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## **Cross-cutting issues**

This chapter considers a number of cross-cutting issues relevant to disaster risk reduction, including gender, good governance, policies and advocacy.

## Gender and disaster risk reduction

Disasters are profoundly gendered phenomena. Hazards such as drought, floods, HIV/AIDS and conflict affect women, girls, men and boys differently. Gender inequalities often exacerbate existing vulnerabilities to the impact of disasters. In order to be successful, strategies to reduce the risk of disasters need to be engendered or gender-sensitive at all stages.

### Gender and vulnerability to disasters

Women and children constitute the vast majority of people displaced by conflict or as a result of other natural and human-made disasters. However, in some cultures, traditional beliefs about gender roles mean that attacking women is a disapproved practice, making men and boys more vulnerable to attack. As the following case study illustrates, this may pose an opportunity for women to engage in activities outside their usual roles.

#### Women going where men can't...

The drought of 2002 had aggravated the conflict between the Afar and Issa (Somali) ethnic groups. As a result it was difficult to collect fuel wood from areas bordered by the two groups. As traditionally neither side would deliberately attack women, one of the elderly women from Udula Esi village of Amibara *woreda* suggested that women could collect the fuel wood from this area. Accordingly, women mobilized themselves and peacefully collected fuel wood from this previously volatile area.

Source: Oxfam GB

The HIV/AIDS pandemic graphically illustrates the direct relationship between gender and disaster. In addition to biological factors that make it easier to transmit HIV/AIDS from men to women than vice versa, in Ethiopia and other developing countries women and girls' subordinate status makes them more vulnerable to contracting the HIV virus. Women's economic dependence on men makes it difficult for them to negotiate for safe sex or challenge abusive or extra-marital relationships. In addition, poverty leads many women and girls into sex work and exposure to HIV/AIDS. In Ethiopia, traditional practices such as taking a girl as a wife by forced abduction and rape, female genital cutting and polygamy fuel the epidemic and, together with the recent growth in the trafficking of young women, heighten women's vulnerability.

### Gendered impacts of disasters

Natural and human-made hazards tend to heighten gender disparities in terms of access and control of a community's resources. Because of their relative lack of economic and political power, women and girls are disproportionately affected

by natural and human-made hazards such as floods, drought, conflict and public health disasters, such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. Disasters tend to heighten women's disadvantaged position, which results from weak political representation, low access to education and training, economic insecurity and unequal property rights.

*Impact on nutrition and health:* Because Ethiopian women have less access to productive resources such as land, credit and training, households headed by women and adolescents are usually the first to suffer from shortage of food and malnutrition. In addition, in cultures where women are the last to eat, intra-household differences in access to food expose women to malnutrition and illness. The absence of basic household supplies, such as soap, and shortage of water affect women's capacity to maintain family hygiene and health. The services of hospitals and health centres (where they exist) are likely to be disrupted with the onset of disasters, especially in communities that are inaccessible to outside help. Women are often seriously affected by the absence of reproductive health services, especially during menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth.

*Traditional roles/workloads:* In addition to causing the breakdown of community-based support systems, disasters often add to women's productive and reproductive responsibilities and increase their economic burdens. In general, women and girls are primary caretakers of sick and dying family members: malaria and HIV/AIDS pandemics cause serious strains on their already overburdened resources and capacities.

The increased burden on women to find food and shelter after disasters occur often correlates with decreasing access to resources, such as credit and productive land. Droughts mean that women and girls have to walk farther to fetch water and they may resort to environmentally unsustainable coping strategies, such as collecting and selling firewood. In addition, drought often sees girls and boys dropping out of school due to shortage of funds and hunger.

The depletion of household assets in the face of drought and other hazards may negatively affect communities, with men and women resorting to coping strategies, such as migration and selling livestock and household assets, that may leave them more vulnerable to future shocks. In addition, families may decide to split-up to improve their chances of coping with disasters, affecting gender relations. Women and girls are more likely to engage in risky coping strategies, such as migration to cities, begging and sex work, that make them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Furthermore, the loss of culturally appropriate clothes, such as head scarves, during crises may, in some societies, affect women's identity and restrict their mobility and ability to take part in relief programmes and attend food distribution sites.

*Gender-based violence:* In Ethiopia, gender-based violence (GBV) is reported in communities affected by emergencies, as well as in refugee camps and food

distribution sites. Disasters exacerbate tensions within households and conflicts often lead to an increase in domestic violence. In addition, where disasters result in displacement and the reorientation of traditional gender roles, men may respond to the loss of their stature through increased violence. Furthermore, the processes of migration, displacement and resettlement put girls and women at risk of sexual exploitation and attack by family members, military and police personnel and humanitarian aid workers.

Gender-based violence has become a hallmark of complex emergencies and situations of conflict where civilian women and children may be targeted for rape, abuse and exploitation. Physical and sexual violence affect women and girls on many levels and in countries like Ethiopia, with low levels of professional psycho-social support, trauma and the psychological effects usually go untreated. Rape often results in the loss of self-esteem and may be followed by stigma and marginalization by the community.

The gender dimension of disasters means that in order to be effective, disaster risk reduction strategies need to take into account the added vulnerability of women and girls at all stages - prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response - and to involve their participation at all levels.

## **Addressing the added vulnerability of women and girls**

Gender equality is guaranteed under Article 35 of the Ethiopian Constitution and the National Policy on Women. In addition, Ethiopia is a signatory to international conventions ensuring gender equality including the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the *Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW). In addition, the MDGs have equality between men and women as a specific goal and recognize that without gender equality, none of the other goals can be achieved. Disasters threaten the progress of countries towards achieving the MDGs and need to be addressed in ways that further gender equality and, at the very least, do not exacerbate women's insubordinate status.

Recognizing women's added vulnerability, the international community has stipulated laws and guidelines for the protection of women and girls in times of disasters and for their full involvement in disaster risk reduction. The *Sphere Humanitarian Charter* and *Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* are explicit in their commitment to gender-sensitive interventions, including combating GBV, at all stages of disaster response in each of five key sectors (water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter and health services). In addition, the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for coordinated humanitarian assistance has specific guidelines for *Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings*.

At the national level, the Women's Affairs Department of the DPPA released a *Gender Mainstreaming Guideline and Checklist for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Activities* in 2004, which should provide a framework for engendering all interventions in disaster risk reduction in Ethiopia.

## Engendering disaster risk reduction

*Gender analysis of vulnerabilities and capacities:* As noted earlier, all prevention interventions in the context of disaster risk reduction need to have in-built systems of gender analysis. Women need to be trained and participate in community-based early warning systems, soil and water conservation, public awareness/advocacy and capacity building activities geared to prevent disasters. Assessing a certain community's vulnerability should include examining the factors that make women and girls more vulnerable to the disaster in question, or especially vulnerable to engaging in harmful coping strategies, exploitation and GBV. Similarly, capacity assessments need to be gendered and make special note of traditional coping strategies, including forms of community support in the face of disasters. All efforts should be made to build on these strengths, support women's resilience and avoid the common pitfalls of humanitarian agencies undermining traditional coping mechanisms through culturally inappropriate interventions.

*Gender-disaggregated data:* All data collected in the context of preparation, mitigation, preparedness and response stages of disaster risk reduction needs to be disaggregated by gender and, where possible, also by age. While it may be difficult to collect data broken down by gender and age at the very onset of a disaster, all efforts should be made to start the collection of such data as early as possible and to do it consistently. Gender disaggregated data allows communities and agencies to assess the impact of disaster risk reduction on men, women, boys and girls and alert them to constraints experienced by any group from accessing, participating and benefiting from interventions.

As far as possible, the collection of gender-disaggregated data needs to extend to the household level. Assuming that all households are headed by men and targeting them for relief distribution and food aid puts women at a disadvantaged position; as a result many communities report cases of dilution and misuse. In the case of polygamous communities, it is important that each co-wife and her children are registered separately so as to ensure that they are not left out. The participation of the community in selection of intervention participants helps ensure accurate targeting.

Furthermore, humanitarian actors need to make gender-sensitivity a key component of all monitoring and evaluation of disaster risk reduction activities, and all indicators (for example of relief commodities distributed or emergency shelter provided) need to be gender-disaggregated. In budgeting, programme planning and reporting, it is important to indicate the amount of expenditure and type of relief commodities that are distributed to and utilized by different sections of the community.

*Full participation:* The most effective route to ensuring gender-sensitive interventions is through the full participation of women and girls at all stages of disaster risk reduction interventions. Women (from affected communities in

particular) should participate fully in teams assessing risks of disasters and strategies to prevent and mitigate the risk, as well as in all groups and committees implementing response strategies including in food distribution taskforces. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that the participation of women and girls is not 'tokenistic'; that they are encouraged to play a key role in strategic decision-making, such as the location and layout of camps and registration of beneficiaries.

Agencies working in emergencies report a significant improvement in the quality of service delivery when women are involved in decision-making, both in the context of emergencies and development. The same is true for women's involvement at organizational level. Agencies and governments need to adopt recruitment practices that encourage women to work in disaster risk reduction. In addition, all staff working with communities affected by disaster need to be trained on gender-sensitivity. Agencies should strongly monitor adherence to relevant guidelines to ensure the participation of women and girls and adopt a 'zero-tolerance' approach to GBV by their staff and employees. Awareness should be created that sexual violence is expressly prohibited by international humanitarian law.

## Activities by sector

In addition to the collection of gender-disaggregated data, gender-analysis and ensuring the participation of women, humanitarian actors might consider adopting the following sample of gender-sensitive interventions (recommended by the IASC) that encourage gender equality and actively address GBV in the framework of disaster risk reduction.

*Water and sanitation:* Women and girls need to be involved in water resource development (including groundwater exploitation) and small-scale irrigation activities geared to prevent and/or mitigate drought-related disasters. At the response stage of disaster risk reduction, in addition to efforts to ensure that households are able to meet their minimum requirement of water for drinking, cooking and washing, agencies need to provide facilities for people to dispose of excreta safely and protect water supplies from contamination. As fetching water is the work of women and girls in most parts of Ethiopia, the location of water points should be determined with their full participation. In addition, water points as well as communal bathing facilities should be located in safe areas, where all users can be guaranteed privacy and maintain their dignity.

*Nutrition and food security:* Efforts to prevent/mitigate the effects of drought, including drought-resistant farming methods and provision of seed for fast-maturing crops, should target women as well as men farmers. All effort should be made to include female-headed households that often face labour shortages and may miss out on the benefits of development interventions.

In responding to disasters, agencies should strive to distribute culturally appropriate food with energy-saving cooking properties so as to reduce the

workloads of women and girls. In addition, special consideration should be made to address the nutritional needs of pregnant and nursing women.

Whenever possible, households headed by children or adolescents should be prioritized and receive their rations on a separate day so as to protect them from abuse and violence.

The implementation of the *Safety Net Program* has illustrated the pitfalls of locating food distribution points without consulting women. Travelling long distances that often involve overnight stays, women and girls are exposed to GBV. In addition, food packages are often too heavy for women and children to carry, creating dependence on outsiders who might take advantage of their vulnerability. If well-designed with the participation of women and children, food distribution sites provide a good opportunity to address child protection issues and can be designated as 'safe spaces' where children can play and learn while their parents wait for their turn to receive food.

*Shelter and non-food items:* In the response stages of emergencies and in the context of refugee camps, strategies for fuel collection should be planned and implemented with the full participation of women and girls. In addition, women staff should consult with women and girls on identifying and distributing culturally appropriate sanitary material.

*Health/psycho-social support:* In the prevention, mitigation and response stages of disaster risk reduction, agencies should undertake or participate in rapid situational analysis of the accessibility and availability of existing health services to respond to the health needs of communities in general and of women and girls in particular. All women, men, girls and boys need to be able to benefit from mass immunization campaigns at the mitigation stage of droughts and flood-related disasters. In the mapping of diseases/vulnerabilities during epidemic scares, the special needs of pregnant and nursing women need to be given due consideration.

A major area of disaster response is the provision of preventative and curative healthcare. Included in the capacity building of health facilities needs to be the ability to address reproductive health needs and priority should be given to training women as health providers. Health providers need training in counselling so as to deal with GBV compassionately and with confidentiality. Agents such as traditional birth attendants (TBAs), women groups and community-based support networks, such as *edirs* and *mahbers*, may successfully be galvanized to provide health services, protection against GBV and emotional support to survivors. In addition, influential people such as religious leaders and clan elders can play key roles in advocating against GBV and reducing the stigma and marginalization of survivors. The needs of child survivors of GBV should also be given special consideration.

*Education:* As mentioned elsewhere in this book, formal and non-formal education provides a good opportunity for education on disaster risk reduction, including

the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

It is important that formal and non-formal education is resumed as early as possible after an emergency, and that all girls and boys have access to free education. If schools are located close to living quarters and have separate latrines for boys and girls, GBV prevention strategies are implemented and teachers are governed by a code of conduct that prohibits them from having sexual relationships with their students, schools can be safe spaces that aid children's transition to normalcy. All effort should be made to recruit female teachers and the participation of girls should always be encouraged.

*Employment opportunities and skills training:* Opportunities need to be provided at all prevention and mitigation stages of disaster risk reduction, as well as in emergency settings, for equitable access to training for men and women. The existing capabilities of women should be used to set up training and skills enhancement opportunities. It is equally important to ensure that women have opportunities for involvement in development and reconstruction projects as well as access to credit for new ventures. Specific guidelines on food-for-work and food-for-training schemes at prevention and response stages are necessary to ensure that women benefit from long-term asset creation from these programmes.

*Gender and pastoralism development:* Efforts to improve pastoralists' terms of trade through the monitoring of cereal and cattle prices at the prevention stage of disaster risk reduction, as well as mitigation efforts to counter the effects of drought in pastoralist areas such as the destocking/off-take of weakened livestock, need to be targeted at women as well as men. The feeding of a nucleus herd of cattle in the mitigation and response stages of disaster risk reduction (using fodder and livestock feed concentrates) in order to sustain breeding stock is an option that should especially be targeted to female-headed households. Where appropriate, recovery activities such as restocking need to involve both men and women pastoralists.

## **Negotiating gender roles during and after disasters**

Women are often portrayed as helpless victims and emphasis is placed on their need for assistance. In addition to the full participation of women and girls in disaster risk reduction strategies, it may be possible to see disasters and the instabilities they cause as potentially fertile ground to address gender inequality and for renegotiation of the division of roles between men and women.

For instance, pastoralist communities in Borana explained that men participate in productive activities such as cooking and setting up house while households are on the move in search of pasture and that gender roles are only rigidly observed during sedentary periods. If communities build on these trends of flexibility, it may result in them enjoying improved gender relations and more equitable access to and control of resources. In addition, the destabilizing of



traditional gender roles during times of crisis often presents women with opportunities to demonstrate their capacities and resilience thereby affecting positive change in their relationship with men.

**Women play an active role**

One of the interventions that Save the Children USA engaged in during the drought emergency in early 2006 was a project to assist the most vulnerable members of pastoralist communities protect an essential component of their livelihoods by preserving a nucleus breeding herd. Feeding lots were established in Mubarak, El Lahey and Chinlanqo in Moyale *woreda* for feeding, treating and vaccinating a selected set of productive shoats and cattle. In total, about 1,000 shoats and 400 cattle were kept in the feeding lot for the worst months of the drought and were then returned to their owners in April 2006.

During the establishment of the feeding lot, it was decided to employ caretakers to feed and look after the livestock during the day and to guard them at night. When the number of caretakers to be employed at the El Lahey site was raised from two to four, the Gender Officer at the Moyale sub-office suggested that two should be women. She argued that this was a good opportunity for women from the community to participate in the project as more than beneficiaries. At first, the clan elders laughed at the idea that women could be hired to do such a job, but she pointed out that Somali women are the ones who take care of shoats and so were fully qualified to be hired as caretakers. After many discussions, the community leaders agreed with the arrangement that two women would be hired to manage the feeding lot during the day and two men would guard the lot at night.

The two women did a wonderful job and were present at the feeding lot everyday. They diligently supervised the feeding, took the animals for watering at a nearby hand-pump and made sure the animals stayed within the enclosure. At the end of the nucleus feeding project, the usefulness of the women's contribution was noted by the community leaders who expressed their surprise at how well the women had done.

Source: Save the Children USA

## Good governance

Governance refers to the processes and systems by which an organization or society operates. It is also understood to mean the exercise of technical, political or administrative authority and the use of institutional resources to perform tasks. Governance describes the process of decision-making and how institutions conduct business, manage and account for resources, and guarantee the realization of human rights. Governance is not limited to governments: it also applies to other public and private institution and how they manage their institutional resources and make decisions.

Good governance is the accomplishment of the tasks of decision-making, managing public affairs and resources and guaranteeing the rights of individuals and groups without abuse, corruption and with respect for the rule of law. Good governance ensures that the views of minorities and disadvantaged groups are heard and that they fully participate in nation building.

The following are some of the characteristics of good governance:

*Participation:* Participation could be either direct or indirect through representatives or their organizations, but either way should involve both men and women, rich and poor, girls and boys, young and old. It requires freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other.

Participation makes sure that people do not feel excluded from major decisions and activities affecting their lives. Participation enables consideration of the different interests in a society, allows broad consensus to be reached on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

*Accountability:* Governmental institutions, as well as the private sector and civil society organizations, must be accountable to the public, their respective constituencies and to those affected by their decisions and actions. Accountability can also comprise responsiveness (that people are served within a reasonable timeframe) and effectiveness and efficiency in meeting the needs of society with the best use of resources at their disposal in a sustainable manner.

*Rule of law:* Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially, full protection of human rights, and an independent judiciary that discharges justice to all of its citizens, irrespective of their status or position.

*Transparency:* Decisions are made and implemented according to the appropriate rules and regulations, with openness and adequate information as to how public and institutional resources are utilized.

## **Good governance for disaster risk reduction**

Good governance is a key issue for enhancing development programmes in general and disaster risk reduction in particular. Experience of agencies engaged in development indicates that unless communities participate in programme planning and implementation it fails to be sustainable. Policies and guidelines that are enforced without proper participation of concerned stakeholders, particularly the community, encounter problems during implementation. Freedom of expression and association will enable communities to be organized, which facilitates disaster risk reduction programme planning and implementation. The denial of citizens' participation, abuse of human rights and deprivation of freedom of expression can all lead to conflict that could gradually progress to disaster.

Good governance includes a system of preventing misuse of development resources. Instances where development and relief resources have been diverted for unintended purposes have been observed in Ethiopia.

Individuals and groups are accountable for the actions they take in discharging their duties and responsibilities. Accountability means that individuals and group who don't discharge their duties and responsibilities properly should face the consequence, which is not always the case in disaster risk reduction. Development agents and authorities are often not held accountable when they negligently allow natural resources to be destroyed, for example erosion of arable land and formation of huge gullies, in the areas they are assigned or when they divert resources allocated for disaster risk reduction. The Government should be held responsibly to the people, leaders to their constituencies, and extension workers to the communities.

## Causes of bad governance

Bad governance may originate from different sources. The following factors cause or exacerbate bad governance:

- apathy of citizens
- lack of knowledge about the issue
- lack of capacity to observe and implement elements of good governance
- ideological factors that promotes a culture of leaders and 'the led'
- political motives and power hunger
- attitude and culture: "those who do not take advantage when they are in position will regret when they are ousted"
- greediness in relation to resources and power
- absence of vibrant civil societies
- lack of independent media.

## Policy

Policies are written rules or regulations that set boundaries and limits or define authority to act. Policies translate constitutions and charters into actions. Policies are guides that allow responsible decision-making.

In Ethiopia, there are many policies that directly or indirectly support disaster risk reduction. Some are disputed, perceived by some to aggravate disasters or undermine disaster risk reduction. Critics, for example, try to show how the land policy could bring about poor land management; farmers not interested in planting trees or protecting gully formation as they have no security of tenure. However, most of the policies ratified are generally considered as signs of good governance. Relevant policies include:

- *Agricultural development-led industrialization*: Promotes food production and productivity in the agricultural sector which prevents occurrence of food crises
- *Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program*: Reduction of poverty reduces vulnerability to disaster
- *Civil service reform*: Improves the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery by government offices, which will support implementation of disaster risk reduction
- *Decentralization*: Devolves power to lower level structures and empowers local authorities and communities to initiate disaster risk reduction measures that are appropriate to local situations
- *Capacity building*: Contributes to planning and implementing disaster risk reduction measures
- *Investment policy*: Creates employment, which helps to reduce the dependency of people on precarious drought-prone agriculture

- *Food security policy*: Ensures availability of, access to and utilization of food to avoid nutritional emergencies
- *Environmental policy*: Protects and rehabilitates the degraded environment, which is one of the major factors exacerbating vulnerability
- *National Water Resources Management Policy*: reduces the effect of droughts.

## Policy versus practice

Ratifying realistic policies through which the government administers the process and systems of conducting public affairs, allocating resources and exercising its power in an accountable and corruption free manner is clearly essential. However, simply having good policies does not guarantee good governance unless the policies are effectively translated into action.

It is evident that appropriate policies and policy instruments provide frameworks for disaster risk reduction. The food security, rural development, decentralization, investment and environment policies, for example, are key instruments for poverty reduction, and therefore also for vulnerability reduction and effective disaster risk reduction. However, many feel that even when policies and legislations are enacted they do not necessarily bring about the expected change; there is often a gap between what is stated in the policies and what is practiced. Moreover, the appropriateness of some of the policies and the process used to develop them is widely questioned.

The Government approved the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) in 1993. The policy involves many actors, defines responsibilities of government agencies, and the link between development and disaster risk reduction is well articulated. Development departments have been given the responsibilities to develop technically feasible, environmentally sound and socially and culturally acceptable projects ahead of the occurrence of disasters. While these intentions are good, many actors in the field feel that the practice has been far below expectation.

Also, there are obvious gaps in the policy. It is silent on legislation and accountability, credit management, tax administration and other forms of payment during emergency. Encouragingly, some individuals in the government structure would now like to see these elements included in the policy.

A number of problems have been identified in the implementation of the NPDPM. These include:

- The commitment of the Government to the policy's implementation gradually declined
- Implementation capacity does not exist; experienced and trained people are regularly moved and personnel are not assigned on their merits
- Employment Generation Scheme (EGS) is not seen as wage payment and DPPA is not allocating resources for it

- Non-wage costs for EGS have not been considered
- The '80:20' proportion (80% of relief resources allocated through EGS, 20% allocated to those who cannot participate in EGS) given in the EGS Guideline has been impractical or misinterpreted
- Le Department (including government ministries, agencies and authorities) do not see EGS as their mandate
- Preparedness modalities, such as the coupon system, development tools and tool depots, relief food outlets, livestock preservation and seed reserves are either weak or totally lacking
- Leadership to the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Committees rests on lower level officials, at least at national and regional levels
- Crisis Management Group and Nodal Officers at different levels of government bodies are not operating as stipulated.

Many things have changed within government structures since the declaration of the NPDPM and the mandates of some ministries have changed. The proclamation that established the then DPPC has been modified and the role of EGS (safety net) has been given to another government body. The existing policy needs revisiting according to the changes made.

To ensure the ratification of a good policy for disaster risk reduction or the revision of the existing policy, concerned agencies need to be engaged in evidence-based advocacy and campaign work. The agencies should have an advocacy strategy and should network with all stakeholders to contribute meaningfully towards influencing policies and practices.

## **Advocacy**

Advocacy is the promotion of good policies, strategies and best practices as well as calling for changes to existing but inappropriate ones. It involves positively influencing decision-makers to provide legislative and policy support for ideas, beliefs and practices that work well and revisiting or changing those that do not. Advocates need to base their arguments on facts and action research will often be required to obtain evidence to explain how and why a certain initiative is working or not.

Advocacy in relation to disaster risk reduction can be understood as a positive instrument of influencing decision-makers to adopt appropriate policies, strategies, legislations and other relevant actions that reduce vulnerability. Pointing out gaps in existing policies and suggesting alternative policy options and practical strategies that facilitate the implementation of disaster risk reduction are important areas for advocacy.

## **Role of agencies in advocacy**

The advocacy role of NGOs and other CSOs is not well developed in Ethiopia and there are no strong pressure groups. Many fear to engage in advocacy work because the Government and even CSOs often associate it with political activism, which is considered beyond the mandate of NGOs. With the existing constraints and challenges, NGOs and other CSOs should:

- understand the purpose of advocacy and change the perception that it is not associated with politics
- develop their individual organizational advocacy strategy
- prepare a framework for joint advocacy work for the country
- identify gaps in policies and legislation for disaster risk reduction
- lobby the Government to refine and/or revise the NPDPM
- gather evidence within their programme areas on what is working and why, what is not and prepare to advocate for the best approach
- form advocacy and campaign alliances and networks
- advocate for government and donors' policy changes to improve efficiency on disaster risk reduction
- advocate for better allocation of resources by government and donors to address the root causes of vulnerability
- influence development and humanitarian actors to eliminate recurring disasters in the country through intensifying poverty reduction programmes
- advocate for the linking of development and humanitarian interventions
- lobby and influence government to treat separately acute and chronic needs and to allocate the necessary resources for each as well as create the enabling policy environment
- target key individuals in government or parliament and lobby them so that issues reach decision-makers.

## **Strategies for advocacy**

Different agencies have shown that service delivery cannot bring about the required results unless this is supported by appropriate policies. However, influencing policy and changing practice through advocacy is not easy in Ethiopia. Most agencies feel that advocacy is a sensitive issue and it is not understood in the same way by different agencies. For some, it is confrontation with the Government, while for others it can be supportive of the Government if done properly.

Advocacy needs skills and appropriate strategies. The strategy for advocacy includes identifying issues, looking into and consolidating supportive evidence, defining the objectives, articulating the messages and choosing the means for delivering them, making force-field analysis – that is identifying the forces for

and against the issue, building alliance with like-minded bodies, identifying the target of advocacy, setting timeframes and conducting campaigns. The following are some specific approaches:

- Networking with like-minded organizations and individuals provides more evidence and creates more opportunities to be heard.
- Bringing donors, NGOs, UN bodies and communities on board helps to pressurize and influence change within the Government.
- Bringing government bodies, NGOs, CBOs and communities together to influence donors' policies and approaches can be effective.
- Lobbying individual advisors, key people in government, members of parliament and others that can be positively influenced to join the campaign.

Use various means including circulating letters, one-to-one discussions, organizing meetings, workshops, symposia, conferences and discussion forums, the media, or even organizing peaceful rallies.

#### **Oxfam America's coffee campaign**

People in the business call it a 'coffee crisis,' but most consumers are blissfully unaware that unstable prices and lack of direct market access are causing devastation, despair, and hunger for 25 million coffee farming families around the world. Even as the price of coffee rises from a 30-year low, small-scale coffee farmers still cannot earn a decent income, not to mention afford basic family expenses like food, healthcare, and education. Structural dynamics and power imbalances in the coffee supply chain continue to cause instability for farmers in the 60 countries where coffee is produced.

Oxfam America works with a broad range of groups—coffee farmers, US consumers, policy makers, retailers, and the coffee industry—to create sustainable solutions to poverty in coffee communities.

Oxfam seeks to create an environment where coffee farmers and farm workers are fairly rewarded for their hard work. Fair trade certification, which guarantees that small-scale coffee farmers are paid a basic price, is one piece of that strategy.

By connecting our work with coffee producers in Central America and East Africa, with consumer education, political advocacy and corporate engagement, Oxfam America is able to develop creative strategies that address the complex challenges facing small-scale coffee farmers around the world.

*Producers:* Through close connections with our coffee producing partners, Oxfam America maintains first-hand understanding of the impacts of the coffee crisis and the needs of coffee communities. By supporting small-scale farmer cooperatives in six countries, Oxfam works to overcome the impacts of the crisis by supporting the development of cooperative business infrastructure and farmers' ability to access the most profitable markets for their coffee.

*Consumers:* Who are Oxfam America's supporters? There are over 350 college campuses and 800 students who have been active on issues of fair trade and the coffee crisis. They have been active in the community realm as well. They work with faith organizations, environmental justice groups, community-based organizations, immigration organizations and many others to support local campaigns from our national advocacy office. Oxfam America supporters have been a key component in the success of the coffee program.

*Governments:* In order for coffee farmers to receive a truly fair deal, Oxfam works to reform trade policies that have historically left small-scale farmers with the cards stacked against them. To level the playing field, Oxfam works to ensure a voice for smallholder farmers in the global institutions that set the rules for coffee trade. Through advocacy and work with political allies, Oxfam encourages government institutions to include programs that support quality improvement programs, direct market access, rural financing, and diversification initiatives - all of which help increase the incomes of coffee farming families.

*Corporations:* Oxfam acknowledges that a comprehensive solution to the coffee crisis must include participation of the coffee industry. Through informed dialogue with coffee companies and retailers, Oxfam seeks to promote business practices that include prices which guarantee a sustainable livelihood for farmers and a sustainable supply of quality coffee for the industry.

This year Oxfam America has joined a broad coalition of student groups, NGOs and Ethiopian community members, all calling on Starbucks to help Ethiopian farmers make more off their crops.

More than a year ago, Ethiopia approached Starbucks and asked the company to lead the coffee industry by example and sign an agreement recognizing Ethiopia's legal ownership of its fine coffee names. If companies like Starbucks signed such agreements, Ethiopia would occupy a stronger negotiating position with foreign buyers, capture a larger share of the market associated with its coffee names, and better protect its brands.

Despite its much-publicized commitments to farming communities, however, Starbucks has yet to take Ethiopia seriously. That's why Oxfam and the other coalition members are calling on Starbucks to recognize the right of Ethiopians to make better profits off their coffee names.

*What's in a name?*

Well, a lot actually. Take 'Volvo.' Volvos aren't any old cars. The name 'Volvo' connotes a high level of quality. A family car. A company that does not compromise on safety. According to their website, every Volvo "is the sum total of more than 70 years of focusing on safety. Which means you're not just driving a car. You're driving a promise." And the Volvo name—its brand—commands a higher price and the allegiance of consumers.

It's the same for coffee names like Ethiopia's *Sidamo*, *Harar*, and *Yirgacheffe*. Coffees marketed under these names promise quality. Companies like Starbucks can charge consumers more for these coffees because they're considered among the finest in the world.

The problem is that the poor farmers who've grown this gourmet coffee for generations aren't seeing much of the profits. Ethiopian coffee farmers often collect about 10 percent of the profits from these coffees. The rest goes to the coffee industry players that can control the retail price, the international importers, distributors – and roasters like Starbucks.

If successful, Ethiopia's names project could bring an estimated additional US\$88 million a year in revenues. In a country where about 15 million people depend on coffee, that amounts to significantly more money for food, health care, and education.



Source: Oxfam America

## The targets of advocacy

The Government of Ethiopia is primarily responsible and accountable for planning and implementing appropriate development policies and programmes to reduce poverty and human suffering. It can discharge these responsibilities through facilitating the participation of all actors and by designing appropriate policies and strategies. Its political commitment should be manifest not only through having policies and strategies, but also through the practical measures it is taking. Other actors cannot assume the development role of government.



But if government policies, strategies and practices do not achieve the goal of reducing poverty and human suffering, other actors need to help the government realize its shortcomings by bringing tested examples of good practice. Policy-makers tend to defend their positions and simply requesting them to change may not work; it is often necessary to put pressure collectively through lobbying and joint campaigns.

## **Good donorship**

The role of external funding is important for poor countries like Ethiopia. Huge amounts of assistance flows into the country every year. However, there are problems of focus, approaches, mismatched partnerships and differing priorities, amongst others. Here it is important to highlight the quality of good 'donorship'.

Institutional donors like the World Bank, IMF, USAID, DFID, CIDA, SIDA, GTZ, individual governments and multi-lateral donors like the EU and UN bodies (WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, etc) are providing substantial amount of funds to Ethiopia. Humanitarian aid in particular has been generously channelled to the country since the 1973/74 famine. However, the country's vulnerability to disaster has persisted; in fact it now even greater than it was 33 years ago.

Some argue that development is the responsibility of national governments and not humanitarian organizations. While this is true in principle, humanitarian organizations come to assist because the emergency situation is beyond the response capacity of national governments. Similarly, when eradicating poverty and the resulting vulnerability to disasters is beyond the capacity of poor countries, support should be given to address the root causes of vulnerability rather than supporting very costly interventions during emergencies under a normally fragile economic environment. Unfortunately the approaches of donors were generally reactive during emergencies, without linkage to development. Recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts were very limited.

Advocacy to donors should focus on:

- tackling the root causes of poverty, supporting preventive actions and not just emergencies
- promoting sustainable development programmes that reduce vulnerability
- linking development with relief
- supporting the development of local capacity to respond
- committing multi-year assistance
- working in coordination with other actors
- using local resources and importing food and other resources only if they are not available in-country
- adhering to the elements of good governance: participation, responsiveness, transparency, accountability.

There are times when famines have occurred due to lack of responsiveness of donors. It is important to persuade funding agencies to focus on prevention and mitigation and also on effective response; internalize the relationship between emergency and development; commit long term development funding; appreciate the importance of capacity building and coordination and support capacity