

Gender-Sensitive Post-Disaster Rehabilitation Guidance: Shelter/Housing

Safe and secure housing is vital for women because so much of their daily lives centre around the household. Women must be centrally involved in the design, siting, and construction of local housing and community facilities because of their roles as home based workers, caregivers, and managers of domestic and natural resources.

Adequate lighting and provisions to protect security and privacy must be a priority.

- Increase housing security by deeding permanent housing in the names of both wives and husbands.
- Target highly vulnerable categories of women – single women, widows, women living below poverty level and unemployed women, socially marginalized women, and others (identified at the local level by knowledgeable women).
- Provide women with access to construction-related employment.
- Promote the participation of women across caste and class lines (and other relevant social ‘fault lines’) in decisions regarding community relocation, siting of new settlements, and design of new dwellings.
- Collaborate with local women in planning design innovations that reduce or simplify women’s work loads or that improve living and working conditions for them and their families.



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Box 3.4: Shelter Cluster – Operations- Yogyakarta and Central Java Earthquake, 2006

- **Bring a gender lens to shelter.** All shelter standards (emergency-transition-permanent) and approaches should be informed by separate focus group discussions with women and with men. Before final approval, standards should be put through a gender lens. Engineers and beneficiaries, men and women, may have differing definitions of safety and people-friendliness.
- **Train community facilitators in how to engage women.** Humanitarian shelter actors need to invest in active facilitation to get the meaningful voice and participation of women of all ages. This includes training community facilitators in how to identify and overcome the barriers to women's participation.
- **Involve the Government's gender machinery in shelter response.** The government gender machinery (the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and its provincial and district arms) was involved in the Yogyakarta/Central Java response but primarily through links to the Protection Cluster. This involvement of government gender specialists warrants being expanded into the shelter response. The UN is an appropriate facilitator of this linkage. Early joint collaboration on gender mainstreaming should result in gender considerations being well considered in the emergency phase, creating a momentum for ensuring gender issues are reflected later in transition and permanent housing.
- **Promote joint title.** Although most Yogyakarta permanent housing is being rebuilt in-situ, some previous residential land is now deemed unsafe for housing. When new land for housing is gifted (i.e. Kulon Progo), this should be viewed as an opportunity to advance joint title of land.

Source: Florensia Malau & Linda Pennells , **Gender Reflections Shelter Cluster and Shelter materials**
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