusive are much less likely to be violent.²⁶ Gender-inclusive ideologies also make organizations more peaceful.²⁷

Hence, efforts towards ensuring greater gender equity are significantly connected to preventing violent inter and intra-state conflict and preventing conflict-induced humanitarian crises.

Realities and Analyses Implementation Measures

A. Intersection among Humanitarian and Other Foreign Policy Areas

- Work to ensure that international actors such as the UN, international financial institutions, including the multilateral development banks, and the EU systematically integrate gender perspectives in their reporting and analysis in humanitarian crises, especially on political, economic, security, human security and freedom from violence issues.
- Work to introduce clear recommendations regarding the collection and use of SADD (sex and age disaggregated data) in the OECD/DAC guidelines on conflict, peace and development. These should apply to both bilateral and multilateral actors, including humanitarian organizations.

B. Humanitarian Focus

- Form a task force or working group comprised of senior humanitarian and other relevant personnel from the ministries of foreign affairs and international development aid with the goal of actualizing a feminist foreign policy in humanitarian aid and development that informs high-level policy dialogue, planning, financing and programming.
- Ensure that gender analysis²⁸ is present to inform and shape the planning, data consolidation and identification of information gaps, joint and inter-sectoral analysis, and sharing of findings of a Humanitarian Needs Overview and that this translates into a gender-informed Strategic Response Plan. This requires personnel within the Humanitarian Country teams skilled at ensuring gender has been brought to bear throughout all phases of the creation of the Humanitarian Needs Overview and translating this into the Strategic Response Plan.
- Develop gender analyses on the humanitarian crises in which the UN, EU, NATO or the OSCE are prescribed to act in humanitarian and peace operations, as well as in priority countries. Embassies and ministries of foreign affairs should strengthen their gender analytical capacity for such analysis and reporting, including through the appointment of persons with expertise on humanitarian and protection issues, and gender and SGBV within humanitarian contexts. The resulting reports should be carried out in a timely manner and used to inform these operations, as relevant. Sufficient human and material resources should be made available to ministries of foreign affairs and international aid and embassies to carry out this work.
- In all analytical reports, monitoring and evaluation of major humanitarian responses, require those reports, monitoring and evaluation contain the collection, analysis and use of SADD to inform and shape policy and programming response.

- Require evidence of SADD and gender and age analysis in monitoring and evaluating humanitarian assistance efforts receiving their support, with an emphasis on how SADD is informing programming.
- Ensure that LGBTI populations are considered in each programmatic area of emergency response (beginning early in the planning process) and disaster risk and reduction, with an emphasis on upholding the rights of LGBTI people during crises.
- Support updating internal standard operating procedures, guidelines, and toolkits to be inclusive of LGBTI persons, and to improve data collection tools so emergency planning and response includes LGBTI populations and programs can be better monitored and evaluated.
- Support trainings to educate humanitarian actors in working with LGBTI populations from a human rights perspective and to teach practical skills for working with LGBTI persons professionally and in accordance with international standards and the policies of their agencies. Furthermore, humanitarian agencies, particularly those dealing with refugees and IDPs, should be supported in creating safe spaces, ensuring confidentiality and establishing clear guidelines for staff to provide effective assistance for LGBTI persons in humanitarian emergencies.

Representation—ensuring acceptable representation of women in positions of power and influence

Background. Women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and natural disasters have a right under international law to participate in and to receive information regarding decisions affecting their lives. These rights are enshrined in the International Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Declaration on the Right to Development. Furthermore, they include principles such as the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

The Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response has a Common Standard on Participation, stating that “to ensure the appropriateness and quality of any response, the participation of disaster affected people—including the groups and individuals most frequently at risk in disasters—should be maximized.”²⁹ The Sphere Standards repeatedly highlight participation by women and girls, and the need to counter the discrimination and barriers they often face to effectively participate in decisions affecting their lives in humanitarian settings. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy Statement on Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Operations also calls for addressing the barriers to women’s effective participation, and commits to “integrating capacity building of women’s organizations in humanitarian response and rehabilitation

and recovery phase,” which can enhance local capacity in humanitarian response.³⁰ The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability has a focus on participation as one of its nine core standards: “Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.”³¹ Stressing the importance of inclusive communication, representation and feedback at all stages of humanitarian response, the Core Humanitarian Standard highlights the need to pay particular attention to gender, age and diversity.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security,” is one of the core documents informing Sweden’s Feminist Foreign Policy. One of the four pillars of Resolution 1325 is participation. Resolution 1325 calls for improving intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, including by prosecuting those responsible for violations of international law; and supporting local women’s peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes.

The acumen of prioritizing women’s inclusion in peace initiatives in Resolution 1325 is substantiated in the recent findings of Geneva Graduate Institute’s *Broadening Participation Project*, which examined the roles of women’s groups (and other groups) in 40 peace and transition processes. The research found that when women’s groups were able to effectively influence the process, a peace agreement was almost always reached, and was more likely to be implemented. Women’s participation also increases the probability that the peace agreement will last longer.³² Hence, women’s meaningful participation matters in bringing an end to violent conflict and the resulting humanitarian crises and increasing the chances the conflict will not reignite.

Representation Implementation Measures

A. Intersection among Humanitarian and Other Foreign Policy Areas

- Continue and strengthen efforts to actively highlight and engage women as actors in peace processes and peacebuilding, particularly to help enable them to make meaningful contributions to peace processes and their implementation (the mere presence of women is not enough).
- Actively work for the implementation of the 1325 agenda globally, including through the UN and the EU, and in individual countries in order to strengthen the participation of women in addressing peace and conflict.
- Actively work for organization and staff policies within multilateral organizations, the EU, and partner organizations that aim to create non-discriminatory organizational structures, promote gender equality, and open up for more women in leadership positions.

B. Specific Humanitarian Focus

- Continue and strengthen support for Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, the Code of Conduct, and other international norms regarding humanitarian response.
- Require and promote the use of the Gender Marker and Gender Assessment in Humanitarian Projects and Programs Tool.
- Develop an internationally recognized Gender Monitoring and Evaluation Tool in Humanitarian Projects and Programs Tool that is likewise required.
- Require implementing partners to report on the gender balance of their teams at decision-making levels, as well as their fact-finding/assessment teams and operational teams. Require partners to report on how they ensure gender equity in how beneficiaries participate and their opportunities to influence the programs the partners are designing and implementing.
- Ensure that partners guarantee affected women's and girls' meaningful participation in shaping humanitarian response, in particular when conducting assessments; setting priorities with communities and households; carrying out program planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities; designing leadership and decision-making structures; undertaking advocacy, awareness and education initiatives in communities; and establishing committees, subgroups and others structures for information gathering, decision-making and implementation.
- Strengthen women's participation and influence in addressing and resolving humanitarian crises, promoting women as active agents of change at local through international levels. The work should aim to increase women's representation in key decision-making forums and processes both as staff and as representatives of affected communities, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders who are from the areas affected by humanitarian crises.
- To better enable women's participation, prioritize work with international and national NGOs, as they are often well placed and skilled in actualizing the meaningful inclusion and participation of women.
- Build on humanitarian cooperation with UN agencies with strength in ensuring women's and girls' meaningful and effective participation, including UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF.
- Invest in training the next generation of humanitarian leaders, with an emphasis on women's leadership, and ensuring emerging humanitarian leaders have strong skills

in gender and protection analysis and response, including for LGBTI persons. To help facilitate this, support universities to educate their humanitarian focused students in these areas and to carry out research to further develop these areas.

Resources—ensuring transparent and just distribution and use of resources between men and women

Background. In 2014, a record \$24.5 billion was given for humanitarian assistance, still falling over \$7.5 billion short of what was requested.³³ In just over a decade the number of people in need of assistance has doubled, with an estimated 82.5 million people affected by humanitarian disasters in 22 countries in 2015.³⁴ As this briefing has shown, in all of those locations, gender is a key factor in how women, men, girls and boys are experiencing those crises.

Ensuring transparent and just distribution and use of resources between men and women in humanitarian crises requires that gender analyses inform the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any humanitarian response. It also requires that gender equality and ensuring women’s and girls’ rights during humanitarian crises are key considerations in the creation and funding of the humanitarian action.

To date, no international norms exist for tracking global peace and security spending and its gender focus. The creation of the Gender Marker (discussed below) is intended to capture humanitarian and development aid projects that do or do not emphasize gender equality, though its application is spotty at best. It is thus difficult to track donor spending on gender in emergencies due to poor donor reporting on this topic. One important result is that it is difficult to tell if donor policy commitments to gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights in humanitarian assistance are being met.³⁵

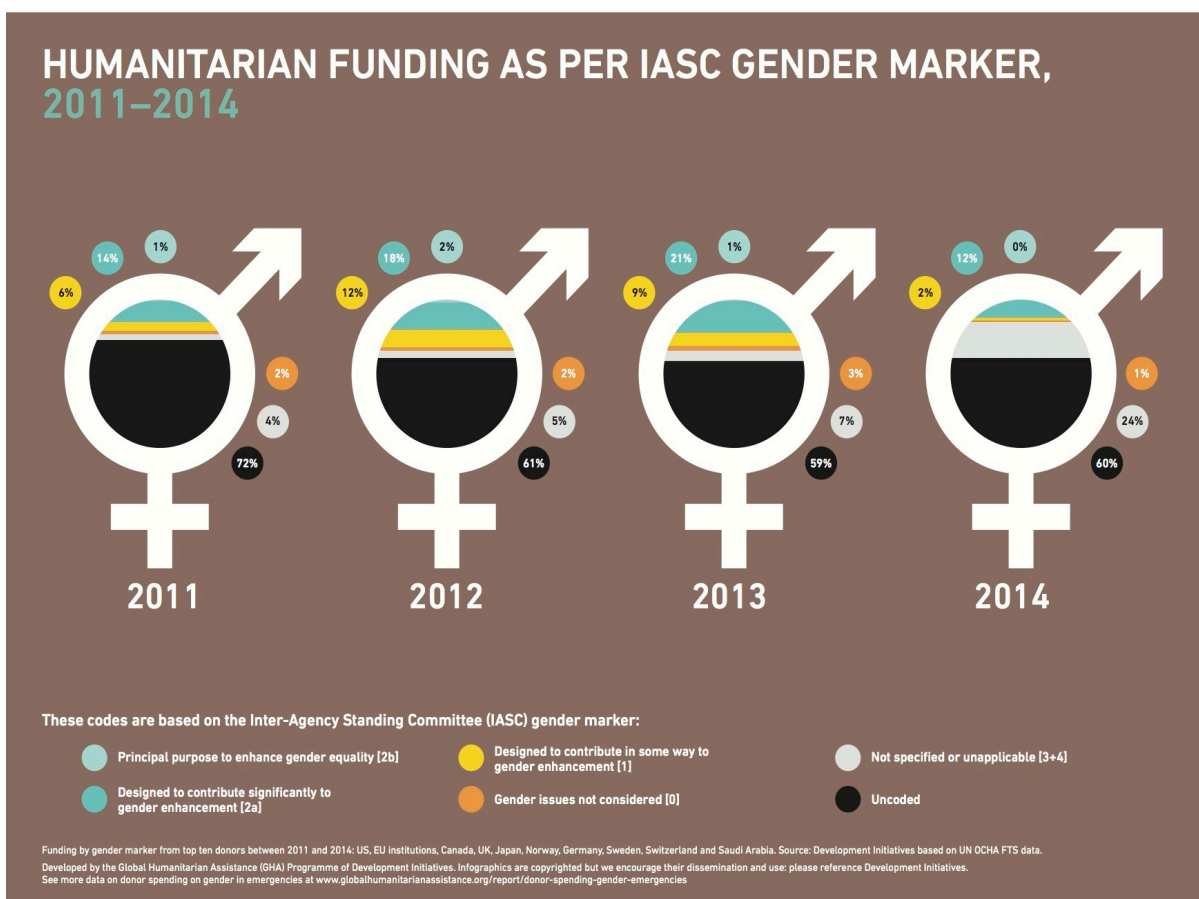
Responding to a request from the UN Secretary General to develop a Gender Marker “to assist in tracking the proportion of funds devoted to advancing gender equality,” in 2010, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee produced a gender marker for donors and agencies to use to track spending tied to promoting gender equality in humanitarian assistance. The Gender Marker is coded based on the extent to which: (1) a project has considered the needs of men and women equally; (2) its activities respond equally to these needs; and (3) the project has led to gender-related outcomes.³⁶ A number of key donor countries, including Sweden, currently use the Gender Marker to assess all projects submitted by partners for humanitarian aid and development assistance.

Drawing on OCHA data, a 2014 report on funding gender in emergencies from 2011 to 2014 found that “funding to projects that ‘did not consider gender issues’ (US\$566 million) was nearly four times that to projects whose ‘principal purpose’ was to advance gender equality (US\$147 million). In addition, 56 percent of funding (US\$7.9 billion) was left blank

or ‘uncoded’—meaning that the project was not coded for a gender marker—highlighting the weakness of overall reporting on gender.”³⁷

The report also found a number of important trends in the proportion of funding for humanitarian assistance that takes gender equality into account. First, since just after the introduction of the Gender Marker in 2011, there is no improvement in the use of Gender Marker by donors, with “uncoded” humanitarian assistance remaining constant at approximately 60 percent in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Second, where the Gender Marker is used, there is a decrease in the proportion of humanitarian funding that focuses “principally” or “contributes significantly” to gender equality (22 percent in 2013 decreasing to 12 percent in 2014). Third, where donors use the Gender Marker, the proportion of humanitarian assistance allocated to projects where “gender issues are not considered” decreased to 1 percent in 2014 (Figure 3). Fourth, a large proportion of humanitarian assistance given to the top ten recipients fails to use the Gender Marker, thus impeding any determination as to whether humanitarian response in these crises countries upheld and promoted the rights of women and girls or contributed to gender equality.

Figure 3. Overall Humanitarian Funding as per IASC Gender Marker



Source: Sarah Dalrymple, September 2014, *Funding Gender in Emergencies: What are the Trends?*, Global Humanitarian Assistance, p. 3.

In the case of support to fragile states, one success is the gender focus of the World Bank's allocations has increased substantially. In 2010, 57 percent of World Bank allocations were gender informed, and the figure rose to 97 percent in 2014. Another leading example is Sweden, which requires that all partners present a Gender Marker code for proposals, and has stated that they do not want to fund projects that have a "0 code" (i.e., no application to gender equality). This has made a strong statement on Sweden's prioritization of gender equality in humanitarian and development response.

Other international organizations lag behind, for example reporting on the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) shows that UN entities have made limited progress in resource tracking and allocation for gender-focused interventions. Only 15 (24 percent) out of 62 entities reporting data in 2015 currently have systems to track resources for gender equality and women's empowerment.³⁸

While recognizing the need and utility behind the use of Gender Markers, there are several areas in which the system needs improvement. First, the system is designed for projects and thus is unable to account for gender equality within core funding. Second, it is unclear who within the partners is accountable for determining the actual code within the Gender Marker, as well as who with the partners ensures the quality control of the project in regards to gender equality and the use of SADD to inform, monitor and evaluate the project, and so forth. Hence, much more clarity and accountability is needed (starting with the Humanitarian Country Team or Clusters leads) to address these issues. Right now, there is no clear accountability and this presents a significant weakness in the system. Finally, systematically applying the Gender Marker and extending its use beyond a proposal development tool to a program cycle tool (to inform and monitor the project throughout and not only at the planning stage) would result in more accurate information; smarter and better targeted programs; strengthened accountability; and better allocation of resources that are able to respond to the different needs, and ensure more transparent and just distribution and use of resources, among women, men, girls and boys.³⁹

Also necessary will be much stronger leadership for gender responsive planning and budgeting; monitoring and evaluation; and an investment in technical expertise.

Resources Implementation Measures

A. Intersection among Humanitarian and Other Foreign Policy Areas

- Work to ensure a larger share of global humanitarian aid funds promote gender equality and women's, girls' and LGBTI persons' rights. These efforts could include, but are not limited to, promoting the use of the Inter Agency Standing Committee's Gender Marker, to help ensure donor policy commitments to gender equality and women's and girls' rights are being actualized in their allocation of funding in humanitarian crises.
- Further develop the Gender Marker as an international tool applicable not only to planning but to the entire program cycle.
- Ensure accountability for gender equality and the use of SADD and other measures, including through working for clarity as to which body (e.g., Humanitarian Country Teams, Cluster leads, etc.) is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and implementation of gender measures within the Gender Marker in partner proposals.
- Ensure that all policy documents and other basic documents in the multilateral organizations and the EU are based on gender analysis, including for influencing the allocation of resource for humanitarian aid and development response.
- Push that equality becomes an integral part of all EU development cooperation, primarily by promoting the implementation of the EU's gender equality plan.

- Support the Gender Standby Capacity project to enable gender informed responses in humanitarian crises and their aftermath through the deployment of Gender Capacity Advisors to support the Humanitarian Coordinator, Humanitarian Country Teams, UN agencies, cluster leads, governments and NGOs.

B. Humanitarian focus

- Gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights should significantly shape and be present in new policy for humanitarian intervention, and consequently reflected in the allocation of human and material resources.
- Significantly strengthen human and material resources within ministries of foreign affairs and international aid and embassies to bolster humanitarian and gender analytical capacities and enable the realization of a feminist foreign policy and implementation measures in humanitarian aid and development response.
- Gender equality should be integrated into all guidelines and policies that govern humanitarian aid and development cooperation, including regional strategies. All policy proposals should be based on gender analysis that should be clearly reflected in policy direction, operations, monitoring and allocation of resources.
- Seek measures to clarify the ways in which core funding to UN and other international partners addresses gender equality and uses gender and age analysis to inform its policies and programs.
- In situations of humanitarian crises and their aftermath, push for economic and social rights in order to strengthen women’s economic empowerment, such as property and asset rights, legal and other assistance to defend their land from land-grabbing, access to the labor market and financial services, inheritance, ownership and user rights. These areas are of paramount importance in ensuring women’s rights and enabling women and their households to survive and recover from conflict and disaster.

Policy and Implementation Challenges to Integrating a Feminist Foreign Policy in Humanitarian Response

Possible Implementation Challenges

1. Some states and many non-state actors do not share these principles of gender equality and or support women’s and girls’ human rights, and they may actively oppose them. Promoting a specific feminist and women’s and girls’ rights and equality policy agenda in the context of attempting to provide humanitarian assistance or protection to extremely vulnerable people may turn out to be difficult in some places. The question then arises: Should aid prioritize the over-arching goal

of its feminist foreign policy, or should it prioritize protecting vulnerable people caught in conflict or crisis? Even promoting gender equality is enough to get humanitarian agencies into difficulties in some countries—and not infrequently, these are the countries where humanitarian emergencies occur (for example, Islamic countries with non-state actors committed to a very restrictive interpretation of Islam in Syria, Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen). Adding the emphasis on LGBTI rights no doubt complicates this even more, although there is less experience with this in the field to date. If the over-arching goal of implementing a feminist foreign policy is truly the priority, then governments will need to be ready to do a lot of advocacy with governments who might be unfriendly to these rights. Additionally, governments should prepare a contingency plan in the event that the humanitarian agencies they fund find their access compromised. Dealing with armed non-state actors who control crisis- or conflict-affected populations—and who may be even less friendly to these rights—adds yet another level of complexity.

This concern also raises questions about funding for local or national NGOs that might also not agree with policies that promote gender equality and women's and girls' human rights, or which might feel that a northern political agenda was being forced into humanitarian response. In other words, challenges may well arise between over-arching feminist foreign policy goal and more specific humanitarian goals.

2. Adding additional, foreign policy-related conditions to international aid will, almost by definition, require adding staff to ensure compliance. Governments should be willing to add additional human capacity to field and headquarter staff to ensure policy compliance.

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