

## A WAY FORWARD: Landscaping Report on Integrated Gender-Based Violence and Economic Recovery Programming

### 1 BACKGROUND

For forcibly displaced women around the world, access to and control over sustainable sources of income remain critically low. In approximately half of the countries that host displaced people, women are not allowed to work as labor market regulations and social norms block their entry. In these settings women are often forced to seek employment in the informal economy, risking exploitation, discrimination, and other abuses to provide for themselves and their families. In these settings, only 6 to 40 percent of displaced women are employed, which is consistently lower than employment rates for both displaced men and non-displaced women.

Displacement also increases risk of and exposure to gender-based violence (GBV). GBV disproportionately impacts women and girls in these settings, and extends to other and intersecting marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities or individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

Psychological trauma, disability, gender norms, legal status, and stigma about being a survivor of GBV may inhibit survivors from accessing safe, decent work or entrepreneurship and becoming economically self-reliant. These factors can push survivors to remain in abusive or vulnerable situations or to engage in risky coping behaviors.

Although GBV is highly prevalent in humanitarian settings, there are critical evidence gaps about how integrating GBV prevention, mitigation, and response in economic recovery programming helps survivors meet their long-term recovery needs.

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have partnered to generate the program "Advancing Economic Empowerment of GBV Survivors in Humanitarian Settings through Evidence and Localized Action for Gender-Transformative Change."<sup>1</sup> This program aims to address the evidence gaps and support humanitarian service providers to implement integrated GBV-economic recovery program models that center collaborations with local organizations and address gender inequality.

WRC completed a global landscaping report to identify existing evidence and practices that will be the foundation for the program in four displacement contexts—Jordan, Lebanon, Niger, and Uganda, and for the development of a theory of change (TOC). The TOC guidance will inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of integrated GBV-economic recovery program models that include partnerships between local and international organizations. This snapshot summarizes the findings of the [global landscaping report](#).

### 2 FINDINGS

The global landscaping report collates evidence for gender-transformative and localized programming that integrates GBV and economic recovery, including cash and voucher assistance (CVA).<sup>2</sup> In total, 62 publications and 11 interviews with experts were analyzed to identify program models and interventions, barriers, good practices, guidance, and tools.

The report demonstrates the ways in which economic recovery, GBV programming, gender transformation, and localization in humanitarian practice each contribute to advancing the economic empowerment of GBV survivors.

It posits that economic recovery programming for GBV survivors must go beyond market assessments and economic activities to address certain barriers created or exacerbated by exposure to GBV risks. This is where the integration of GBV and economic recovery programming works to respond to GBV and help survivors to overcome the financial, psychological, legal, and social challenges that surround GBV and inhibit their economic recovery.

Even with thoughtful and targeted program design, gender norms can limit program participation and outcomes for women, girls, and individuals with diverse SOGIESC. When programs do not address the drivers of gender inequality, there may be unintended negative consequences, such as limited mobility, increased time burden due to unshared domestic work, and backlash to shifting gender dynamics from family members. Incorporating program components that aim to positively alter gender norms at individual, community, and institutional levels can reduce the underlying gender inequality of these barriers and improve the outcomes of both GBV and economic recovery program components.

Programming that is led by local organizations can provide access to targeted communities, enhance the design and delivery of program components with context-specific expertise, and augment local capacity for sustainable change. Working with international organizations can be advantageous for local organizations in terms of knowledge and network sharing and funding exposure.

Read the global landscaping report [here](#)

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations for integrated programming are clear from the literature review and key informant interviews:

- **Conduct context-specific assessments of market opportunities and GBV risks to guide program design and implementation, ensuring data disaggregation for diverse populations.** This is particularly important for marginalized survivors, such as those with diverse SOGIESC or disabilities.
- **Employ a survivor-centered approach** throughout the program cycle to ensure assessments, design and implementation ensure survivors' safety, confidentiality and respect and prevention of discrimination.
- **Ensure coordination and train all program staff on the basics of each program component—gender equality, GBV, and economic recovery, including cash & voucher assistance.** The hallmark of integrated programming recognizes that area experts have different knowledge bases and significant knowledge sharing and capacity building among partners is a key to success.

Overall, the findings of this study provide a path ahead for gender-transformative and localized, integrated GBV and economic recovery programming for survivors in humanitarian settings and highlights areas that merit further research.

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The Women's Refugee Commission improves the lives and protects the rights of women, children, and youth displaced by conflict and crisis. To learn more, visit [womensrefugeecommission.org](http://womensrefugeecommission.org).

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a leading international NGO that works in 40 countries to protect, advocate, and build sustainable futures for refugees and other displacement affected people and communities. To learn more, visit [www.drc.ngo](http://www.drc.ngo).

1 Localized action is the meaningful engagement and leadership of local and national actors (with a focus on women-led organizations and organizations representing vulnerable populations) in humanitarian response and increasing direct funding. Gender-transformative change addresses the root causes of gender inequality, including imbalances in power relations between men and women, as well as the structures and norms that uphold these inequalities.

2 CVA provides cash or vouchers exchangeable for goods and services directly to recipients.