



# A Double-edged Sword: Livelihoods in Emergencies

Guidance and Tools for Improved Programming

## Executive Summary and Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis

During emergencies, women, girls, boys and men draw on their assets while navigating 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 gender-based violence (GBV) and insecurity. Women, girls, boys and men experience these dynamics differently, and their risks of violence are unique.

When effective, livelihood programs can seed longer-term recovery while saving lives.<sup>1</sup> However, as emergencies are characterized by a spike in insecurity, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse, humanitarian practitioners can unintentionally contribute to increased exposure to these dangers due to poor response planning; the urgency to “do something” can compromise the imperative to “do no harm.” It is therefore critical that from the very early days of an emergency, gender dynamics are understood, GBV risks are assessed and measures taken to reduce vulnerability to threats for women, girls, boys and men.

This report presents findings from a year-long research project on current practices through field assessments in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Philippines, a literature review and expert interviews. The report also offers a draft tool, the Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis (CLARA), for further field testing and research. This draft tool seeks to include an analysis of different risks for individuals in livelihood assessments and program design.

### Summary Findings

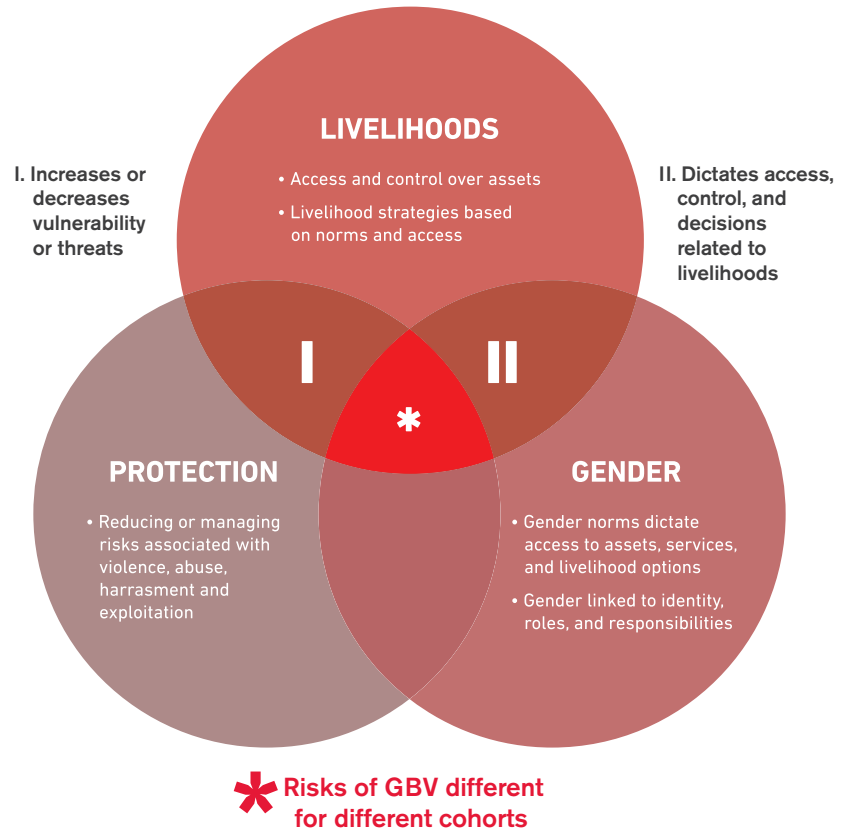
- There are no incentives or disincentives in organizations and agencies to include an analysis of GBV risks for affected individuals in livelihoods programming in emergencies.
- GBV risk analysis is not institutionalized in operational activities.
- There is a lack of targeted tools designed explicitly for capturing risks of 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 that articulate safer livelihood programs as a priority and institutionalize them into practice.
- **Influence culture.** Leadership can create the incentives and disincentives for developing risk-mitigating programs. Structures that support and reinforce these incentives can assist alongside the culture shifting from “do no harm” to “doing better.”
- **Work directly with affected communities to identify risks** associated with participation in livelihood and economic recovery programs and how to best mitigate those risks.

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

- **Deepen and expand on existing tools, guidance and practices.** Target and articulate explicitly the objective of identification and reduction of risks and of GBV in particular for different population cohorts.
- **Approach risk analyses as an ongoing responsibility.** Situations change over time, and different risks must be assessed from assessment to implementation, end of program and post-program. This phased approach can start with a quick initial assessment that leads to more nuanced and data collection activities.



## The Gender, Protection and Livelihoods Link

Despite good intentions, external assistance through the introduction of resources can disrupt fragile relationships within communities as well as attract internal and external threats, thereby shifting assets into liabilities.<sup>2</sup> For example, livestock pre-crisis is an asset for a household. Post crisis and displacement, livestock can become a target for theft and/or attack; or the livestock can draw on the scarce resources at the expense of other household members. As in some contexts women and girls are least prioritized, they often bear the brunt of shortages and negative coping mechanisms.<sup>3</sup> When assessing livelihoods, such threats are not immediately visible or obvious and need to be identified through risk analysis that includes gender dynamics.

Women and girls, boys and men respond to shocks by drawing down on their assets (human, natural, financial, social and physical) and employing diverse livelihoods strategies to meet their basic and urgent needs.<sup>4</sup> How individuals employ their assets as livelihood strategies is a decision-making process based on access, control, options and the system of institutions

and processes they work in—which in turn are dictated by gender roles and norms. Livelihood programs that seek to decrease economic vulnerability and increase wealth may do so at the expense of the security for different types of individuals if these gender norms, vulnerabilities and potential risks are not considered.<sup>5</sup>

In analyzing existing or increased exposure risks to GBV, however, this research found a lack of explicit and regularized tools or procedures to address and manage GBV risks in assessments or design of livelihoods programming. Risks and vulnerabilities are at the core of protection-focused assessments, but are often not considered when conducting livelihoods program assessments. Instead, focus is generally on risks of potential market distortions. When related to GBV, risk analysis only superficially captures unintended consequences of livelihoods programming. The WRC developed a list of questions as a tool called CLARA to capture these risks.

## CLARA Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis

CLARA is a set of four steps to capture GBV risks associated with livelihoods as well as potential risks arising from programs in response to crises. Currently in draft form, the CLARA may be used alongside livelihood assessment tools already in use, though can be also used as a stand-alone tool.

### STEPS TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY AFTER A CRISIS: Rapid Response

#### STEP ONE: Preparation

In preparing a response approach, a secondary data review should be conducted, including a conflict/situational analysis, to develop an understanding of the overall context of the crisis. Review of assessments, studies, qualitative and quantitative information should focus on the drivers of GBV, in complement to the broader secondary data review. Particular focus should be on:

- Who controls assets? How are livelihood decisions made? What are the roles of women, girls, boys and men in earning incomes for the household?
- What are the predominant livelihood strategies?
- What are existing vulnerabilities to watch for?
- What are the sources of violence and threats to the affected population?
- What are some strengths and assets that individuals possess that can manage risks and threats?
- What data exists that specifically addresses GBV in the context? Are there potential overlaps of GBV and the livelihoods predominantly practiced by different individuals?
- What has changed due to the emergency? What are most people doing to cope with the emergency? What are the major types of negative livelihood strategies that are likely to be seen in the crisis?

#### STEP TWO: Primary Data Collection

As per the IASC's *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risks, Promoting Resilience, and Aiding Recovery* (in progress), assessments should be conducted by consulting different cohorts, including but not limited to women, girls, men, boys, elderly, persons with disabilities and different ethnic groups.

In identifying different cohorts, critical questions to keep in mind are (1) Who are the different types of people that are affected? (2) Who are the most vulnerable and why? (3) What are the most likely risks related to the prevalent livelihoods? See full set of CLARA questions at the end of this document.

#### STEP THREE: Data Analysis and Program Design

Primary and secondary data needs to be compiled and analyzed to develop the fullest picture possible of the livelihood strategies and associated risks prevalent by age cohort. The analysis needs to inform programming choices, that is, which type of livelihood program to implement, as well as program design – how can that program

be designed and implemented to make it as safe as possible for all participants according to their unique risks. In analyzing the data collected, practitioners seek to design responsive programming. By collecting the risks for different individuals related to livelihoods programming, programmers have a better understanding of the:

- Impact of conflict or crisis on household assets
- Risks identified for each cohort, at a minimum by sex and age
- Risks associated with various livelihood activities
- Community capacity to mitigate risks
- Economic coping strategies
- Proposed community/household economic strategies and solutions

## **STEPS TO TAKE MONTHS AFTER THE CRISIS: Response and Recovery**

### **STEP FOUR: Monitoring and Program Implementation**

Regular review of the changing context should be operationalized in program activities. Surveys and focus group discussions should take place in conjunction with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and community mobilization. Ways in which the CLARA can be included in the implementation of the program include:

#### Community Mobilization

- Establish livelihood committees with communities that assess the progress of the program objectives, as well as gauge changing threats of violence and levels of related risks. Committees should include women or have separate committees for women.
- Establish a feedback mechanism where women, girls, boys and men can anonymously and safely share information on program results and processes.
- Focus group discussions or key informant discussions including questions from the CLARA should be a required and regularized activity.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

- Include in monthly or other regular reports, status of risks based on discussions with committees or key informant discussions.
- Include regular surveys that include the CLARA questions to capture key attitudes and perceptions about risks.
- Include indicators that show that risks are being identified, and measures taken to manage identified risks.

**STEP TWO: CLARA Questions****1. What activities did you do to earn a living before the crisis?**

Discussions with women:

Discussions with men:

Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:

**2. Did you feel that these activities were safe for you and other members of your household? If not, what were the major threats?**

Discussions with women:

Discussions with men:

Discussions with adolescent girls living with families:

Discussions with adolescent girls living as alone or as heads of household:

<b>STEP TWO: CLARA Questions (continued)</b>
Discussions with adolescent boys living with families:
Discussions with adolescent boys living as alone or as heads of household:
Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:
<b>3. How has the conflict or crisis impacted your livelihood?</b>
Discussions with women:
Discussions with men:
Discussions with adolescent girls living with families:
Discussions with adolescent girls living as alone or as heads of household:
Discussions with adolescent boys living with families:
Discussions with adolescent boys living as alone or as heads of household:
Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:
<b>4. What activities are you doing now to meet your basic needs and earn a living?</b>
Discussions with women:

**STEP TWO: CLARA Questions (continued)**

Discussions with men:

Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:

**5. Do you feel that these activities are safe for you and other members of your household? If not, what are the major threats?**

Discussions with women:

Discussions with men:

Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)

Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)

<b>STEP TWO: CLARA Questions (continued)</b>
<p>Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)</p> <p>Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)</p>
<p>Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:</p>
<p><b>6. What are some ways that you are trying to manage these threats?</b></p>
<p>Discussions with women:</p>
<p>Discussions with men:</p>
<p>Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)</p> <p>Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)</p>
<p>Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)</p> <p>Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)</p>
<p>Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:</p>



**STEP TWO: CLARA Questions (continued)****7. If your livelihoods activities are currently restricted, how would you get back to generating income? What is missing currently to allow for this to happen?**

Discussions with women:

Discussions with men:

Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (What activities did you do to support the family in earning income?)

Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (What activities did you do to earn income?)

*- Examples can include childcare, helping other members in income generating activities, helping in the fields, collecting water, etc.*

Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:

**8. Do you feel that these activities would be safe for you and other members of your household? If not, what would be the major threats?**

Discussions with women:

Discussions with men:

<b>STEP TWO: CLARA Questions (continued)</b>
<p>Discussions with adolescent girls living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)</p> <p>Discussions with adolescent girls living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)</p>
<p>Discussions with adolescent boys living with families: (Recall activities conducted in support of household income generation)</p> <p>Discussions with adolescent boys living alone or as heads of household: (Recall activities conducted in support of income generation)</p>
<p>Discussions with elderly/disabled/other:</p>
<p><b>Examples of potential risks related to livelihoods, not exhaustive</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposing participants to theft, violence when travelling to and from work (location of work, time of work)</li> <li>• Creating additional vulnerabilities for women or others, such as younger children and the elderly, due to changed roles and responsibilities during workday (childcare, cooking, pulling children out of school to assist in activities)</li> <li>• Increasing exposure to exploitation by employers, clients, suppliers</li> <li>• Inciting backlash from family or community members when women start earning money</li> <li>• Increasing vulnerabilities of theft and violence due to greater assets and wealth</li> <li>• Reinforcing inequalities by continuing to limit choices to more vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Causing false expectations and dependence on short-term surge of cash or assets</li> <li>• Increasing costs and drawing on resources, such as providing livestock without fodder or veterinary care</li> <li>• Exacerbating tensions between host community and affected community</li> <li>• Continuing physical and environmental threats from unstable infrastructure, flooding, earthquake aftershocks</li> </ul>
<p><b>How can these risks be managed?</b></p>
Empty space for answers

# CLARA: Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Analysis

## IMMEDIATELY AFTER CRISIS

### Immediate Response

Secondary data review

- In preparing a response approach, secondary data review includes a conflict or situational analysis, and other available data collected to develop an understanding of the overall context of the crisis. Specific secondary data review (assessments, studies, qualitative and quantitative information) should focus on the drivers of GBV, to complement the broader review.

Primary data collection: CLARA

- In identifying different cohorts, critical questions to keep in mind are (1) Who are the different types of people that are affected? (2) Who are the most vulnerable and why? (3) What are the most likely risks related to their livelihoods?

Analysis of data and program articulation

- Identify those that are at most risk of GBV, related to livelihood strategies
- Threats to primary income earners, and to those who indirectly support livelihoods
- Ways in which crisis affected individuals are coping
- Assets and capacities of the affected individuals

Use the data to assess which program has the least potential to increase risks of GBV to participants.



## WEEKS AFTER

### Response and Recovery

Community engagement

- Establish livelihood committees with communities that assess the progress of the program objectives, as well as gauge changing threats of violence and levels of risks related. Committees should be context specific; however, include women or have separate committees for women.
- Establish a feedback mechanism where women, girls, boys and men can anonymously and safely share information on program results and processes.
- Focus group discussions or key informant discussions, including questions from the CLARA, should be a required and regularized activity.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Include in monthly or other regular reports, status of risks based on quick discussions with committees or key informant discussions
  - o Undertake regular surveys that include the CLARA questions to capture key attitudes and perceptions about risks.
  - o Include indicators that show that risks are being identified, and measures taken to manage identified risks.



## Notes

1. Sue Lautze and Angela Raven-Roberts, "Violence and complex humanitarian emergencies: implications for livelihood models," *Disasters Volume 30*, Overseas Development Institute (2006). <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/disa.2006.30.issue-4/issuetoc>.
2. Susanne Jaspars and Dan Maxwell, "Food security and livelihoods programming in conflict: a review," *Network Papers*, Issue 65 (March 2009). <http://www.odihpn.org/hpn-resources/network-papers/food-security-and-livelihoods-programming-in-conflict-a-review>.
3. IASC, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience, and Aiding Recovery* (in progress).
4. World Food Program, "Food Aid and Livelihoods in Emergencies: Strategies for WFP," *Policy Issues Agenda Item 5* (May 2003).
5. Patricia Justino, *Women Working for Recovery: The Impact of Female Employment on Family and Community Welfare after Conflict*, UN Women (October 2012). <http://wrc.ms/UNWomenJustino>.



Read the full report and guidance at  
[www.wrc.ms/double-edged-livelihoods](http://www.wrc.ms/double-edged-livelihoods)



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August 2014

This report is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of the WRC and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.