

# CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

## AGE, GENDER, DIVERSITY

### This section covers:

- What an AGD approach is
- CCCM Cluster responsibilities
- Examples and guidance for age, gender, diversity, and disability inclusion

## AN AGD APPROACH<sup>1</sup>

### CONSIDERATIONS

All individuals have a unique profile and capacities. In humanitarian response, it is important to take these differences into account – both as they may result in specific protection risks, and because they can often be leveraged to improve the situation of individuals and communities.

Humanitarian actors should seek to ensure that all individuals in affected communities have access to their rights, equal to others. By analysing Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) as interlinked personal *and* contextual characteristics, we can understand better the protection risks and capacities of individuals and communities – and address and support these more effectively.

An AGD approach is not an “add on”, but a **core element of fair and equal humanitarian assistance**.

AGE	GENDER
<p>Refers to the different stages in a person’s life. It is important to be aware of where people are in their life cycle as their capacities and needs change.</p> <p>Different cultures can attribute different roles, responsibilities and constraints to childhood, youth, adulthood, or older age, improving or decreasing a person’s capacity to exercise their rights. Risks also affect a person differently depending on age.</p>	<p>Refers to socially constructed roles for women, men, girls, and boys. Gender roles are learned, changeable over time, and variable within and between cultures.</p> <p>Gender often defines the duties, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities, and privileges of a person in any context. Gender equality refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities and opportunities, and implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of each gender are respected.</p>
DIVERSITY	
<p>Refers to ethnic background, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, health, social status, cultural perspectives, and other personal characteristics. These characteristics vary from person to person, and differences must be recognized, understood, and valued by humanitarian actors.</p> <p>People with disabilities include individuals with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments. When these impairments interact with various barriers, this can limit their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.</p>	

Source: Global Protection Cluster [https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age\\_gender\\_diversity](https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age_gender_diversity)

<sup>1</sup> Global Protection Cluster, AGD, [https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age\\_gender\\_diversity](https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age_gender_diversity)

## BARRIERS TO INCLUSION<sup>2</sup>

There are key attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers to inclusion of gender, age, and diverse characteristics in humanitarian action, such as:

- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Negative attitudes and discrimination on one hand, or over-protection on the other hand, can be caused by a misconception of gender, disability or older age, among others.

*For example, people in the community might believe that a woman, older person, or a person with disabilities cannot participate in the response due to pre-existing biases or misconceptions regarding their capacity. Parents might hide a child with disabilities at home because they think that disability is a source of shame. Factors such as disability, age and gender are not isolated: the intersection between them can create multiple forms of discrimination.*

- **Environmental Barriers:** Barriers include physical barriers to accessing the built environment or services, and barriers to information and communication.

*For example, if only one format is used to provide information on humanitarian services, instead of different formats, such as tactile signing, sign language, audio, or images, this could be a barrier. Similar barriers could apply in contexts where diverse linguistic groups coexist, and information is disseminated only in one language. Information barriers may be less visible than physical barriers, but it is important to detect them, as they can exclude large groups of people.*

- **Institutional Barriers:** Laws, policies, and procedures (including those of humanitarian organizations) can lead to either intended or unintended discrimination against certain groups.

*These may separate women, older people, and persons with disabilities from many aspects of community life, such as employment, political participation, education and/or social services.*

## CLUSTER RESPONSIBILITIES

A CCCM Cluster should:

- ✓ **Seek to understand differing risks and capacities of individuals from the affected population, based on their age, gender, and diversity characteristics.** Including in:
  - Needs assessments – through disaggregation of data by sex, age and disability at a minimum.
  - Needs analysis – including the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO).
- ✓ **Include age, gender, and diversity analysis in CCCM strategic planning.** Including in:
  - CCCM Response Strategy.
  - Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).
- ✓ **Promote AGD approaches in CCCM activities delivery and undertake collaborative work with specialized stakeholders and local organizations to support specific groups.** For example:
  - Promoting AGD approaches in community engagement.
  - In coordination with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, identify barriers faced by persons with different impairments but also enablers to their inclusion in displacement sites and draft guidance or action plans for CCCM actors.
  - Approach Child Protection actors to ensure the views and specific needs of children – including adolescents, are taken into consideration in the response.

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<sup>2</sup> Global Protection Cluster, AGD, [https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age\\_gender\\_diversity](https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/age_gender_diversity)

Use existing expertise and reach out to specialist organizations in the response to support these aims. Gender Advisors often work with inter-cluster coordination groups to support AGD analysis in the HNO and HRP. Other clusters, e.g. Protection Cluster and GBV Sub-Cluster, might give guidance and share resources.

Thinking more broadly can help move AGD analysis from a paper-based exercise to a practical approach. For example, CCCM actors might have good practice approaches to share with other Cluster members. Specialist organizations might provide resources, examples, or even trainings for humanitarian partners. Map and reach out to local and national organizations who work with specific groups – e.g. women’s organizations, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) – who are willing to share their local expertise, and support their inclusion in Cluster meetings, activities, and access to humanitarian funding.

## **GUIDANCE AND EXAMPLES**

### **AGE**

Age can improve or decrease a person’s capacity to exercise their rights. Risks affect a person differently depending on age, and the context they are in. In different contexts, diverse roles, responsibilities and constraints may be attributed to certain ages, impacting the individual’s life and leading to situations of exploitation or discrimination. For example, children may be asked to provide financial support to their families, and older persons may not be engaged in employment opportunities while they were previously productive contributors in their societies.

**Children:** In some humanitarian response CCCM practitioners engage in, over 50% of the displaced population are children. It is essential that CCCM responders take into consideration their specific needs, as well as the risks they may face during displacement – e.g. risks of violence, abuse and neglect, dangers and injuries. Child Protection concerns must be mainstreamed and integrated into CCCM strategies, activities and planning throughout the response. CCCM partners should engage with Child Protection actors to ensure activities and services are accessible to children and appropriate to their development stage – e.g. 0 to 5, 5 to 12, 13 to 17 years old. Participation of children should be fostered in the response, and two-way communication systems put in place. In addition, child safeguarding measures among partners should be effective to ensure a Do No Harm approach. See [Toolkit Section 9.4 Child Protection](#) for more recommendations.

**Older persons:** Today, about 12.5% of the world’s population is aged 60 or more, and the population of older persons is growing by 2% each year – considerably faster than the population as a whole. The concept of old age itself must be understood in broad terms. In many countries and cultures, being considered old is not necessarily a matter of age, but it is rather linked to circumstances such as being a grandparent, or showing physical signs such as white hair. In many emergency-affected contexts where people live in hardship, many of the conditions usually associated with older age, such as disability and chronic disease, are present at earlier ages. As such, while the UN definition of old age is those aged 60 years and above, using a cut-off point of 50 years and over may be more appropriate in many contexts where humanitarian crises occur. Data disaggregation will be critical to understand the percentage of older people in a given context (using Sphere recommended age groups of 60-69, 70-79, and 80+ years), and needs assessments can help understand their specific requirements – e.g. in terms of access to services, including health services, social and economic needs, as well as skills and capacities and potential discrimination they face.

Toolkit resources:

- ADCAP (2018) [Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for older people and people with disabilities](#)
- HelpAge (2012) [Older people in emergencies: Identifying and reducing risks](#)
- HelpAge (2012) [Ensuring inclusion of older people in initial emergency needs assessments](#)
- See [Toolkit Section 9.4 Child protection](#) for resources on child inclusion

## GENDER

Gender influences different roles, responsibilities, and degrees of power in society. These can contribute to unequal access and barriers to protection, assistance, and services – for women and girls, and also for men and boys. The way in which sites are managed and coordinated during humanitarian crises affects women, girls, men, and boys differently.

*“Women and girls take on important roles in their communities and families and contribute in various ways to strengthening protection and solutions. However, negative gender roles ascribed to them often ensure that they face specific, severe, and wide-spread barriers to accessing their rights, including fewer opportunities and resources, lower socio-economic status, less power and influence, numerous forms of discrimination, and heightened protection risks, including of SGBV (sexual and gender-based violence).*

*Men and boys can be agents of change for rights promotion, including increasing gender equality and preventing SGBV. Displacement creates protection risks for men and boys, including trafficking, forced recruitment, and certain forms of violence, including SGBV.”<sup>3</sup>*

A CCCM Cluster should promote gender-sensitive CCCM programming that integrates gender perspectives into all aspects of CCCM policies and programmes and management of displacement sites. This might include supporting capacity-building and training for staff, promoting consideration of gender in all site management activities (including physical access to services, safety in sites, GBV prevention and risk mitigation, access to information and feedback mechanisms), and promoting equal participation in site governance and committees. See [Toolkit Section 9.3 Gender-Based Violence](#) for information and guidance on GBV.

A CCCM Cluster should also ensure a gender-sensitive approach in its own work, including in needs assessment and analysis and strategic planning (see [Toolkit Section 5. HPC](#) for tools to support gender analysis in HNO and HRP), and in monitoring of the response. Advocacy and technical support is also an important aspect: consider collaboration opportunities with Cluster partners and technical experts and gender-focused organizations in the response to provide training, resources, and technical guidance for CCCM teams.

### Toolkit resources:

- Example [Cluster Minimum Gender Requirements, Nigeria S-NFI/CCCM Cluster 2017](#)
- [Example CCCM Rapid Gender Analysis, Somalia CCCM Cluster 2022](#)
- IASC (2018) [Gender Handbook – CCCM Chapter](#)
- [Tipsheet on Gender with Age Marker for HNO & HRP](#), IASC in [Toolkit Section 5. HPC](#)
- [Women’s participation in displacement toolkit](#)
- See [Toolkit Section 9.3 Gender-Based Violence](#)

## DIVERSITY

Diversity refers to ethnic background, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabilities, health, social status, cultural perspectives, and other personal characteristics that vary from person to person.

*“People belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, or indigenous groups often experience discrimination and marginalization. They are frequently excluded from participation and encounter obstacles to expressing their identity, factors which are compounded in displacement. They are likely to be affected both by the immediate events leading to their displacement and by the long-term legacy of discrimination.*

*Persons who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and other diverse identities (LGBTIQ+) face complex challenges, threats, and barriers, and are often exposed to discrimination, abuse, prejudice,*

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<sup>3</sup> UNHCR (2018) *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity* p.19

*and violence due to their sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity. This is often severely compounded in situations of displacement.”<sup>4</sup>*

These differences must be recognized and respected by CCCM actors, and their impacts on people’s participation, needs, access to services, and wellbeing understood and addressed in CCCM implementation.

**See guidance including:**

- [Working with LGBTI+ persons in forced displacement](#), UNHCR 2011 for a short introduction
- [Working with LGBTI+ persons in forced displacement](#), UNHCR 2021 for more in-depth explanation, available online in English, French, Spanish, Russian

**DISABILITIES**

Persons with disabilities include women, men, girls and boys with long-term physical, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Persons with disabilities tend to be disproportionately affected during crises. They may face greater difficulties in accessing humanitarian services, engaging in participation mechanisms, and being involved in decision-making mechanisms. They often remain invisible in the responses, due to several barriers: attitudinal barriers due to stigma and discrimination, physical and communication barriers, and misconception over capacities and skills. For a humanitarian response to be effective, everyone must be included – this includes persons with disabilities, who represent more than 15% of the population globally.

CCCM practitioners can contribute to mitigating the barriers persons with disabilities face and support their inclusion in the response by fostering partnerships with their representative organizations, raising awareness on their rights and building capacities of CCCM partners, removing physical barriers and improving accessibility of services, and fostering their meaningful participation in the response.

**Case Studies:**

- [CCCM Case Studies 2021-22 Chapter 2 – Inclusion of persons with disabilities](#) examples from CCCM practitioners from Somalia, Mozambique, Bangladesh

**Toolkit resources:**

- Disability Inclusion Checklist, from the [Minimum Standards for Camp Management](#)
- IOM (2023) [Disability Inclusion in CCCM Toolbox](#)
- Example ToR for Taskforce on Persons with Disabilities, North-West Syria
- Example Cluster Action Plan on Disability Inclusion – CCCM Cluster Somalia
- Age and Disability Consortium (2018) [Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for older people and people with disabilities](#). Available in multiple languages
- Tip sheet for Disability Inclusion in HNO/HRPs, CCCM see [Toolkit Section 5. HPC](#)
- Tip Sheet (1-pager) for Integrating GBV RM & Disability Inclusion in HNOs & HRPs See [Toolkit Section 5. HPC](#)
- DFID (2019) [Guidance on Strengthening Disability Inclusion in HRPs](#), see [Toolkit Section 5. HPC](#)
- IASC (2019) [IASC Guidelines for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action](#) – Chapter 11 on CCCM. Available in multiple languages and accessible formats

**RELATED RESOURCES**

Title	Type	Language	Date
<a href="#">IASC Gender Handbook – CCCM Chapter</a>	Guidance	English	2018
<a href="#">Example CCCM Rapid Gender Analysis, Somalia CCCM Cluster</a>	Example	English	2022

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR (2018) *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity* p.19

<a href="#">Example Cluster Minimum Gender Requirements, Nigeria S-NFI/CCCM Cluster</a>	Example	English	2017
<a href="#">Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for older people and people with disabilities, Age and Disability Consortium</a>	Standards	Multiple Languages	2018
<a href="#">Disability Inclusion Checklist, Minimum Standards for Camp Management</a>	Guidance	English	2021
<a href="#">IOM, Disability Inclusion in CCCM Toolbox</a>	Guidance	English	2023
<a href="#">Example ToR for Taskforce on Persons with Disabilities, North-West Syria CCCM Cluster</a>	Example	English	
<a href="#">Example Action Plan for disability inclusion, Somalia CCCM Cluster</a>	Example	English	2022

## References & further reading

- [Global Protection Cluster](#)
- [Women in Displacement Toolkit](#) — for CCCM actors to enhance women and girls' participation in decision-making and governance structures to improve their sense of safety and to mitigate the risks to GBV
- IASC [Accountability and Inclusion Resources](#)
- IASC (2019) *IASC Guidelines for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action – Chapter 11 on CCCM* Available online in multiple languages and accessible formats:
- UNHCR (2011) [Working with LGBTI+ persons in forced displacement](#) for a short introduction
- UNHCR (2021) [Working with LGBTI+ persons in forced displacement](#) for more in-depth explanation, available in English, French, Spanish, Russian
- UNHCR (2019) [Need to Know Guidance: Working with Persons with Disabilities in Forced Displacement](#), available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish.
- UNHCR (2021) [Working with Older Persons in Forced Displacement](#), available in English, French, Spanish and Russian.