

## Today we face a global humanitarian challenge.

From Syria's ongoing conflict to Nepal's post-earthquake recovery and West Africa's Ebola epidemic, human suffering has reached alarming levels, with women and girls being disproportionately affected. Yet, when it comes to humanitarian assistance, gender equality is not prioritized.

**200.5**

million

people were affected by natural disasters or displaced by conflict and violence in 2014.

**50**

per cent

of refugees are women and girls.

**only 4**

per cent

of projects in UN inter-agency appeals were targeted at women and girls in 2014.

**just 0.4**

per cent

of all funding to fragile states—most impacted by disasters—went to women's groups or women's ministries from 2012 to 2013.

## When crises strike, gender inequalities are often exacerbated.

These include: increased levels of gender-based violence, exclusion from life-saving services and decision-making processes due to discriminatory social norms, such as food hierarchies, and limited mobility to get help due to physical insecurity.



### Health

Access to healthcare is limited during and after a crisis, increasing mortality and malnutrition rates, particularly for mothers and infants.

### Gender-based violence

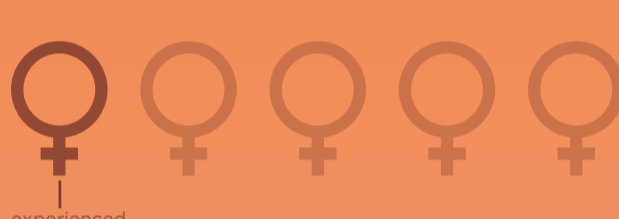
Gender-based violence, including rape and early and forced marriage, often increases during crises when protection mechanisms deteriorate, depriving women and girls the fundamental rights to live free from violence.

**60**

per cent of preventable maternal deaths take place in settings of conflict, displacement and natural disasters.

**1 in 5**

refugees or displaced women in complex humanitarian settings are estimated to have experienced sexual violence—likely an underestimation given the barriers associated with disclosure.



### Livelihoods

Crises often hit women's livelihoods hardest, in part also because they tend to work in informal sectors, increasing their risk of engaging in poorly paid work or transactional sex.

### Education

Girls are often the first to be pulled out of school as parents find ways to alleviate economic burdens, depriving them of the fundamental right to education and the realization of their full potential in life.

**Up to 30**

per cent of internally displaced households in Yemen are female headed, compared to approximately 9 per cent before the current crisis.

**Girls are 2.5**

times more likely to be out of school in conflict-affected countries than their counterparts in conflict-free countries.



## Women are leaders and agents of change.

These include: increased levels of gender-based violence, exclusion from life-saving services and decision-making processes due to discriminatory social norms, such as food hierarchies, and limited mobility to get help due to physical insecurity.



## Catalyzing action to achieve gender equality.

Together we must take bold steps to enable women and girls to realize their human rights and full potential and end discrimination in crises. When women are meaningfully engaged, and their needs are directly addressed, humanitarian action is more efficient and effective, the transition to recovery accelerated, and community-wide resilience is enhanced.



### COMMITMENTS WE MUST MAKE

#### Commitment 1

Empower women and girls as change agents and leaders, including by increasing support for local women led groups to participate meaningfully in humanitarian action.

#### Commitment 2

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the Outcome Documents of their review conferences for all women and adolescent girls in crisis settings.

#### Commitment 3

Implement a coordinated global approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in crisis contexts, including through the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.

#### Commitment 4

Ensure that humanitarian programming is gender-responsive.

#### Commitment 5

Fully comply with humanitarian policies, frameworks and legally binding documents related to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights.



# Closing the Gender Gap in Humanitarian Action



## SYRIAN REFUGEES, JORDAN

UN Women's largest cash-for-work programme for women in Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp increased the average income of full-time workers, improving diets, household hygiene and healthcare.

Credit: UN Women/Christopher Herwig

## EBOLA EPIDEMIC, WEST AFRICA

Informational radio programmes, psychosocial support and UN Women-facilitated trainings helped women adopt new strategies to respond to, cope with and curb the spread of Ebola.

Credit: UN Women/Emma Vincent

## EARTHQUAKE, NEPAL

When an earthquake rocked Nepal in 2015, UN Women partnered with national women's groups and civil society to develop an early recovery strategy through a "Common Charter of Women's Demands".

Credit: UN Women/Samir Jung Thapa

## CYCLONE, FIJI

Following the devastating cyclone in Fiji in 2016, UN Women has been working with local partners to promote economic opportunities for women through market spaces.

Credit: UN Women/Murray Lloyd

## CONFLICT, COLOMBIA

UN Women actively works with indigenous women, local authorities and educators, among other actors, to strengthen protection mechanisms on gender-based violence for conflict-affected populations.

Credit: UN Women/Ryan Brown

## REFUGEES, CAMEROON

In refugee camps across Cameroon, UN Women supports women's peace caravans, dialogue committees and other activities to promote social cohesion among community members.

Credit: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Step it up for gender equality.

We must achieve a Planet 50-50 by 2030.

unwomen.org  
facebook.com/unwomen  
twitter.com/un\_women  
youtube.com/unwomen  
flickr.com/unwomen  
instagram.com/unwomen

