



LEGS

Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards

Gender and Livestock in Emergencies

A Discussion Paper for the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)

Karin de Jonge and Lucy Maarse



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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ASF</i>	African Swine Fever	<i>LEGS</i>	Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards
<i>CAHW</i>	Community Animal Health Worker	<i>M&E</i>	Monitoring & Evaluation
<i>CFB</i>	Community Fodder Banks	<i>MA</i>	Male Adults
<i>CSOs</i>	Civil Society Organisations	<i>ME</i>	Male Elders
<i>DVM</i>	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine	<i>MY</i>	Male Youth
<i>EU</i>	European Union	<i>NGO</i>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<i>FA</i>	Female Adults	<i>OIE</i>	World Organisation for Animal Health
<i>FE</i>	Female Elders	<i>PRIM</i>	Participatory Response Identification Matrix
<i>FY</i>	Female Youth	<i>RGA</i>	Rapid Gender Analysis
<i>GAM</i>	Gender Analysis Matrix	<i>SADD</i>	Sex and Age Disaggregated Data
<i>GBV</i>	Gender Based Violence	<i>SIDA</i>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<i>HA</i>	Humanitarian Action	<i>UN</i>	United Nations
<i>HH</i>	Household		
<i>HIV</i>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus		
<i>IASC</i>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee		

I. Introduction

The aim of this Discussion Paper is to outline the major issues at the crossroads of gender and livestock in the context of humanitarian response, for the Advisory Committee of LEGS (Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards) to inform the revision of the LEGS Handbook. This Paper includes:

- a summary of current trends and thinking regarding gender and humanitarian action, and its (potential) relevance for livestock related humanitarian interventions
- case studies with a gender perspective

Despite improvements and positive anecdotal evidence, humanitarian action (HA) is still not highly gender sensitive. Operating in an often male dominated context, coupled with the need for urgency, taking a gender perspective is generally low on the list of priorities, and this is also the case in livestock humanitarian interventions. Note for instance the following observation: 'I have been working in East Africa, especially Kenya and Rwanda, in the last few years on a vaccine project for an international research project, and some smaller projects with pastoralist women in Marsabit (Kenya). I cannot say that I have seen any greater awareness of gender in the drought relief projects in Marsabit over the past few years. There have been huge livestock investments, but focused on cattle marketing, and men. The international NGO is active up there but is not doing anything to bring women (or small ruminants) into the work.'¹

However, it is also well recognised that when questions of gender equality are not sufficiently considered in the implementation of HA, its effectiveness and impact diminish. This is equally the case for emergency livestock interventions. Understanding gender roles and addressing specific gender-related needs and vulnerabilities can lead to improved outcomes for livestock-based humanitarian action, in terms of protecting women's assets, addressing their priorities, and overcoming cultural and economic barriers, with positive impacts on women's livelihoods and household food security.

A few examples are presented here to illustrate these issues.

Crises affect women and men, boys and girls differently, including crises regarding livestock. Men and women also differ in their perceptions of the impact of shocks:

In Niger, women, but not men, identified diseases that affect poultry as one of the most important threats in their community, reflecting the importance of poultry for women's livelihoods, as small livestock are among the few resources they control. Small animals are more likely to be sold or used to meet needs in the face of recurrent crises (chickens are quick to raise, and the eggs can be sold) making them essential resources for households to cope during times of stress. Poultry disease, therefore, not only threatens a critical source of income for women, but also a commonly-used form of household insurance against shocks. In contrast men, who own and care for large livestock, often contended with cattle rustling as well as with drought that reduced the availability of good forage for their herds. These shocks put men at greater risk of exposure to conflict over resources and land (Mercy Corps, 2014).

Understanding gender divisions in ownership of livestock is equally important in humanitarian livestock interventions:

In tribal areas of India keeping backyard poultry is common. During a bird flu culling emergency operation, veterinarians collected the birds, door-to-door, village by village, killing and dumping them in a pit. Women, generally assumed to be the owners, were approached to hand over the birds. Women received bird flu awareness lessons and financial compensation. However, despite the massive culling exercise, bird flu kept spreading. It turned out that this was caused by fighting cocks, which were hidden by their male owners, as they found the proposed compensation far too small (fighting cocks have a tenfold price in the informal market). As cock fighting is illegal, there had been no attention given to the compensation of cocks which are typically kept and trained by men.²

¹ Email exchange with Dr. Beth Miller on 27 May 2020

² First-hand experience, L. Maarse

Identifying pre-existing vulnerabilities with a gender perspective is important as part of planning humanitarian responses and identifying appropriate target groups:

Recognising the roles and responsibilities of women and girls in their families and communities increases impact: when humanitarian responses include specific measures to facilitate women's access to food supplies, the level of hunger in households drops. However, providing vouchers for women to buy large ruminants at the market might not work when women are constrained in accessing large livestock markets. They will have to ask or hire a male relative, may not get the value for money nor the animal they wish for, and the impact may be low or none.³

During its Indian Ocean tsunami response in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Thailand and Somalia, Oxfam distributed boats, one of the most significant assets in fishing communities. An evaluation highlighted that the boats were distributed primarily to men across the tsunami response, but Oxfam and its partners did strive for gender equity by promoting some distribution to women. This received a mixed response and required significant work to engender community acceptance of women's access to these traditional male assets. It was suggested that Oxfam might not have appreciated the significance both of the social change it was promoting through its support of women's fisheries and the support required to ensure that women would benefit: "It is not part of their culture and custom to engage women in fishing; sensitization of men and women is required to change their attitudes. This may take a long time and concerted efforts" Promoting social change is not an easy process, requires ongoing support and may well receive a mixed response (IASC, 2017).

Furthermore, men and women have different priorities regarding the four roles or functions of livestock - see Figure 1 (FAO 2010), something that it is important to be aware of when planning humanitarian response.

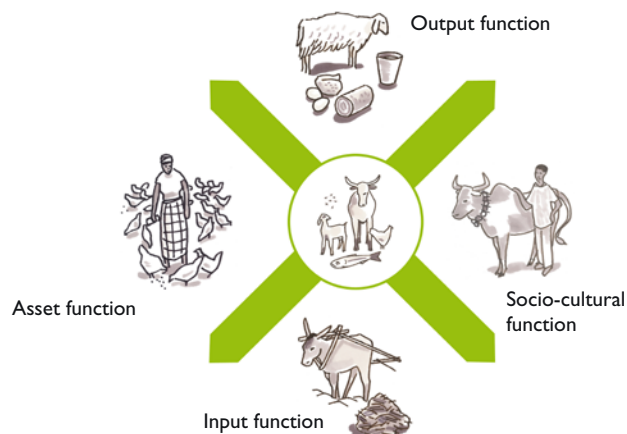


Figure 1: The four functions of livestock

The **output function** relates to the production of food and non food products such as milk, meat, wool, hair and eggs, but also fuel (manure/dung cakes), medical products (urine and goat milk) which all meet family needs. In cultures where women use dung cakes as fuel, the manure of the livestock may be highly valued by women.

The **input function** relates to providing inputs for other sub-systems (crop production; pasture/shrub/tree production; transport; draught power) for produce and people; men might use bullocks for ploughing the fields, while women are keen on having a donkey to transport water.

The **asset function** or risk coverage relates to raising money in times of need and concerns asset building in the form of animals (including birds); this often is the priority function among poor livestock keepers and the reason that animals are not necessarily sold when market prices are attractive, but when there is a need for cash. Women may be keener on small livestock when they have the control over such animals.

The **socio-cultural function** relates to social status, culture etc. As livestock are a part of the household, they remain strong indicators of social status. Festivals and fairs can be based on livestock, including bullock cart racing, cock fighting, cow beauty contests, etc. Women while cleaning, feeding, or grazing and milking the animals sing songs related to livestock. Dowries are paid in livestock; in polygamous cultures, men will use cattle to marry additional wives.

2. Current trends and thinking regarding gender and humanitarian action, relevant for livestock interventions

This section describes a number of recent trends and thinking in relation to gender and humanitarian response, and its relevance for livestock interventions.

2.1 The intersection of gender and age

Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as age, gender, ethnicity, and disability as they apply to an individual or group. It thereby refers to potential overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantage. It is important to be aware of all levels of intersectionality when assessing vulnerability and overlapping vulnerabilities, needs and potential of a community during planning and implementation of livestock emergency interventions (Chaplin et al 2019). However, this Paper highlights gender and age as probably the most useful intersection linked to livestock interventions and feasible to apply. Given the limited time and resources available for planning, implementation and monitoring of humanitarian interventions, gender and age analyses are relatively easy to apply and result in significant improvement of approach and impact.

The debate around the need for sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) has been running for at least the last decade, but mostly at the level of donors and programme managers. In 2018, the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) developed the Gender with Age Marker to improve the design and monitoring of humanitarian programming through a relatively simple coding scale for four performance issues. These are: a gender and age analysis, tailored activities and allocated resources, influence on the project, and benefits from the project (IASC 2018). The use of the Gender with Age Marker is required for UN and partners applying for funds for the 2019 Humanitarian Programme Cycle. Donors like SIDA have adopted this tool as well (SIDA 2015). The EU has had a Gender Age Marker for humanitarian action since 2014 (European Commission 2014).

Collecting SADD is however also meaningful for practitioners on the ground in order to improve design, implementation, and impact, especially for livestock interventions where peoples' roles and responsibilities are often closely tied to sex and age (in the categories young, adult and elderly, men and women). Starting with a needs assessment and context analysis which has SADD, this analysis can then be applied throughout the implementation and monitoring phases.

Figure 2 shows a simple and easy to apply gender and age lens which the author used in different settings, especially when working with technical teams of veterinarians, animal husbandry managers or foresters, who are, at best, gender neutral⁴.

In this case, age is divided in three categories relevant to livestock interventions: young, adult and elderly.

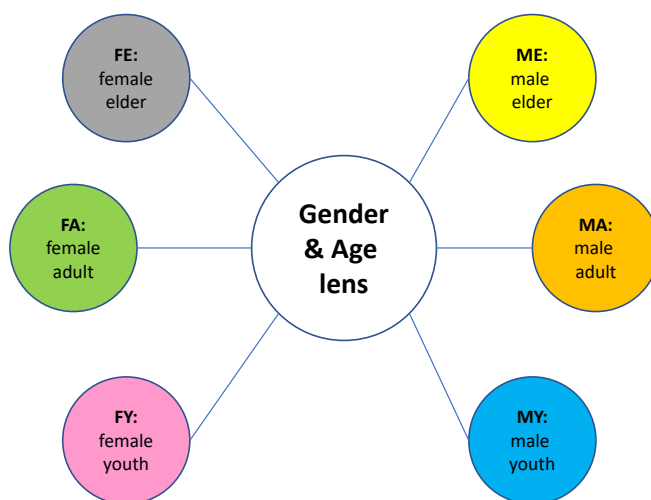


Figure 2: Simple Gender and Age Lens

When selecting candidates for Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW), age and gender matters and choices are context-specific. The following options are examples from a range of programmes in Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan, and India⁵. If a community has to select candidates for a CAHW in a village or a settled community it may be that a male elder (ME) and a female adult (FA) are the most appropriate candidates as they will be more likely to stay near the village. Male adults (MA) and male youth (MY) may tend to leave, e.g. seeking employment, and female youth (FY) might leave the village after marriage. Sometimes a pairing of female and male adult CAHWs may be the

4 Based on field experiences in East, North Africa, and South Asia as livestock expert, usually with national governments, L. Maarse.

5 Based on field experience various programmes, L. Maarse

most appropriate option with the female CAHW caring for the small livestock. In pastoral settings, a male adult CAHW may be a more likely candidate as he can move with the herds. However, selection of appropriate candidates will also depend on the household status, for example, having young children to care for and/or being a female headed-household may make it very challenging to take on the additional role of being a CAHW.

Technical teams find it easy and acceptable to apply this gender and age lens: whatever the activity, the question is asked with whom to interact, why and how. It can also prevent teams from targeting women in livestock programmes just to meet donor or organisational requirements without really exploring the context from women’s perspective.

Figure 3 is an example of how this lens could be embedded within the LEGS Handbook PRIM matrix, increasing awareness on gender-age categories of stakeholders.

For example, take the “With stakeholders” tasks (bottom of the PRIM). By applying the lens, you ask yourself with whom you have engaged. If you have only engaged adult men and women, it is important to consider approaching the youth and elders. You might observe that the male adult (MA) provides a different score compared to a female elder (FE), while a female youth (FY) might provide a different arrow as for her, the relevance is different compared to the female elder (FE).

Another concrete example of a SADD tool for practitioners is the CARE Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) (CARE undated). The RGA provides essential information about gender roles and responsibilities, capacities, and vulnerabilities, together with programming recommendations. It is used in situations where time is of the essence and resources are scarce. The RGA uses a range of primary and secondary information to understand gender roles and relations and how these may change during a crisis. It assists in providing practical programming and operational recommendations to meet the different needs of women, men, boys and girls, and in ensuring ‘do no harm’. The five steps in RGA are presented in Box 1 opposite.

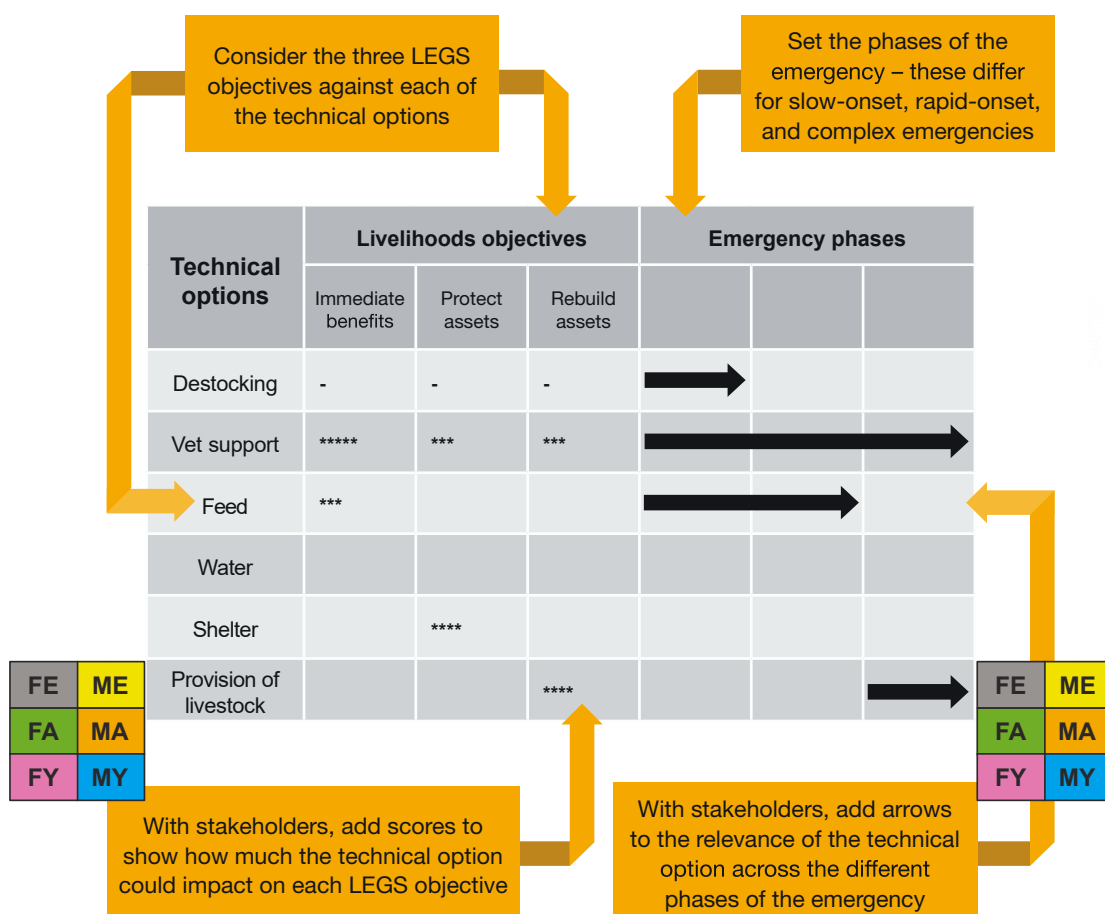


Figure 3: The gender and age lens combined with the LEGS Participatory Response Identification Matrix (PRIM)

Box 1: Five Steps in a Rapid Gender Analysis

1. **Find existing analysis and data on gender relations:** compile and analyse existing secondary gender information in a two-page document, which contains SADD and gender analysis from before the crisis, with links to key reference documents and existing programmes
2. **Collect additional data through gender assessments:** gather information from women, men, boys and girls about the impact of a crisis
3. **Analyse the results and compare to pre-crisis data:** analyse gender data to provide practitioners with an understanding of changes to gender relations and how they affect programming; use the information generated to form recommendations; find and understand gaps in programming and make adjustments
4. **Provide clear and practical recommendations to improve** or address some of the problems or gaps identified, of the different needs, capacities and contributions of women, men, boys and girls. This will improve the response efforts and potentially those of implementing partners
5. **Share the information with other actors**

2.2 Humanitarian action and gender transformation

There is growing support for the notion that it is not sufficient to ensure that women equally benefit from humanitarian response interventions, but that HA should also empower women and girls and challenge the status quo regarding their subordinate roles and responsibilities. HA should work with women's agency, potential and capacities, consciously consider women's potential as agents of change and leadership positions, and contribute to gender transformation.

Emergency situations and humanitarian responses can provide unique windows of opportunity in this respect. Crises offer opportunities to change discriminatory social norms and power imbalances. Women heading their households as men and boys have died or left, take up roles and responsibilities which challenge pre-crisis gender norms and values. This could include women and girls taking up new roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis livestock care and management. HA in such situations can contribute to changed power relations and should avoid reinforcing discriminatory social norms. For example, supporting women's groups during humanitarian responses gives women a stronger collective voice and enables them to lobby for their own priorities and for equal decision making. Men and boys can be strong allies to promote and support women's rights and need to be engaged.

2.3 A feminist approach to humanitarian aid

It is interesting to note that governments like Canada and Sweden take a feminist approach to humanitarian aid, acknowledging the above and pointing to the fact that the impact of humanitarian response increases when gender transformation is part of the approach⁶. Sweden sees gender equality and actively supporting women's and girls' participation and leadership, as a strategic link between humanitarian response, recovery, and long term development (SIDA 2015). Also, international NGOs like ActionAid invest specifically in women's and girls' rights as well as women's leadership in humanitarian crises. Table 1 below provides an analysis by The Feinstein International Centre, Tufts University, of Sweden's feminist approach to humanitarian aid, including an overview of the complementarity of core humanitarian principles and a feminist approach to humanitarian principles (Mazurana and Maxwell 2016).

⁶ https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/fiap_humanitarian-action-humanitaire_paif.aspx?lang=eng

Table 1: Complementarity of core humanitarian principles and feminist approach to humanitarian principles

Principle	Core humanitarian principles endorsed by the UN General Assembly ⁷	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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's and girls' ability to survive and recover from armed conflict and natural disaster. • This requires humanitarians to have an awareness of gender-based power structures and their implication for women's, girls', men's and boys' needs, risks, vulnerabilities, resources, and access to services
Neutrality	Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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.
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, class, or political opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's and girls' rights to protection and humanitarian assistance and response without discrimination are well established within international, national, customary, and soft law. • 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.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

⁷ 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).

The principles of neutrality and impartiality and avoiding discrimination and marginalisation of women and girls is highly relevant for livestock emergency interventions. A discriminatory approach may reduce the impact of a humanitarian intervention:

In many cultures, but also amongst technical livestock people, 'large livestock' is generally higher up the livestock ladder than small stock. Climbing the livestock ladder is used as an indication of controlling and/or owning more valuable assets, as shown in Figure 4 (Todd 1998).

During emergency interventions, animals at the top of the livestock ladder⁸ are normally given first priority by key stakeholders (livestock owners, veterinarians, emergency, government, NGOs and private sector actors) and belong to men, while the bottom is often overlooked or not given priority as the economic value of the animals is less. These animals are generally under the control of women.

Sheep and goats receive most attention when in large herds and kept by men. Yet, when women keep a few sheep and goats at home these animals are often overlooked, as are donkeys. Backyard poultry is often completely ignored by the above mentioned stakeholders. Technicians are trained on and work in large scale commercial poultry systems, and backyard poultry or village poultry (managed by women) is perceived as backward. In livestock emergency interventions this means that small herds and backyard livestock risk being overlooked, to the direct detriment of household food security.

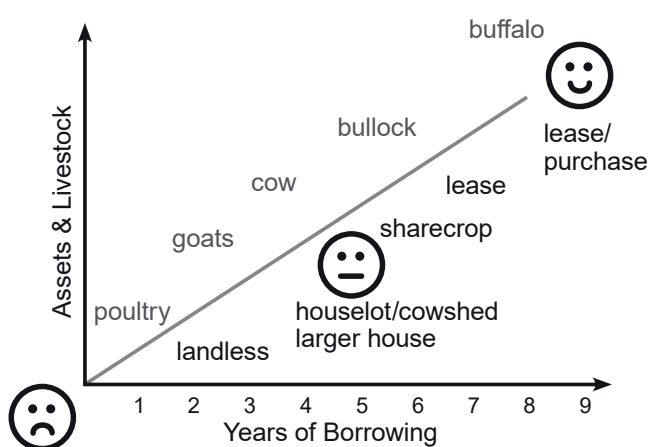


Figure 4: The progression of animal ownership

2.4 A gender responsive localisation agenda

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit agreed a new global localisation agenda to maximize the role of local, national, and regional actors in humanitarian action⁹. The Summit also provided high-level recognition of e.g. women focused civil society organisations, and prompted a shift in thinking for many international institutions. The Grand Bargain¹⁰ and Charter for Change¹¹ commitments by the international community reflect this localisation agenda but have limited references or commitments to gender equity. The Grand Bargain sets a target of providing 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders (i.e. local authorities, local civil society, local private sector), 'as directly as possible', to be achieved by 2020. The Charter for Change is led by both national and international NGOs, to implement changes to the way the Humanitarian System operates and enable more locally-led response. Supporting local humanitarian responders should lead to change on how crises are managed and strengthen the voice of affected populations. The added value of working through local structures includes earlier response and access, better acceptance by communities, more cost effectiveness, better links with development work and increased accountability.

For this global localisation agenda there is, however, also a need for a gender responsive approach among all local actors: local government (especially in genuinely decentralised governments such as in Kenya), local civil society, and local private sector actors. Working across these professional boundaries is important. The Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group developed guidance notes on how to promote gender equality through localization, participation, and humanitarian needs assessments (see UN Women 2020a,b,c,d).

8 Even in the West, farmers with dairy cows are perceived as higher up in the hierarchy compared to pig or poultry farmers.

9 <https://agendaforhumanity.org>

10 <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>

11 <https://charter4change.org>

At the level of civil society organisations (CSOs), there is a need to ensure women focused CSOs have the resources to meet basic needs and fuel long-term gender-equality gains within their communities affected by emergencies. Documented roles of women-focused CSOs include being first responders, service providers, community leaders and advocates (especially when men and boys are absent), and resilience builders. Their strength further includes their intricate knowledge of local context and established trust with communities. Five priorities for achieving gender transformative localisation working with CSOs are presented in Box 2 below (Women Deliver, undated).

Box 2: Five Priorities for Achieving Gender Transformative Localisation

1. More tailored, accessible, and sustainable funding opportunities for women-focused CSOs, which enable them to meet humanitarian needs in their communities and drive transformative gains in gender equality.
2. More opportunities for women-focused CSOs to meaningfully engage in and contribute to local, regional, and global decision-making fora that affect their work and lives.
3. Stronger coordination and collaboration between international actors and local women-focused CSOs to complement and prevent duplication of efforts.
4. More strategic investments in capacity strengthening and sharing opportunities for women-focused CSOs, aligned with their priorities, and increasing their fund absorption capacity.
5. Accountability: ensure women-focused CSOs can provide feedback for programmes designed for their communities.

2.5 Prevention of gender based violence and the need for protection

Gender based violence (GBV) is any harmful act of sexual, physical, psychological, mental, and emotional abuse that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender differences. Currently there is wide attention paid to GBV and the concurrent need for prevention and appropriate protection in humanitarian settings, most often in a context of violent conflict. One in five internally displaced or refugee women living in humanitarian crisis and armed conflict have experienced sexual violence¹². The Sphere handbook emphasises the need for humanitarian action to be guided by protection principles, and distinguishes protection work such as prevention, responsive, remedial and environment building (Sphere Association 2018).

Livestock based livelihoods are highly dependent on land, natural resources, and human labour, and thus on the good health status of livestock keepers. The impact of GBV can be devastating in terms of health, coupled with social stigma and discrimination related to GBV. This may lead to psychological trauma, feelings of powerlessness, and inadequacy to engage in productive activities and to fully participate in community activities. Acts of GBV related to livestock dependent livelihoods include boys being kidnapped or forcibly conscripted by local militias while herding the family's animals, girls or women being raped while going to the market to

sell milk, boys being killed when their livestock is looted, etc. Land degradation, water degradation and scarcity, and deforestation often cause women and girls to walk longer distances to collect fuel wood and water, with increasing negative consequences for their health and safety¹³. Finally, in situations where people are already impoverished and social structures disrupted, as is often the case in humanitarian settings, the impacts of GBV on rural livelihoods are even more devastating (FAO and Dimitra Project, undated).

For livestock related humanitarian interventions, it is therefore important to incorporate prevention of GBV through safety and security measures related to animal husbandry (safe locations of water points, safe grazing routes and pasture areas, safe roads to markets, etc). Appropriate protection elements built into programmes or through strategic collaboration with others contribute not only to peoples' safety and security, but also to their wellbeing, dignity, and psychosocial health. It should also be noted that livestock programming - if it quickly restores and reinforces livelihood systems from which women benefit - can itself be a preventive measure if it protects women and girls from having to adopt other, more harmful, strategies during crisis.

12 <https://www.unocha.org/story/gender-based-violence-closer-look-numbers>

13 <https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/Eija's%20Presentation.pdf>

3. Conclusions

This Discussion Paper on Gender invites LEGS to consider an enhanced gender perspective by incorporating and translating a number of key trends on gender and their relevance to emergency livestock interventions. For livestock interventions in emergencies it is useful to adopt more of an intersectional approach and acknowledge overlapping vulnerabilities. Relevant overlapping categories in this respect are gender and age and it is therefore worthwhile to consider using a simple gender and age lens in all phases of livestock emergency interventions.

Equally, LEGS should consider a gender transformation perspective, using the windows of opportunity which may arise in a humanitarian setting to challenge subordinate roles and responsibility, support women's empowerment and leadership, and thereby enhance the impact of livestock interventions.

The global localisation agenda provides a good opportunity to invest in local structures and organisations with a gender perspective, for example, investing in women's leadership and support to women's organisations, thereby working on resilience and better emergency preparedness of communities. It also allows for the selection of gender sensitive service providers.

Preventing gender based violence and incorporating protection of women and girls, men and boys, in project design and implementation, will ensure livestock keepers' agency, dignity and health.

In general LEGS could reflect more on the fact that women constitute 50% of the population. They are currently frequently referred to as a group, even as a vulnerable group, and there is need to pay more attention to their potential, capacities, and strength, especially in humanitarian settings and as part of livestock interventions.

4. Case study

Fodder Banks in Afghanistan build peoples' resilience and lead to more voice for women¹⁴

The Kuchi are Afghanistan's nomadic pastoralists, forming 8-10% of the total population (approximately three million people). They live primarily in the tough mountainous areas and migrate seasonally with their herds over vast tracts of the country's rangelands. It is tough terrain and frequent natural disasters present a challenging landscape that has only been made worse by the political struggle in the country in the midst of terrorism, warfare, and instability.

The Kuchi are the most vulnerable population, but one which contributes significantly to the livestock sector. Some Kuchi nomads have settled over the last decades, but still consider themselves as Kuchi. They have often lost their livestock due to calamities such as war, prolonged droughts, and disease outbreaks.

Provision of humanitarian assistance (HA) often involves increasing animal health service access and the provision of feed for the animals. In order to also build resilience, investments were made in developing community fodder banks (CFB). These are formed by a group of animal owners to jointly purchase straw and/or grass in a good rainy season, store it, and then sell it to its members over the winter season and during a drought, through a revolving fund system.

It has been proven that a CFB with professional management, a proper business plan, and a sound membership structure can do a lot in terms of risk mitigation and maximization of returns through, for example, provision of fodder and feed for periods of scarcity, as well as for fattening. Fodder and feed can be purchased at times and in places when/where it is cheaper, and then stored properly. In that way a strategic stock is kept for the bad years.

A CFB is normally registered under a cooperative law and community elders arrange for an election. Often the non-migratory Kuchi run the CFB. No Kuchi women can be elected as the culture dictates that women cannot be involved in decision making with strangers. Establishing a medium size fodder bank requires approximately US \$12,500 covering the building, machinery, equipment, etc. As an example, one fodder bank is needed for about 20 to 150 families which keep around 100,000 sheep and goats ranging from 5-500 per household. Settled Kuchi have fewer ruminants than nomadic Kuchi who normally have large numbers.

How can women now be involved when there are such stringent cultural restrictions? Girls, adult and elderly women care for the offspring of small ruminants, milk the goats, process wool and hair into carpets and other products, while also making milk products (local soft cheese, yogurt, etc.) and trading them. By providing attention to these female value chain activities, women are organised into extension groups and subsequently are represented in the CFB structure as a co-opted member. Items provided to women, apart from training materials, include churning machines, spinning wheels, and some items to enable them to work in a more hygienic manner. The extension groups working with milk and/or wool, meet regularly and issues related to fodder and feed can be brought to the CFB management through their representative. These value chain activities have improved the women's position in the households and the surrounding community resulting in their work being valued and the women gaining more respect.

An important lesson learned over the years is that in cultures which might exclude women, HA can contribute to women being more involved in (public) decision making by investing in their value chain activities, which gives them power and a voice.

¹⁴ Source: experiences of DCA obtained through email exchanges and direct observation by the author L. M Maarse.

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LEGS

Vesey Farm

Little Clacton Road

Great Holland

Essex CO13 0EX

United Kingdom

✉ coordinator@livestock-emergency.net

🌐 www.livestock-emergency.net

🐦 [@TheLEGSPROject](https://twitter.com/TheLEGSPROject)

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