

# Do No Harm & Gender

## A Guidance Note

### What is the purpose of this Guidance Note?

This guidance note aims to integrate gender sensitivity into the practice of Do No Harm (DNH), by illustrating how Do No Harm analysis can be enriched through the application of a gender lens. The linkage is increasingly important because performing the analysis from a gender-sensitive perspective enhances the inclusivity of interventions, an awareness made clear by the strengthened commitment from DNH practitioners across humanitarian, development, human rights, and peace building sectors.

The guidance assumes some previous exposure to Do No Harm, and complements existing Do No Harm materials. It is written with Do No Harm practitioners in mind, with varying degrees of gender expertise.

### Background: How this Note was created

This CDA Guidance Note was made possible through the support and collaboration of Kvinna Till Kvinna. It was written by Michelle Garred, Charlotte Booth and Kiely Barnard-Webster with major contributions from Nicole Goddard, Ola Saleh, Muzhda Azeez and Katarina Carlberg.

#### **KVINNA TILL KVINNA FOUNDATION**

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (hereafter Kvinna till Kvinna) strengthens women in conflict affected regions since 1993. With its head office in Sweden, Kvinna till Kvinna currently operates in 21 countries and supports over 100 partner organisations that work to advance women's human rights and promote non-violent approaches to conflict.

This Note has not yet been field tested, so input as welcome at:  
[feedback@cdacollaborative.org](mailto:feedback@cdacollaborative.org).

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## Introduction

This guidance note aims to integrate gender sensitivity into the practice of Do No Harm (DNH), by illustrating how Do No Harm analysis can be enriched through the application of a gender lens. We begin with a brief look at the relationship between conflict and gender, and then consider how to integrate gender in each step of the Do No Harm analysis process: context analysis, program impact analysis, and the generation of options for program (re)design. In each section, there are examples drawn from the work of Kvinna till Kvinna in Iraq, plus insights from other organizations. There are also gender-sensitivity tips for DNH trainers and facilitators, and suggestions for further reading. In this guidance, the black font indicates standard DNH, while the blue font indicates integration of gender dimensions.



### To Note

*Gender-sensitivity in Do No Harm requires an in-depth understanding of gender dynamics. We recommend integrating the perspectives of women, men, and sexual and gender minorities into the analysis, by seeking out the relevant people, and by asking gender-specific questions where appropriate. Seek balance in representation and voice. Find contextual strategies to include hard-to-reach people, who often have unique and important perspectives.*

## 1. How is Do No Harm related to Gender?

'Gender' refers to "the socially and politically constructed roles, behaviors, and attributes that a given society considers most appropriate and valuable for men and women."<sup>1</sup> Importantly, gender is about the ways in which power imbalance affect the experiences of each gender group and the dynamics between them.

Socio-political conflict is related to gender in several powerful ways:

- *Conflict impacts males, females and SGMs differently.* For example, depending on the context, men may face greater pressure to get involved in violence. Women may become single heads of household in mobility restrictive conflict environments, and may face personal status insecurity, aggravating challenges in providing for their children and families. Both SGMs and women may be more frequently exposed to gender-based violence.
- *The underlying causes and dynamics of conflict are gendered.* Conflict is often rooted in structural inequalities and exclusion of certain groups, including women, from social, economic and political power. Further, gender norms – the contextual and cultural standards of social behaviour by gender groups – can play a role in drawing societies into conflict. Militarism reflects and reinforces the belief in protectionist male heroism, it is often associated with certain ideas about masculinity and manhood such as "men who don't pick

<sup>1</sup> Watson, Charlotte, Hannah Wright and Hesta Groenwald. *Gender Analysis of Conflict Toolkit*. London: Saferworld, 2016, p.2

up arms are not manly enough". Militarism has repercussions on women, too, including the propagation of ideas about femininity as the domestic and the subject of protection ("the honor of the nation"). It sets a framework for female roles in society, such as health care providers for the wounded, and mothers and wives of soldiers. However, such roles are highly contextual, as women can also be fighters. These ideas can exist as socio-cultural norms, even when individual people do not necessarily conform to them.

- *Violence mirrors power dynamics.* Violence does not mean only inflicting direct physical harm; it can also refer to the power-based structural exclusion of certain groups, or the cultural mindsets used to justify that exclusion.<sup>2</sup> Minority identity groups, women and SGMs may be systematically oppressed in a social system dominated by patriarchal<sup>3</sup> norms.

### Why Sexual and Gender Minorities?

Sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) are people whose sexual orientation and gender identity falls outside of hetero-normative gender roles. Depending on the context, SGMs may include gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, etc. Gender-sensitive DNH takes account that how they influence and are influenced by the conflict is key for understanding gender power relations, and this will help practitioners design more inclusive interventions. In contexts of conflict, SGMs may face increased risks of harassment, exclusion, gender-based violence, and denial of social services. However, they may also find that due to the rupture in society and change potential violent conflicts can create in social norms, new windows of opportunity may open for recognition and lobbying. Gender provisions in peace agreements can offer a new vehicle for SGMs' needs and contributions to be recognized.

Myrttinen, Henri and Megan Daigle. *When Merely Existing is a Risk: Sexual and Gender Minorities in Conflict, Displacement and Peacebuilding*. London: International Alert, 2017. [http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Gender\\_SexualGenderMinorities\\_2017.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Gender_SexualGenderMinorities_2017.pdf)

As an ethical principle, 'do no harm' applies to gender just as it applies to conflict. It means recognizing that the actions we take in a particular context are not neutral. Our actions *will* affect the relationships within that context, either for better or for worse. In a context where women's rights and social inclusion are threatened, we have a minimum obligation to pay attention to these dynamics so that we do not unintentionally exacerbate them.

<sup>2</sup> Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3):167-191. 1969.

<sup>3</sup> "Relating to or characteristic of a system of society or government controlled by men; a patriarchal society" Dictionary.com

This guidance note treats DNH primarily as an analytical tool and process<sup>4</sup> for conflict sensitivity and demonstrates how a gender lens can be applied step-by-step to enhance practice. Power analysis is key when considering gender as outlined above, whereas for DNH power differences are in fact embedded in the DNH analysis of Dividers. The analyst must be intentional in making this explicit. In certain cases, it may also be helpful to supplement gender-sensitive DNH with power analysis tools, referenced within this document.

DNH emphasizes prioritization because most contexts of conflict are complicated, and there is a limit to how many socio-political groups, Dividers and Connectors an organization can productively track and incorporate into planning, implementation and monitoring. When facing operational constraints, there is often a genuine need to keep DNH simple.

However, gendered power imbalances are so pervasive around the world, and so intrinsically linked to conflict, that they are indeed a critical ingredient of conflict sensitivity analysis. When working under tough conditions, there is a dangerous tendency to continuously postpone gender sensitivity for a more convenient moment, saying “now is not the time.”<sup>5</sup> That tendency needs to be resisted on the grounds of both ethics and effectiveness. In contexts where there are high levels of gender inequality and gender-based insecurity, and/or when your own organization has opted to make gender a priority, these are indications that it is essential to integrate a gender lens into your DNH analysis.

#### Iraq: Security, Sectarianism and Gender

The security situation in Iraq has been exacerbated by the power struggle over territorial control by the multitude of paramilitary militias, non-state armed actors formed along sectarian and political lines, the emergence of IS (Islamic State) and the ensuing security response from the Iraqi government and its allies. All people are affected, but the type and magnitude of effects often differ by gender, ethnicity, age and geographic region. One notable nationwide trend is the increase in sectarian conflict, which is evident in everyday life and in government institutions. The absence of opportunities to form a sense of citizenship, and mobilization on sectarian grounds, has led to increased conservatism as the contesting religious identities offered an alternative source to identity confirmation. This resulted in stricter gender norms. Indicative of those developments is the persistent push from conservative politicians to amend the Personal Status Law, including allowing marriage for girl children as young as nine.

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<sup>4</sup> CDA rarely prescribes what tool or process is ‘best’ for analysis, as many different options exist – and context, instead, will most often dictate which option is best fit for purpose. This guidance is simply one option for an analytical tool and process that might help to assess whether an intervention is both gender and conflict sensitive.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, Kristine. *Now is the Time: Research on Gender Justice, Conflict and Fragility in the Middle East and North Africa*. London: Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Oxfam and International Alert. 2017.

## 2. Context Analysis: Dividers and Connectors

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All contexts of conflict are characterized by two factors: Dividers and Connectors. Dividers and Connectors analysis focuses on relationships between identifiable groups of people and can supplement other forms of context analysis that practitioners might be using. It is important to situate the Dividers and Connectors analysis within a broader analysis of the conflict context.

Dividers are those factors that:

- Increase tension, divisions or capacities for war between groups of people.
- Increase suspicion, mistrust or inequality in a society.

Connectors are those factors that:

- Bring people together despite their differences
- Decrease suspicion, mistrust and inequality in a society.

Connectors are sometimes difficult to identify. Insiders don't tend to talk about them, and outsiders may think they do not exist, yet we see them in every context. Connectors are not always strong enough to overcome dividers, but this does not mean they are not important. Aid interventions will have an impact on both Dividers and Connectors.

### ***Dividers, Connectors and Gender***

When integrating a gender lens to standard Do No Harm usage, it is tempting to begin to identify Dividers and Connectors in the relationships between gender groups, for example between women and men. This line of thinking will probably produce some insights. However, this is not the best way to use the Do No Harm tool!

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### **The 6 Lessons of Do No Harm**

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1. When any intervention enters a context, it becomes part of the context ([gender-sensitive analysis may give a richer picture of the context](#)).
  2. Every context is characterized by two sets of factors: Dividers and Connectors ([dividers and connectors affect gender groups differently and are linked to gendered power relations](#)).
  3. Any intervention will interact with both Dividers and Connectors ([and with gender dynamics within the conflict context](#)).
  4. There are predictable patterns by which aid interacts with conflict. ([These patterns need to be analyzed from a gender perspective](#))
  5. The details of an intervention matter.
  6. There are always Options for adapting to improve impact. ([Changing program details can enhance inclusiveness of your programming](#))
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Purpose determines tool selection. If your purpose is to analyze gender relations, there are other tools better suited to help unpack the power dynamics involved, such as the power cube<sup>6</sup> and the matrix of oppression.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, if your purpose is to conduct a conflict sensitivity analysis that recognizes gender dynamics, then it is advisable to apply a gender lens to each step in the Do No Harm analysis process, as this guidance note describes.

Identify Dividers and Connectors as usual in the relationships among identifiable groups of people. Be sure to specify which groups are being divided or connected, and in which context. The DNH process also offers analytical categories to support unpacking the analysis of Dividers and Connectors. Prioritize if necessary to indicate relative importance. Then, conduct an additional analysis of the Dividers and Connectors as follows.

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<sup>6</sup> Institute for Development Studies. *Powercube: Understanding Power for Social Change*. Web-based resource available at: <http://www.powercube.net/an-introduction-to-power-analysis/>.

<sup>7</sup> Adams, Maurianne/Bell, Lee Ann (eds.), *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, Second Edition, Routledge, 2007

## Applying a Gender Lens to Dividers and Connectors

After identifying Dividers or Connectors in a context, ask:

1. Are gender norms related to the existence of particular Dividers or Connectors? If yes, how?
  - What roles are men, women and SGMs playing in the conflict? Or in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the conflict?
  - How do norms relating to masculinity and femininity fuel the conflict, and/or help contribute toward peace?
  - How do gender norms and behaviors shape how different types of violence are used, by whom against whom?
2. How do the Dividers and Connectors affect gender groups differently?
  - How are men, women and SGMs affected by a particular Divider (or Connector)?
  - How might a change in a particular Divider (or Connector) affect women, men, and SGMs in different ways?
  - In what ways does the effect of a particular Divider (or Connector) depend not only on gender, but also on other variables such as ethnicity, social class, and/or age? (Note: this important complex relationship of variables is called 'intersectionality.')
3. Do identity groups have different norms and perspectives when it comes to the roles and equality of women, men and SGMs? If yes, how, and in what ways?
  - Do norms around the public or economic behavior of men, women and SGMs differ across groups?
  - Do some groups view the conflict and peacemaking roles of SGMs, women and men differently than others?

### An Application Exercise – Iraq: Gendered Dividers

*Two gendered questions (above) have been inserted (in blue) below. This application exercise is meant to illustrate how a gender lens may be applied to an analysis of Dividers or Connectors in a context.*

- **How are men, women and SGMs affected by a particular Divider?** In areas around Baghdad, dividers occur in relation to internal displacement (estimated at 3.4 million people), and the process of return in the context of aggravated sectarian divisions, where militias control previously mixed areas. There have been cases reported where women without a husband were refused return, being alleged (or defamed) for being married to fighters from contesting militias.
- **How do gender norms and behaviors shape how different types of violence are used, by whom against whom?** In other areas around Baghdad, current Dividers include the violent actions of militias affiliated with religious sects. Men are likely to be affected by militia threats and property crimes, while women and SGMs have reason to fear gender-based violence. Sexual assault brings social stigma, which aggravates existing mobility and social barriers for girls, as some families ask girls to limit their movement, forego school and/or marry young to protect them.

*Some questions adapted from: Watson, Charlotte, Hannah Wright and Hesta Groenwald. Gender Analysis of Conflict Toolkit. London, UK: Saferworld, 2016, p.9.*



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## Connectors, Dividers and UNSCR in Iraq

Women's organizations across Iraq are working in consortia to promote the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The aim is to pursue full and meaningful participation of women in peace and security efforts, not only in the quantity of women participating but also in the quality of their influence. The National Action Plan (NAP) on 1325 is in place, and efforts are underway to ensure that it is customized and put into action across national ministries and within provincial governates.

Wherever possible the consortia builds upon the shared challenges faced by Iraqi women as a Connector, to help unite women of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. An NGO based in Divala Governate has been particularly successful at moving the process forward, in collaboration with a local government council despite the sectarian divide. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), women rights organizations have collaborated with governmental actors for changes in the personal status law which has been amended with regards to polygamy, legal age of marriage, and honor killing.

At the same, the consortia faces challenges relating to contextual Dividers. The fractured nature of Iraqi society is reflected in the existence of two 1325 consortia rather than one, and their efforts to cooperate are sometimes undercut by shortage of resources and competition for funding. Kvinna till Kvinna supports women's organizations active in one or the other consortia, and strategic networking activities between organizations also create platforms for coordination, e.g. on national and international advocacy. Civil society space appears to be shrinking. As experienced in many countries around the world, to limit civic space, women's organizations are targeted for their work being driven by outside agendas, as a means to create further barriers to their influence. For instance, there is mistrust directed toward Iraqi women's organizations that collaborate with INGO partners. The 1325 consortia receive periodic threats from often unidentified sources, which they interpret as pressure to give up. However, they persist in their efforts.

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### 3. Program Impact Analysis

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Standard Do No Harm usage highlights the fact that the actions that organizations take when working in a context, and the behaviors that they demonstrate, can have both positive and negative impacts on Dividers and Connectors.

When analyzing Do No Harm with a gender lens, we also see that those contextual changes resulting from an intervention may be experienced very differently by women, men and SGM. Not only that, but program interventions can also have a direct (and sometimes unanticipated) effect on gender dynamics.

When analyzing an intervention to understand if particular actions or behaviors are having unintended negative effects, it's critical to keep in mind that often the *details* of an intervention will matter most. For example, analyzing the impact of "when" an intervention takes place might point to the start time of a particular activity that exacerbates an unknown tension, increasing a Divider in the context. Adding a gender lens to this analysis enhances the understanding of these critical details. To start this analysis process, some important over-arching questions include:

- In what ways do we ensure that our services are relevant to needs and priorities of women, men, SGMs, including from an intersectional perspective?
- When our intervention affects Dividers and Connectors in the context, how are those changes perceived and experienced differently by women, men and SGM?
- Could our intervention be exacerbating gender inequalities? For example, when programs are designed, who is consulted and 'at the table' during decision-making conversations, and who is not? Do we make gender-blind assumptions about the opportunities and constraints of participants, which may in fact make it harder for women and girls to access the services we provide? Once our services are accessed, who has control over decisions and resources afterwards?
- Who are we as staff? How do our gender identities, presence and approach impact on gender dynamics?
- If our program activities include work on gender, how are we operationalizing these activities? For example, if we work with one gender identity group only – either intentionally or unintentionally – how may this affect other gender identity groups, and the dynamics between them?

## **Patterns of Action**

In Do No Harm analysis, 'Actions' refer to the ways in which aid interventions impact inter-group Dividers and Connectors through the resources that they provide. These resources may include both tangible goods and intangibles - such as capacity building, visibility, leadership opportunities, etc. – as well as the processes through which they are provided.<sup>8</sup> There are some types of impact that occur frequently, so learning about them can help practitioners to identify impact patterns in their own program. The chart below summarizes the most common Patterns of Action, reflecting both a conflict dimension and a gender dimension to each pattern.



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### **Mind the gap: Unintended effects of missing gender analysis in support to Local Councils in Syria**

Local councils in Syria initially played an important role as a connector in promoting political goals, mediating civil military tensions and, in some cases, negotiating ceasefires or access routes for service delivery. Local councils also provide essential public services, as well as humanitarian relief.

In that way, local councils can be vehicles to promote women's participation and capacity development. Given the ambitious and expansive vision of local councils to serve as the nucleus of the municipalities of a future transitional government, they function as a connector on the community and sometimes regional level. However, the percentage of women's representation in local councils is approx.. 2%. When the community is largely governed by patriarchal norms, the unintentional effect of a missing gender analysis when supporting local councils' work sets them as an exclusionary structure to women's influence and participation and affects the relevance, legitimacy and effectiveness of the local councils as a more politically representative and influential structure.

*Adapted from Bela Kapur. The Participation of Syrian Women in Political Processes 2012-2016. Literature Review, The Kvinna Till Kvinna Foundation: 2017. <https://kvinnaatillkvinna.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/syrian-women-in-political-processes-ktk.pdf>*

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<sup>8</sup> Actions can also be called Resource Transfers.

Conflict Dimension	Pattern of Impact	Gender Dimension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the resources of the agency vulnerable to theft or diversion?</li> <li>• How and why are local communities made vulnerable to theft because of their involvement with the intervention?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Theft (or Diversion)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the intervention vulnerable to corruption or diversion of resources? If so, how do gender groups influence or experience these dynamics differently?</li> <li>• How and why are gender groups made more vulnerable to theft because of their involvement with the intervention?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the intervention operating (distributing resources, hiring, partnering) along the lines of an existing conflict?</li> <li>• Who is left out? Why? How will you know?</li> <li>• What are the needs of the other communities in the context?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Distribution</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are differences in needs and priorities across women, men and SGM?</li> <li>• Is the method of distribution benefiting/affecting women, men, SGMs differently? (security, control of resources, perceived preferential treatment, etc.)</li> <li>• Who participates in decision-making processes about the details of the intervention? Who is excluded and why?</li> <li>• Is the intervention reinforcing existing gender inequalities? (This may involve distributing resources, hiring, partnering, etc.)</li> <li>• Who is left out? Why? How will you know?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What authorities, groups, institutions, or other individuals are given a higher status through their involvement with our intervention?</li> <li>• Are these the appropriate authorities (truly representative), groups, institutions, or individuals with which to work?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Legitimization</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the way the intervention is carried out de-/legitimize existing gender power imbalances/gender inequalities?</li> <li>• How is the intervention affecting the status or perception of status of women, men and SGM? (This may be based on access to resources and decision makers, control of resources, responsibilities, roles, mobility, etc.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the intervention overwhelm, undermine, or replace functioning systems and structures in the context (formal and informal)?</li> <li>• Does the intervention allow the government to divest from development/relief and therefore invest (energy/funds/time) in continuing conflict?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Substitution</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the intervention substituted for the responsibilities of government and other duty-bearers, freeing them up to pursue conflict? If so, how does this substitution affect gender groups differently?</li> <li>• How has the intervention substituted or undermined the role of governmental actors or other duty-bearers in protecting women and SGM?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does/will the intervention affect the prices of goods and services—immediately or longer term—in the context? (raising/lowering prices)</li> <li>• Do these impacts affect certain groups more than others?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Market Effects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the intervention affect the roles of specific gender groups in relation to economic activities and opportunities—immediately or longer term—in the context?</li> <li>• If economic opportunities are being created by the program for one gender group, how does this affect economic opportunities for others—immediately and longer term?</li> </ul>



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## Negative Distribution Effects When Viewed Through a Gender Lens

In Nepal after earthquakes in April and May, 2015, the country's population experienced diverse effects, especially in receiving aid. A 2015 International Alert report analyzed the specific gendered outcomes of the disaster response, explaining that many women experienced challenges when receiving resources from disaster response programs. The report highlighted that 26% of houses damaged in the earthquake were headed by female Nepalese citizens - yet the gender norm in Nepal is traditionally that men act as heads of household. This meant, when aid was distributed, and women showed up, there was often discrimination - e.g., in the form of being turned away.

What's more, the report pointed out that a gender norm for many women in the Nepalese context is that of 'caretaker' for children - forcing many women heads of household to make a difficult choice when aid was being distributed. Receive aid, or stay and care for children at home? In some of these cases women were unable to leave their homes and did not receive aid. Disaster response programs were an immediate need after the earthquake, yet some interventions (as seen through a gendered DNH lens) had a negative Distribution Effect - meaning resources were unintentionally benefiting one group over another and programs were less effective than they might have been. While not every organization can mitigate all unintended negative effects, analyzing them accurately contributes to more effective, holistic response during program planning.

*"Building Back Better or Restoring Inequalities?: Gender and conflict sensitivity In the response to Nepal's 2015 earthquakes," Jana Naujoks, International Alert, April 2016.*

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## Patterns of Behavior

'Behaviors' refer to the ways in which aid interventions impact inter-group Dividers and Connectors through the behavior of their staff and volunteers. Every action that a staff member takes, and every sentence that they say, communicates a message about who and what they value.<sup>9</sup> Both outsiders and insiders have cultural worldviews, personal mindsets and life experiences which influence their actions in both conscious and unconscious ways. These include gender norms, among other aspects.

In a context of conflict, what becomes problematic is that certain behavioral messages can reinforce "the modes and moods of warfare"<sup>10</sup> – including systematic discrimination against different identity and gender groups. These messages can be communicated via the individual conduct of staff and volunteers, internal organizational decisions/policies, and external organizational publicity.

There are some types of behavioral impacts that occur frequently, so learning about them can help practitioners to identify impact patterns in their own program. The chart below summarizes the most common Patterns of Behavior in relation to RAFT, an easy-to-remember acronym for the key principles of Respect, Accountability, Fairness and Transparency. The black font indicates standard DNH, while the blue font indicates integration of gender dimensions.

### Patterns of Behavior – Conflict and Gender Dimensions

Negative Patterns of Behavior		Positive Patterns of Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Competition</li> <li>▪ Perceived superiority or inferiority</li> <li>▪ Suspicion</li> <li>▪ Anger and Aggression (Belligerence)</li> <li>▪ Indifference</li> </ul>	<b>Respect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperation and Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Interdependence and partnership</li> <li>▪ Trust</li> <li>▪ Calm</li> <li>▪ Sensitivity to local concerns of women, men and SGMs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Claiming Powerlessness</li> <li>▪ Impunity</li> <li>▪ Arms, Power, Dominance</li> <li>▪ Threats and intimidation</li> <li>▪ Silence of the majority</li> </ul>	<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Taking Positive Action</li> <li>▪ Responsibility</li> <li>▪ Rule of Law, Nonviolence, no tolerance for harassment</li> <li>▪ Physically and emotionally safe environment for collaboration</li> <li>▪ Majority defends minority rights</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Behaviors can also be called Implicit Ethical Messages.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, Mary B. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War*. Boulder: Rienner, 1999.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different Values for Different Lives</li> <li>▪ Ignoring Rules</li> <li>▪ Unfairness</li> <li>▪ Opportunities and rewards based on gender</li> <li>▪ Exclusion of family care-givers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fairness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognized Value of every individual</li> <li>▪ Following Rules</li> <li>▪ Fairness</li> <li>▪ Agency of gender groups equally recognized</li> <li>▪ Opportunities based on needs for equal access</li> <li>▪ Rewards based on capacities</li> <li>▪ Family-friendly arrangements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Closed (to some, e.g. only one gender group represented)</li> <li>▪ Decision making process unknown</li> <li>▪ Decisions made behind closed doors</li> <li>▪ Hide information</li> <li>▪ Unspoken barriers to advancement</li> </ul> <p>Lack of transparency contributes to all above behaviors</p>	<p><b>Transparency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open (to all, with proactive measures to ensure equal participation)</li> <li>▪ Decision making process shared</li> <li>▪ Decisions made in open fora</li> <li>▪ Share information</li> <li>▪ Rules of advancement are clear to all</li> </ul> <p>Transparency contributes to all above behaviors</p>



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## When the Status Quo is Challenged & Threats Increase

Organizations that work for women's empowerment often encounter hostility, threats and even violence in response to their efforts. When the status quo of gender dynamics is challenged, female program participants may face increased repression in homes and/or in public spaces. Similarly, men and boys participating in the transformation of negative gender norms may also be exposed to threats. Women who advocate for the defense of women's rights in conflict settings may also be targeted for retaliation, including gender-based violence, as a means of discouraging such civic engagement. When this happens, 'do no harm' is often mentioned to highlight the principle that interventions should not expose women to unnecessary risks.

In general, practitioners who are committed to both empowerment and Do No Harm sometimes feel confused: Are women's empowerment - and other approaches that emphasize human rights and challenge existing power structures - incompatible with conflict sensitivity?

Of course not. Do No Harm does not mean 'do not promote justice.' In fact, where injustices and rights violations exist, they should be considered Dividers. Where they are carried out frequently and with impunity, they need to be challenged. Do No Harm is not a proscriptive tool, so it will never tell practitioners what and when to challenge – but once practitioners have decided, DNH can inform planning in ways that help make the work more effective and safe.

The analysis of Dividers can help identify the risks of retaliation, so that those risks can be mitigated. Program plans can be modified to avoid *unnecessary* confrontation with the powerful - and to support women to better protect themselves in cases when confronting the powerful is deemed *necessary*. Activists who align their own behaviors with RAFT (Respect, Accountability, Fairness and Transparency) can set a high ethical standard that reduces tensions. Many women's empowerment initiatives actively mitigate backlash and resistance through engaging, educating and mobilizing men and boys, thereby supporting the effectiveness of the work and reducing tensions.

In some cases, it is also possible to build on shared long-standing behavioral norms (Connectors), to bring people together *across the lines of conflict* to promote women's empowerment. For example, women's organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina began championing alliances around the challenges faced by all women, independent of their ethno-national identity, following the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1996. "There was a strong need and desire to meet with people who had been on the other side – to hear about their situation, exchange information and discuss common problems. It was clear that regardless of nationality or religion, women faced the same type of problems, i.e. exclusion from the power structures of society, violence, discrimination, poverty, trauma etc. and they could achieve a lot more if they worked together."<sup>11</sup> Activities built on this Connector have included bridge-building initiatives in which women's organisations partnered to create conditions for safe return of displaced persons. As trust has built over the years through such joint engagement, women's organisations are now engaging together in advocacy for more gender-sensitive transitional justice and constitutional reform processes.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Thomasson, Ristin. To make room for changes: Peace strategies from women's organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Johanneshov: Kvinna till Kvinna, 2006, p.15.

<sup>12</sup> Adapted in part from: Wallace, Marshall. Guidance Note: Human Rights and Do No Harm. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2013.

## 4. Options Generation and Program Re-Design

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There are many reasons to redesign a program. Conflict sensitivity redesigns are meant to address intergroup dynamics and should – as argued in this guidance note – account for gender dynamics in doing so. Even with strong planning, unanticipated negative impacts will arise. When they do, it will be your job to identify practical real-time options for achieving the same program goals without having an unidentified negative impact and, where possible, enhancing the positive impacts. It might be a change so seemingly insignificant that you don't even consider tracking its impact. It's worth remembering that impacts often arise from the details of, rather than the entirety of, a program.

There is no prescription for which program adaptations will work best in your context. You must use what you know about the context, what you know about your potential and actual impacts, and your team's joint creativity. Be sure to root your thinking in the local context, because what works in one place won't necessarily work everywhere. The best way to do this is to collaborate with local women, men, SGMs who know their own context much better than outsiders, and they usually have a good sense of what will work and what won't.

To identify Options in a gender-sensitive way, consider integrating the gender lens to identify Options as follows:

1. ***Monitor the context and prioritize Dividers and Connectors, including their gender aspects.*** Revisit to monitor them as changes occur, and adjust prioritization as needed. If your initial gender analysis was weak or implicit, use the review to enhance it. A richer analysis may lead you to discover new unintended negative effects of your program.

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### Program Options in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) has been relatively secure in recent years, so it has drawn large numbers of diverse displaced people fleeing violence in other regions. Some ethnic tensions have arisen as host communities tap limited resources in support of the newcomers. A women's rights NGO in KRI worked primarily with displaced women in 2015 and 2016, providing hygiene kits, legal assistance and women-safe spaces. However, after observing that ethnic tensions were rising, the NGO team realized that an exclusive focus on IDP women's needs could worsen that Divider. In 2017, the NGO developed an Option to expand their targeting, which was supported by Kvinna Till Kvinna as one of their donors. The project now covers both displaced persons and host communities, focusing on vulnerable women among the Yazidis, Iraqi Kurds, Iraqi Arabs, Syrian Kurds, Syrian Arabs, and others. The organization also continues to provide gender awareness seminars for men and boys, to engage them in supporting women's rights.

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2. ***Identify the Patterns of Impact.*** If a change is observed in the priority or intensity of a Divider or Connector, ask yourself “Why? Which Patterns of Impact caused that change? Which program detail is that pattern linked to?” To add a gender lens, be sure to identify negative impacts in relation to unintendedly reinforcing gendered power difference and gender-based discrimination through your programming. You may for instance ask whether there are gendered Distribution Effects in your program (when “the method of distribution is benefiting/affecting women, men, SGMs differently – e.g., security, control of resources, perceived preferential treatment, etc.”). If the impact is negative, you will need to identify options for change.
3. ***Identify Options to Change the Pattern of Impact.*** Look for program details that can be adapted to improve impact e.g. through changing the timing of your activities to avoid excluding certain groups, including women (family-friendly arrangements). Where you have observed negative patterns of Actions or Behaviors, explore the possibility of using the corresponding positive patterns instead. Do not attempt to create new Connectors, particularly if you are an outsider, because the creation of meaningful Connectors is quite difficult to do. Instead, identify and support those Connectors that already exist.

After identifying potential Options, review again for unintended effects, including gender effects.

- Does the proposed option have potential to unintentionally increase other Dividers, or undermine other Connectors? If yes, how could this unintended negative impact be mitigated?
- Consider further the gendered aspects of those Dividers and Connectors. How might the newly adapted elements of the program interact with gender and power dynamics? Could power imbalances between gender groups be unintentionally worsened, and if so how? How could this unintended negative impact be mitigated?

Getting in the habit of asking these review questions whenever a program is adapted will ensure that any program changes are not only conflict sensitive, but gender sensitive as well. This will contribute to the inclusiveness of your programming and increase the possibility of making a positive contribution towards greater gender equality.

## 5. Gender Sensitivity for DNH Trainers and Facilitators

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A DNH workshop or field assessment (a real-world application of how to conduct a Do No Harm analysis) is itself an intervention, and so must be done in a conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive manner. Workshops and field assessments are distinct activities, yet many of the gender-sensitivity concerns are common to both. This section highlights gender-sensitivity tips for both DNH workshop trainers and field assessment facilitators.

### When planning the event:

- Develop an awareness of the gender dynamics of the cultural and organizational context, and how they might affect the DNH process. What are the gender and cultural dynamics that may arise during the process? What are the norms regarding contact between the sexes?
- Ensure that the timing, location and logistics of events allows women, men and SGMs to participate as appropriate. Are child-care arrangements needed? Does the local culture imply any security requirements for female participants? What are the lodging needs of SGM and female participants?
- Consider team identity. Ensure that you have a mixed-gender training or facilitation team. Having at least one team member who comes from the local context can help provide insider knowledge and smooth relationships.
- Think in advance about how your training/facilitation team will respond to strong emotions if they arise, or how you will handle sensitive information (e.g. stories of trauma or abuse).

### When preparing to train or facilitate:

- Develop and use learning materials that avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes through content, images and examples. Ensure that women, men and SGM are reflected equally. Use examples that demonstrate how gender is inter-related with other aspects of identity, including ethnicity, social class, etc. ('intersectionality').
- Design a process that includes diverse techniques and formats, so that all participants can find a comfortable way to express themselves. If people feel inhibited about speaking in mixed-gender groups, then make selective use of single-gender breakout groups or focus groups.
- Integrate the perspectives of women, men, and SGMs into the analysis, by seeking out the relevant people, and by asking gender-specific questions where appropriate. Seek balance in representation and voice. Keep in mind that hard-to-reach people often have unique and important perspectives.
- Consider using experiential learning exercises to help training participants discover gender dynamics in the group at hand and how it affects the workshop process. Use this experience to reflect on the linkages between DNH and gender.

- Discuss with participants the intended use of any data that is recorded (in notebooks, audio, video, photos, etc.). Are there any gender-specific concerns that affect people's dignity and security? Be sure to seek fully informed agreement and consent.
- Think about how to use inclusive language. This will differ depending on what language(s) you are using. For example, in English, you might take care with pronouns, avoiding the exclusive use of "he," and instead say "he," "she" and "they."
- Do not assume that all women are gender-aware, or that all men are gender-insensitive. All people are individuals, and their perspectives may vary widely. The mere inclusion of diverse gender groups in its own right does not ensure gender awareness.

**When following up the event: :**

- Involve local women, men and SGMs in data analysis wherever possible. Ensure that conclusions are fully validated by gender-diverse stakeholders.
- Close the loop by sharing the training or assessment outputs with local stakeholders – and be sure that you communicate in a way that is equally accessible to women, men and SGMs.

### **Training Exercise: Power Walk**

The Power Walk is used to raise awareness of social categories such as gender, ethnicity, etc. that exist in society.

Give each participant a piece of paper with the description of a character from a typical conflict or post-conflict situation (e.g. "female, displaced, from an indigenous group;" or "male, mediator, from abroad").

Tell the participants to stand in one line. This line represents Article One from the UN Declaration on Human Rights: 'All are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' Then start to read out questions, such as 'Do you have enough resources to take care for your family and yourself?' or 'Do you have access to the persons at the peace negotiating table?,' etc. After each question, each participant must decide, depending on the character on their paper, whether the questions can be answered with 'yes,' 'no' or 'not sure.' Those who can answer 'yes' take one step forward. Those who answer 'no' take one step backwards. Those who cannot answer the question ('not sure') stay where they are.

After you have read out all the questions, ask the participants to stay where they are for a moment. It is important at this point to indicate where the starting line was.

Now it is time for you to debrief the exercise. Here are some ways to do that, but you can expand the activity by developing your own questions: Ask the people at the front who they are, then ask the people at the back who they are. Ask why they are in the front or back. Ask how the combination of different identity variables (gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, etc.) made a difference in their positioning. Ask those at the back how they felt when they saw the others moving forward. Discuss what the outcome of the Power Walk means for the context in which the participants work.

**Material:** Paper with at least 15 questions, about 20 pieces of paper with different characters.

**Time:** 40 minutes.

*Adapted slightly from: Reimann, Cordula. Trainer Manual: Mainstreaming Gender into Peacebuilding Trainings. ZIF and GIZ, p. 48-49. The exercise was previously adapted from UNSSC and GIZ.*

## Resources for Further Reading

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<http://www.equalpowerlastingpeace.org/resource/to-make-room-for-changes-peace-strategies-from-women-organisations-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>

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Wright, Hannah. *Masculinities, Conflict and Peacebuilding: Perspectives on Men through a Gender Lens*. London: Saferworld, 2014.

### **On Do No Harm**

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