



Recommendation

Culture Empowerment of women Partnerships

Colombia

Tips for building partnerships in community emergencies in Colombia – by Fundación Mujer y Futuro¹

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General tips for building partnerships in community emergencies in Colombia

Description	Practical examples
Tip: Acknowledging the context and culture of the communities we are planning to work with.	
Throughout the whole project we need to consider and recognise the context of the different communities, as well as their culture, diversity and any potential situations which may change this context. This involves understanding the structures of society, dynamics of power relations, as well as material and non-material resources available to the communities to ensure their own protection and development. Similarly, it is important to consider the obstacles and barriers which will need to be prevented and overcome.	<p>Agreements between communities/partners and international organizations stating the scope of the convention in relation to the communities' different needs according to their context and culture.</p> <p>Implementing actions based on community engagement allowing for the recognition of community contexts whilst promoting risk shifting and protection capacity building.</p>
Tip: Identifying and recognising real leadership within communities.	
In individual/household assistance within groups/collectives, it is important to identify women's leadership in cases of gender-based violence. This will allow us to react to warning situations in order to implement protection routes.	In the humanitarian response in both Santander departments (Santander and Norte de Santander), before initiating humanitarian transport plans, we identified two women leaders who had access to the information (contact phone numbers) as well as the ability to manage any risk situations identified along the journey.

Tip: Relying on the work previously done by the partner in that location.

In project specifications we need to consider the existing local capacity via the partner's expertise, technical knowledge and work teams as well as their approaches, principles and achievements on people and community protection.

In Santander department, the organisation Fundación Mujer y Futuro has provided recognised leadership in women's rights defence and the requirement to live free from violence, both through protection plans and advocacy work supported by the current humanitarian response in Colombia.

Tips for developing a trusting relationship between international organizations and partners/communities

The relationship always needs to be developed from the community social base and the people affected by emergencies, setting up a dialogue with partners and international organizations, who will need to adapt to the local resources and people's needs.

The relationship is built through assertive communication based on respecting the work carried out by local organizations and their knowledge and expertise on the relevant matter.

Ideally, needs assessments will be undertaken by participatory action and research efforts, allowing the communities to identify their own needs as well as any potential strategies to meet them.

Tips regarding the accountability of international organizations towards its partners and the communities

Introducing joint responsibility as a key action for process development in order to help change people's perceptions. This joint responsibility is achieved by recognising everyone's active responsibility for their own protection.

Identifying women leaders within the communities in order to allocate roles to them according to their skills and capacities; this allows them to own these processes and empower themselves as key actors by using support networks.

Recognising that the humanitarian response and protection actions within the communities imply both the State's responsibility and the set of responsibilities accepted in the humanitarian principles through the existing local structure. For this reason, working collaboratively and as part of a network is essential for the exercise of protection.

Example: The "40 días por la vida y la dignidad de las mujeres" strategy (40 days for the life and dignity of women) targeted the migrant population with a desire to stay "who were stranded due to the border closure for COVID-19", and the host communities. This campaign took place in hotels and temporary accommodation in the centre of Bucaramanga in order to provide people with food assistance, shelter, advice and case management regarding protection. A range of strategies were implemented as part of the campaign, such as coordination with public bodies (Profamilia-Defensoría del Pueblo) and humanitarian structures (Red Cross, Action against Hunger) for protection purposes, and to guarantee the rights to health and justice, with an emphasis on sexual and reproductive health as well as prevention of gender-based violence. Furthermore, the strengthening of women's leadership in the relevant hotels and accommodations linked to the strategy promoted joint responsibility in relation to community-based protection in these contexts.