



Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis (CLARA)

Overview: Guidance and Tools for Improved Programming

Promoting safe livelihoods for refugees is a cornerstone of protection, including GBV risk mitigation, which starts with gender risk analysis.

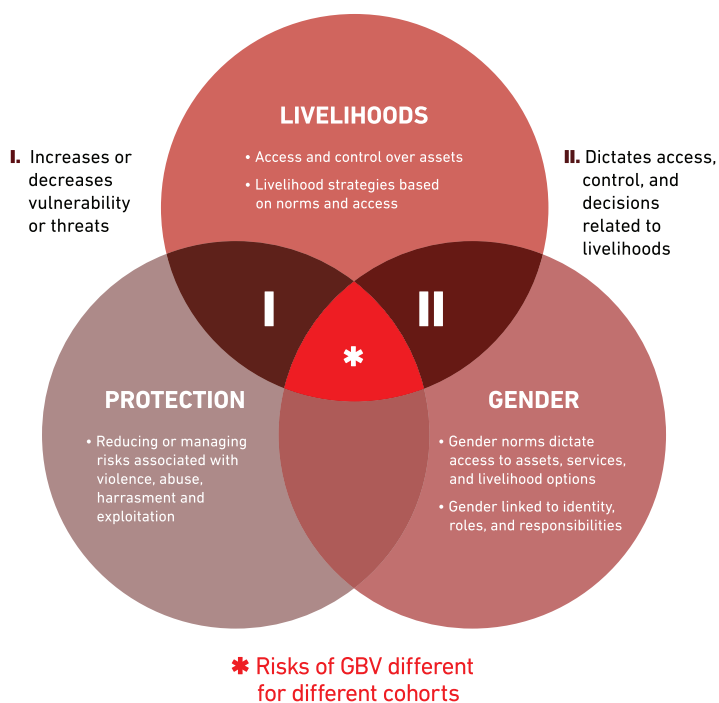
During emergencies, individuals draw on their assets (human, financial, social and physical) to navigate a complex landscape of changing power dynamics, unequal access to resources and information, and threats of violence and displacement. Assets in emergency contexts are a double-edged sword: they can help people overcome crises but can also quickly turn into liabilities, increasing vulnerability to risks including gender-based violence (GBV).

When effective, livelihood programs can seed longer-term recovery while saving lives. However, humanitarian practitioners can unintentionally contribute to increased exposure to dangers due to poor response planning; the urgency to “do something” can compromise the imperative to “do no harm.” It is critical that from the very early days of an emergency, gender dynamics and risks, including GBV, are understood and measures taken to reduce vulnerability to threats for women, girls, boys, and men.

With funding from the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) conducted a two-year action research project (2014-2016) on safer, gender-sensitive livelihoods programs in emergencies. **WRC found that gender risk analysis is a critical gap in livelihoods interventions.** Drawing upon these findings, WRC developed the Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis (CLARA), an operational approach that captures risks associated with livelihoods, including GBV, as well as potential risks arising from programs in response to crisis. CLARA can inform program design, monitor implementation, and capture outcomes.

The CLARA guidance and tools are designed for field-

level livelihood practitioners engaged in emergency and early recovery interventions. These resources were piloted in Iraq, Nigeria, and South Sudan, and are designed to be modular and adapted to context.



The Gender, Protection, and Livelihoods Link

Today more than two-thirds of refugees are living in cities where they face significant risks as they engage in livelihoods, including exploitation, discrimination and various forms of GBV. How individuals employ their assets as livelihood strategies is a decision-making process based on access and control—all of which are dictated by gender roles and norms.

Risks and vulnerabilities are at the core of protection-focused assessments, but are often not considered when conducting livelihoods assessments (focus on risks is on

Gender risk analysis is the identification of risks faced by cohorts with respect to gender relations and identities, which indicates specific risks and informs targeting actions.

potential market distortions). Similarly, gender analysis of livelihoods is often omitted, or if conducted is not integrated with protection analysis.

The humanitarian protection mandate is to reduce vulnerability to risks faced by crisis-affected communities by increasing their capacities to meet their basic needs, build resilience and achieve self-reliance. Livelihoods programs that seek to reduce economic vulnerability and increase wealth may do so at the expense of the security of different types of individuals if gender norms, vulnerabilities, and potential risks are not considered and mitigated.

Livelihoods are the capabilities, assets and strategies people use to meet basic needs and—in crises—to survive.

Summary Findings

- There are no incentives by donors, agencies, and organizations, to ensure gender risk analysis in livelihoods programming in emergencies.
- GBV risk analysis is not institutionalized in operational activities.
- There is a lack of targeted tools designed explicitly to capture risks including increased exposure of GBV for women, girls, boys, and men.
- There are mechanisms and activities, such as secondary data analysis, community mobilization, and existing risk analysis, that all organizations practice, which can be expanded to include a gendered risk analysis.

Summary Recommendations

- **Create demand for gender and risk-sensitive livelihoods programming.** Start with policies (donor, agency, and organization) that articulate safer livelihoods programming as a priority and institutionalize them into practice.
- **Work directly with affected communities to identify risks** associated with participation in livelihood and economic recovery programs and how to best mitigate those risks.
- **Deepen and expand on existing guidance, tools, and practices.** Adaptations and enhancements to existing tools should explicitly focus on identifying and mitigating risks, including GBV.
- **Approach risk analyses as an ongoing responsibility.** Situations change over time, and different risks must be assessed from assessment through implementation and post-program evaluation. This phased approach can start with a quick initial assessment that leads to more nuanced data collection activities.

CLARA Resources (available online)

Guidance in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#)

Tools in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#), [Editable \(English\)](#)

Reports:

- [*A Double-edged Sword: Livelihoods in Emergencies*](#)
- [*CLARA: Designing safer livelihoods programs in Iraq*](#)

Case Study: [*Adolescent Girls & Safer Livelihoods: Getting It Right in South Sudan*](#)

Webinars

- [*Foundations of Strength: Gender, Protection & Livelihoods*](#)
- [*Girls & Safer Livelihoods: Getting It Right from the Start*](#)

The Women's Refugee Commission works to improve the lives and protect the rights of women, children, and youth displaced by conflict and crisis. We research their needs, identify solutions, and advocate for programs and policies to strengthen their resilience and drive change in humanitarian practice.

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