



GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACHES IN SOMALI COMMUNITIES

**Participant Handbook
ToGETHER 2.0 Programme**

Developed by:  **ABYAN
Consulting**

Table Contents

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK	3
HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK	3
1. GENDER, INTERSECTIONALITY, POWER & ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON GENDER EQUITY IN THE SOMALI CONTEXT	3
2. GENDER MAINSTREAMING, DISABILITY INCLUSION AND CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING	8
3. POSITIVE MASCULINITY, CLAN ENGAGEMENT & WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SOMALI CONTEXT	11
4. GBV PREVENTION, SURVIVOR-CENTERED RESPONSE & ETHICAL DATA PRACTICES	13
5. GENDER-RESPONSIVE LIVELIHOODS AND PROTECTION IN DISPLACEMENT SETTINGS	16
6. CLIMATE CHANGE, GENDER & SECTORAL RESILIENCE IN DISPLACEMENT CONTEXTS	19
7. ORGANIZATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY, LEADERSHIP, DO NO HARM AND SAFEGUARDING IN CONSERVATIVE CONTEXTS	20
8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING FOR GENDER SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING	22
9. DESK REVIEW FINDINGS: LHP GENDER GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES	24
10. ACTION PLANNING AND APPLICATION	26

TABLE CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook supports Somali Local Humanitarian Partners (LHPs) to apply practical, low-cost, inclusive innovation approaches in humanitarian and community development programming.

It is:

- Practical
- Context-specific
- Participant-friendly
- Action-oriented

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed for:

- Training sessions
- Group discussions
- Organizational reflection
- Innovation planning

Each unit includes:

- Key concepts
- Practical tools
- Reflection questions

Unit 1:

GENDER, INTERSECTIONALITY, POWER & ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON GENDER EQUITY IN THE SOMALI CONTEXT

1. Understanding Gender in Somalia

Sex vs. Gender

Sex (Biological)	Gender (social)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biological and physical differences between males and females• Fixed and natural God given (e.g., pregnancy, reproductive organs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socially constructed roles, behaviors and expectations• Defined by Somali community norms• Can change due to drought, conflict, migration, urbanization

Key Message: Sex is biological. Gender roles are social and can change.

Gender Roles in Somalia

Definition: Tasks, responsibilities and behaviors assigned based on gender.

Women's Triple Role	Men's Roles
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reproductive (childcare, domestic work) 2. Productive (income generation) 3. Community management (social cohesion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection • Community politics • Livelihood provision

2. Gender Equality vs Gender Equity

In Somalia, “sameness” creates resistance. “Justice” resonates culturally and religiously.

Equality vs. Equity in Somalia

Understanding Fair Distribution

EQUALITY

Same resources for everyone



Equality = End state: equal rights, status.

EQUITY

Resources according needs



Equity = Process: being fair.

In Somalia, 'Equality' is often mistranslated as 'sameness', which causes cultural friction. 'Equity' is more culturally and religiously resonant.

Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same resources for everyone • End state of equal rights and status
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair distribution based on need • Process of correcting imbalance

3. Inclusion & Disability Inclusion

Definition	Key Barriers
<p>Ensuring all groups including Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), marginalized, minority have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal access • Participation • Dignity • Decision-making power <p>Disability is not the impairment — it is the barrier.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical (stairs, distance) • Communication (language, literacy) • Attitudinal (stigma) • Cultural exclusion

4. Intersectionality

Definition

Overlapping identities / risk is defined by multiple layers: gender, clan, age, disability, displacement create layered vulnerability.

A woman may also be:

- Minority clan
- IDP
- Widow
- Living with disability


Vulnerability is not a competition. It is a targeting tool.

5. Minority Clan Exclusion


Minority Clan Exclusion

Marginalization of less powerful groups affecting access and decision-making in Somalia

Minority Clans




Historically excluded, less powerful groups lacking protection & status




Numerically smaller groups lacking protection & status

Marginalized Groups



Vulnerable groups facing exclusion due circumstances



Vulnerable groups excluded due poverty, displacement, gender, age, or disability

Clan power influences:

- Access to aid
- Decision-making
- Protection

Neutrality requires proactive inclusion. Use transparent targeting to ensure minority clans are not “skipped” by majority gatekeepers.

6. Islamic Principles of Dignity, Justice and protection

Gender equity is not a Western import; it is an Islamic mandate. It is rooted in Adl (Justice).

<p>Equality in Faith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qur’an – Al-Ahzab 33:35 <p>Believing men and women are equal in reward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah An-Nisa 4:135 <p>Stand firmly for justice.</p>	<p>Human Dignity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al-Isra 17:70 <p>“All children of Adam are honored.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prophet Muhammad <p>“The best of you are the best to their wives.” (Tirmidhi)</p>
<p>Mutual Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al-Baqarah 2:228 <p>Women have rights similar to those over them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At-Tawbah 9:71 <p>Believing men and women are protectors of one another.</p> <p>Reciprocity: Men and women are “Ayliya” (protectors) of one another (Surah At-Tawbah 9:71).</p>	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadith (Ibn Majah) <p>Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.</p>

7. Engaging Religious Leaders

Why Engage?

- Religious leaders shape norms.
- They can shift from gatekeepers to advocates.

Strategies

- Use Islamic evidence
- Show community benefit
- Respect cultural norms
- Frame inclusion as protection and justice

8. Countering Harmful Interpretations power and Access Mapping

Culture and religion	Power & Access Mapping
<p>Culture is man-made and changeable. Religion promotes justice.</p> <p>Trace common restrictions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic religious sources • Cultural traditions 	<p>Power determines access to aid.</p> <p>Common power holders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elders • Men • Majority clans • Landlords • Militia

9. Implications for Humanitarian Programming

If we ignore:

- Gender
- Intersectionality
- Power
- Islamic justice principles

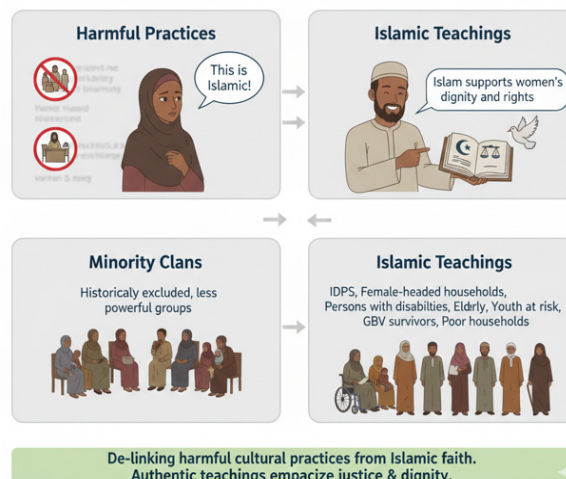
We risk unsafe, ineffective, and undignified aid.

Gender-Responsive Action Checklist:

- Analyze gender roles
- Identify intersectional vulnerabilities
- Map power and gatekeepers
- Ensure minority inclusion
- Remove disability barriers
- Engage religious leaders
- Use Islamic justice framing
- Design equitable targeting
- Ensure safe access to services
- Monitor participation and feedback

Countering Harmful Interpretations

Challenging misinterpretations that restrict women's rights



Reflection	<p>Gender equity in Somalia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is dynamic • Is contextual • Is intersectional • Is deeply rooted in Islamic justice <p>If we fail to apply these principles, we are not only failing gender — we are failing humanitarian effectiveness.</p>
-------------------	---

Unit 2:

GENDER MAINSTREAMING, DISABILITY INCLUSION AND CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING

1. Gender-Sensitive Conflict Analysis

<p>Gender-sensitive conflict analysis examines how conflict affects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women • Men • Girls • Boys • Persons with disabilities <p>It analyzes how power, access to resources and risks change during crisis and how roles may fuel or resolve conflict.</p> <p>Conflict is not gender-neutral. Changing roles increase both vulnerability and resilience.</p>	<p>Key Questions (“Who” Questions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who does what? • Who controls resources? • Who has access to aid? • Who is most exposed to risk? • Who benefits — and who is excluded?
---	--

2. Gender in Needs Assessments

<p>Def: Gender-responsive assessments collect and analyze:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex-disaggregated data • Age-disaggregated data • Disability-disaggregated data <p>(SADDD)</p> <p>“The community” is not one voice.</p>	<p>Why It Matters</p> <p>If you only interview the Village Head (usually a man), you get only half the story.</p> <p>Separate consultations are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women • Minority clans • Adolescents • Persons with disabilities
---	--

3. How conflict shapes Gender Roles & GBV Risks

<p>Definition</p> <p>Conflict reshapes gender roles, forcing a shift and increases risks of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence • Exploitation • Domestic violence • Harmful coping mechanisms <p>War often pushes women into breadwinner roles while increasing exposure to GB</p>	<p>GBV Risk Mitigation</p> <p>GBV risk mitigation is not the same as GBV response.</p> <p>All sectors must reduce risks in their programming.</p> <p>Red Zones: Identifying areas where women and girls feel unsafe, such as firewood collection points or poorly lit latrines.</p> <p>Mitigation: Ensuring WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities are centrally located, well-lit, and have internal locks.</p>
--	---

Conflict changes power and increases GBV risks — but may also open leadership space for women.

4. Disability Inclusion

<p>Definition</p> <p>Disability inclusion ensures persons with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical disabilities • Sensory disabilities • Psychosocial disabilities • Intellectual disabilities <p>Can access, participate in and benefit from assistance equally</p>	<p>Key Principle: Twin-Track Approach</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mainstream inclusion in all programs 2. Provide targeted support where needed
<p>Types of Barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical (stairs, distance) • Communication (no sign language) • Attitudinal (stigma) • Psychosocial (trauma exclusion) <p>Disability is not only visible. Somalia’s long conflict has increased psychosocial disability significantly.</p>	

5. Risk Mapping and Mitigation

Definition

Risk mapping identifies:

- Potential harm
- Exclusion
- Conflict triggers
- GBV risks
- Aid diversion

Risk Mitigation Principles

- Continuous monitoring
- Community feedback mechanisms
- Transparent targeting
- Separate consultations
- Safe reporting channels
- Conflict-sensitive distribution

Reflection

Gender mainstreaming, disability inclusion and conflict sensitivity are:

- Not optional
- Not add-ons
- Not donor language

They are quality standards that:

- Save lives
- Protect dignity
- Prevent violence
- Strengthen resilience

Inclusive programming is effective programming.

By using SADDD and Risk Mapping, we ensure that aid reaches the 100%, not just the most visible 50%.

POSITIVE MASCULINITY, CLAN ENGAGEMENT & WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SOMALI CONTEXT

1. Positive Masculinity in Somali Culture

Definition

Positive masculinity refers to culturally valued male roles that promote:

- • Protection of the vulnerable
- • Responsibility and fairness
- • Non-violence
- • Care for family
- • Service to community

Grounded in Somali tradition and Islamic values.

True strength is wisdom, justice, and protection — not dominance.

Do not blame men. Call men back to noble roles rooted in dignity and responsibility.

Promote gender equality using local definitions of honor and manhood.

2. Harmful Gender Norms Affecting Men & Boys

<p>Definition</p> <p>Harmful norms pressure men to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sole providers • Suppress emotion • Engage in violence • Prioritize clan honor over safety 	<p>These pressures can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Recruitment into armed groups • Substance abuse • Domestic violence <p>Gender norms harm everyone — not only women.</p>
---	--

Men are not only perpetrators — they are also affected by rigid norms.

3. Engaging Male Youth, Fathers, Elders & Religious Leaders

Definition

Engagement is respectful partnership — not confrontation.

Different groups require different approaches.

A one-size-fits-all approach fails.

Messaging must be tailored to the specific group: men, boys, youth, elders, fathers

4. Mapping Clan Decision-Making Structures

Definition

Clan structures determine:

- • Who makes decisions
- • Who influences decisions
- • Who controls resources

Ignoring clan systems leads to project failure. Work within the structure to transform it from the inside.

5. Entry Points for Women's Participation

Definition

Entry points are culturally acceptable mechanisms that allow women to participate without backlash.

Examples:

- • Women's committees
- • Consultative forums
- • Representation through trusted intermediaries

6. Negotiation Strategies with Elders

Definition

Negotiation is respectful dialogue that maintains principles while seeking agreement.

You can be firm on inclusion and soft in tone.

The Three-Argument Approach:

1. Technical Argument
 - Donor and policy requirements
2. Practical Argument
 - Women understand household needs
3. Religious Argument
 - Inclusion is an Amaanah (trust and responsibility)

Ground religious arguments in justice and protection principles found in the Qur'an.

<p>Reflection</p> <p>If participants rely only on “Donor Rules”:</p> <p>Remember:</p> <p>Donor rules expire.</p> <p>Community ownership lasts.</p>	<p>Key Negotiation Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen first • Avoid confrontation • Emphasize shared goals • Use cultural and religious legitimacy • Build gradual agreement <p>Respect builds access.</p>
--	---

Core Principles of Unit 3

- Engage men as allies
- Avoid blaming language
- Use Somali cultural anchors
- Ground arguments in justice and protection
- Map power before acting
- Create safe, negotiated entry points
- Promote meaningful — not symbolic — participation

Engaging men, boys, elders and religious leaders is not about challenging culture.

It is about working within culture to:

- Protect dignity
- Promote justice
- Strengthen families
- Build resilient communities

Positive masculinity, respectful negotiation and inclusive clan engagement are tools for sustainable change.

Unit 4:

GBV PREVENTION, SURVIVOR-CENTERED RESPONSE & ETHICAL DATA PRACTICES

1. GBV, Conflict Trauma and Climate-Related Stress

Definition

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts committed against a person’s will based on gender roles and inequalities.

GBV:

- Is rooted in abuse of power
- Involves force, coercion or threats (not only physical violence)
- Occurs without informed consent
- Is intensified by conflict, displacement and climate shocks

GBV is not just a “social issue.” It is a humanitarian protection priority linked to conflict

GBV affects women and girls disproportionately, but men and boys can also be survivors.

Understanding Power

Power = the ability to make decisions and control resources.

Those with less power:

- Have fewer choices
- Are more vulnerable to abuse

When men lose traditional provider roles, harmful coping behaviors can increase. Addressing root stressors reduces violence risk.

To prevent GBV, we must analyze power relations between:

- Men and women
- Adults and children
- Majority and minority clans
- Persons with and without disabilities

GBV is never justified — regardless of stress or crisis.

2. Informed Consent

Definition

Informed consent is a voluntary, informed and ongoing agreement to share information or receive services.

It must be:

- Free of pressure
- Understood by the survivor
- Withdrawable at any time
- Fully explained

No service should ever be conditional on disclosure.

Definition

An approach that prioritizes the survivor's:

- Safety
- Confidentiality
- Dignity
- Choices

The survivor is the primary decision-maker.

Core Principles

1. Safety
2. Confidentiality
3. Respect
4. Non-discrimination

4. Confidentiality and Data Minimization

Definitions

Confidentiality = Protecting information from unauthorized access.

Data Minimization = Collecting only what is absolutely necessary.

Less data = Less risk.

Survivors own their information.

Case Coding: Never use names or clan identifiers on shared documents. Use anonymous codes (e.g., “Case 001-Galkayo”).

Need-to-Know Basis: Sensitive information should never be discussed in open coordination meetings or stored on shared, unencrypted computers.

5. Safe Storage & Sharing Protocols

Definition

Safe storage and sharing protocols protect sensitive information through:

- Controlled access
- Secure physical storage
- Password-protected digital systems
- Need-to-know sharing

Key Considerations in Somali Context

- Clan retaliation risks
- Gatekeepers demanding beneficiary lists
- Insecure mobile offices

Organizations must have a clear policy for refusing unsafe data-sharing requests.

6. Gender-Responsive MHPSS Integration

Definition

Gender-responsive MHPSS addresses trauma while recognizing that:

- Women and men experience distress differently
- Coping mechanisms vary
- Barriers to care differ

MHPSS = restoring dignity, safety and social support — not only therapy

Staff should not act as counselors unless trained. MHPSS is often about restoring social networks and dignity.

Survivor-centered care, ethical data practices and mental health support are non-negotiable humanitarian standards.

Protecting dignity, safety and trust is as important as delivering assistance.

Without trust, there is no protection.

Without protection, there is no dignity.

Core Principles of Unit 4

- GBV prevention is everyone's responsibility
- Survivor safety comes first
- Consent is non-negotiable
- Collect minimal data
- Store information securely
- Share information only when necessary
- Integrate MHPSS across sectors
- Protect staff as well as survivors

Unit 5:

GENDER-RESPONSIVE LIVELIHOODS AND PROTECTION IN DISPLACEMENT SETTINGS

1. Gendered Impacts of Displacement and Protection Risks in IDP Camps

Definition

Displacement disrupts:

- Traditional livelihoods
- Clan-based protection systems
- Social roles and economic structures

In IDP camps, this often results in:

- Increased unpaid care burden for women
- Reduced income opportunities
- Heightened exposure to exploitation and GBV
- Exclusion from aid due to clan or gatekeeper dynamics

Loss of “home” changes economic power and safety dynamics.

Displacement creates a power vacuum.

Men often lose physical assets (land, livestock, status).

Women often lose protection and safety.

This imbalance increases vulnerability to harmful coping strategies such as:

- Survival sex
- Child labor
- Skipping meals
- Debt exploitation

Displacement reshapes gender roles and increases livelihood-related protection risks.

2. Female-Headed Households (FHH) and Protection Risks

Definition

Female-headed households are households where women are the primary decision-makers and income earners, often due to:

- Widowhood
- Abandonment
- Migration
- Conflict-related separation

Prioritize FHHs for secure, protection-sensitive support.

3. Inclusive Livelihoods in the Somali Context

Definition

Inclusive livelihoods are:

- Context-appropriate
- Market-driven
- Accessible to women, youth, PWDs and minority clans
- Aligned with cultural norms and local demand

Move beyond saturated activities like tailoring toward:

- Higher-value trades
- Informal economy sectors
- Agro-pastoral value chains

Shift from “activity-based” to “market-driven” programming.

4. Preventing Livelihood-Related GBV Risks

Definition

Livelihood-related GBV risks occur when income activities expose women and girls to:

- Violence
- Backlash
- Control of earnings
- Exploitation

Economic empowerment without protection can increase risk.

Integrate “Do No Harm” into economic programming.

5. Informal Economy & Agro-Pastoral Systems

Definition

The Somali economy relies heavily on:

- Informal trade
- Agro-pastoral systems

Women play key roles in both.

In agro-pastoral systems:

- Women often manage small livestock and milk
- Men manage large livestock

Both systems are vulnerable to climate shocks.

6. Cash, Digital Financial Services & Financial Safety

Definition

Cash and digital services increase privacy and inclusion but may expose women to:

- PIN control issues
- Surveillance
- Fraud
- Exclusion due to illiteracy

In Somalia, mobile money platforms like:

- Hormuud Telecom (EVC+)
- Golis Telecom (Sahal)

are widely used. Mobile money can be a protection tool — but only if designed safely.

Challenge one-size-fits-all approaches.

Reflection

Economic empowerment must:

- Increase safety
- Protect dignity
- Strengthen choice
- Reduce exposure to harm

Gender-responsive livelihoods require:

- Protection integration
- Community dialogue
- Market-driven design
- Context sensitivity

Empowerment without safety is risk.

Safety with dignity creates resilience.

CLIMATE CHANGE, GENDER & SECTORAL RESILIENCE IN DIS-PLACEMENT CONTEXTS

1. Climate Change and Gender Vulnerability

<p>Definition</p> <p>Climate change increases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought cycles • Flooding • Heat stress • Resource scarcity <p>In contexts like Somalia, repeated drought–flood cycles are not gender-neutral.</p> <p>Climate shocks create differentiated gender vulnerabilities that must inform programming</p>	<p>Climate shocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the distance women travel for water • Push men to migrate for work • Increase unpaid care burdens • Reduce food intake for women who often eat last • Expose girls to school dropout • Increase risks for older persons and persons with disabilities <p>Vulnerability is linked to access and power, not weakness.</p> <p>Resilience planning must reduce women’s workload and exposure to risk.</p>
---	---

2. Gender-Responsive WASH Programming

Definition

Gender-responsive WASH ensures:

- Safety
- Accessibility
- Privacy
- Dignity
- Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)

WASH services must reduce care burdens and protection risks.

3. Shelter, Privacy and Safety

<p>Definition</p> <p>Gender-responsive shelter ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Safety • Cultural appropriateness • Accessibility <p>In IDP camps, shelter is the first line of protection.</p>	<p>Lack of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partitions • Doors • Lighting <p>Increases harassment and GBV risks.</p> <p>Identify shelter-related risks and design gender-responsive solutions.</p>
---	---

4. Nutrition and Care Burdens

Definition

Nutrition outcomes are linked to:

- Women's unpaid care work
- Food preparation
- Breastfeeding
- Household management

Climate shocks increase the “double burden” on women.

Women often have the least access to high-protein food but carry the greatest nutrition responsibility.

5. Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience

Definition

Climate adaptation means shifting from emergency response to long-term resilience through:

- Community-led solutions
- Gender-inclusive leadership
- Sustainable resource management

Women are often effective resource managers but excluded from decision-making.

Reflection: Climate-responsive services must:

- Protect dignity
- Reduce risk
- Address unequal workloads
- Strengthen women's leadership
- Build long-term resilience

Gender-responsive sectoral programming is not optional — it is essential for effective humanitarian and climate action.

Unit 7:

ORGANIZATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY, LEADERSHIP, DO NO HARM AND SAFEGUARDING IN CONSERVATIVE CONTEXTS

1. Recruitment and Leadership

Definition

Gender-responsive recruitment and leadership ensure fair access, representation, and progression for women and marginalized groups at all levels — while respecting context and maintaining safety.

It means intentionally ensuring women are not only hired as field staff, but are represented in senior management and decision-making roles.

2. Pay Equity and Safeguarding Culture

Definition

Pay equity = equal pay for work of equal value regardless of gender or clan.

Safeguarding culture = zero tolerance for abuse, exploitation, and discrimination, supported by accountability and safe reporting systems.

Pay equity and safeguarding culture strengthen organizational integrity and donor trust.

3. Power Dynamics and Clan Relations

Definition

Power dynamics shaped by clan systems influence jobs, promotions, resources, and protection. These must be navigated carefully to maintain neutrality and fairness.

Senior clan members must actively support inclusion — equality will not happen automatically.

4. Risks of Backlash against Women's Participation

Definition

Backlash refers to social, emotional, or violent reactions triggered by women's increased visibility or leadership.

Mitigation Strategies

- Early engagement with elders and families
- Community dialogue
- Male champions
- Clear security plans
- Confidential reporting

5. PSEA and Child Safeguarding

Definition

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) prohibits any abuse of power for sexual gain.

Aid is a right — never a favor.

Safeguarding Culture: An environment where the lowest-ranking staff member feels safe reporting a senior manager's misconduct without fear of losing their job.

The Six Core Principles of PSEA:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct.
- Sexual activity with children (under 18) is prohibited.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex is prohibited.
- Sexual relationships between staff and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged as they undermine the credibility of aid.
- Where a staff member develops concerns regarding sexual exploitation, they must report it.
- Staff must create an environment that prevents SEA.

Reflection

Gender equality, safeguarding, and Do No Harm are organizational responsibilities — not personal preferences.

Ethical leadership:

- Builds trust
- Protects staff and communities
- Strengthens humanitarian impact
- Reduces operational risk
- Enhances donor credibility

In conservative and complex contexts like Somalia, gender-responsive leadership is not only a moral responsibility — it is a strategic necessity.

Unit 8:

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING FOR GENDER SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING

1. Sex- and Age-Disaggregated Data (SADD)

Definition

Sex- and Age-Disaggregated Data (SADD) refers to collecting and analyzing data separately for women, men, girls, and boys further broken down by age, disability, displacement status, and clan where appropriate.

SADD answers the question:

Who is benefiting and who is invisible?

In Somalia, this must include intersectional analysis (e.g., minority-clan women with disabilities, displaced adolescent girls).

- SADD is a minimum humanitarian standard, not optional.
- Encourage use of SADD+C:
 - o Sex
 - o Age
 - o Disability
 - o Displacement
 - o Clan
- Reinforce confidentiality and Do No Harm when collecting sensitive data.

2. Outcome Indicators vs Activity Indicators

Definition	Outcome Indicators
Activity Indicators Measure what the project does.	Measure the change resulting from the activity.
Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of women trained• Number of meetings held• Number of hygiene kits distributed SMART Reminder	Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of women reporting increased decision-making power• Reduction in reported harassment incidents• Increased safe access to services
Indicators must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific• Measurable• Achievable• Relevant• Time-bound	Activity = Counting effort Outcome = Measuring change Shift from output reporting to impact measurement.

3. Qualitative Feedback and Adaptive Programming

Definition

Qualitative feedback captures experiences, perceptions, and stories through:

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Key Informant Interviews (KIs)
- Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms (CFM)
- Stories of Change
- Numbers tell you what happened.
- Stories tell you why it happened.

Use qualitative data to improve programming.

Exercise 1: Listening Beyond Numbers

4. Internal Gender Audits and Action Planning

Definition

An internal gender audit systematically reviews:

- Policies
- Staffing
- Budget allocation
- Data practices
- Organizational culture

It asks:

Are we practicing the equality we promote?

Translate analysis into action.

An organization cannot promote dignity externally if it denies dignity internally — especially to women and minority-clan staff.

Reflection

Gender-sensitive MEL is not about collecting more data.

It is about:

- Asking better questions
- Making invisible groups visible
- Listening with humility
- Acting responsibly
- Protecting dignity

Data without action is paperwork.

Data with action is justice.

Unit 9:**DESK REVIEW FINDINGS: LHP GENDER GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES****1. Analyzing Identified Gaps**

Gender Treated as a Checklist, Not a Practice

Definition

This gap occurs when gender requirements are fulfilled superficially — ticking donor boxes without meaningful integration into design, implementation, monitoring, or decision-making.

Gender becomes a reporting paragraph — not an operational reality.

2. limited Disability Inclusion**Definition**

Disability inclusion is weak when persons with disabilities are listed as beneficiaries but not meaningfully consulted or accommodated.

- Inclusion is often avoided because it is perceived as expensive or technical.
- In reality, exclusion is a systems failure — not a resource problem.
- Inclusion is a mindset before it is a budget line.
- Identify low-cost, high-impact inclusion strategies.

3. Weak Safeguarding Systems

Definition

Weak safeguarding systems lack:

- Clear reporting channels
- Staff awareness
- Survivor-centered response
- Leadership accountability

In Somalia, fear of clan retaliation often prevents reporting.

Assess safeguarding gaps and identify priority actions.

If we do not document gender outcomes, we cannot prove impact — to donors or communities.

4. Low Documentation of Gender Outcomes

Definition

This gap occurs when reports focus on activities completed rather than changes achieved:

- Participation
- Safety
- Decision-making
- Access

5. Leveraging Strong Women's Networks

Definition

Women's networks are formal and informal support systems that provide:

- Collective action
- Mutual protection
- Information sharing

Somalia has strong informal women's structures and a tech-connected population.

Strategically engage women's networks to strengthen outcomes.

6. Youth Engagement

Definition

Youth engagement means meaningful participation of young women and men in:

- Decision-making
- Implementation
- Feedback systems

Somalia's youth population is organized, connected, and influential.

Design safe and meaningful youth engagement approaches.

7. Community Trust in Local Actors

Definition

Community trust refers to credibility, cultural understanding, and long-term presence that enable effective programming.

Trust is an asset — but also a responsibility.

International actors may not be able to have these conversations — local actors can.

<p>Reflection</p> <p>Desk reviews are not endpoints. They are mirrors.</p> <p>Addressing gender gaps requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honest reflection• Leadership courage• Consistent documentation• Institutional accountability• Sustained action	<p>Gender equality is not achieved through paragraphs in proposals.</p> <p>It is achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice• Protection• Participation• Persistence <p>Dignity begins inside the organization — and extends outward to the community.</p>
--	---

Unit 10:

ACTION PLANNING AND APPLICATION

1. Translating Gender Commitments into Program Improvements

Definition

A gender-sensitive program improvement is a specific, realistic adjustment to design, implementation, or monitoring that enhances:

- Equity
- Safety
- Access
- Participation
- Decision-making

Indicators must track change. Ground improvements in Somali realities (clan, displacement, livelihoods).

2. Intersectional Gender Improvement

Definition

Intersectionality recognizes that gender intersects with:

- Disability
- Age
- Clan

- Displacement
- Poverty

Women are not a homogeneous group.

3. Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality

Definition

Engaging men and boys means involving them constructively as allies in promoting:

- Non-violence
- Shared responsibility
- Positive masculinity

4. Safeguarding and PSEA Action Planning

Definition

A safeguarding action strengthens prevention, reporting, response, or accountability mechanisms related to sexual exploitation and abuse.

5. Safe GBV Data Practices

Definition

Safe GBV data practice means:

- Informed consent
- Minimal data collection
- Confidentiality
- Secure storage
- No unnecessary sharing

Do not collect data you cannot protect.

6. Gender Indicators and Accountability

In Somalia's humanitarian response, gender indicators measure change in:

1. Equitable Access to Assistance
2. Meaningful Participation & Leadership
3. Safety & Protection from GBV/SEA
4. Decision-Making & Control Over Resources
5. Gender Norms & Power Relations

Strong gender indicators measure:

- Change in safety
- Change in equitable access
- Change in agency
- Change in influence
- Change in social norms

They assess:

- Change in power
- Change in safety
- Change in voice
- Change in agency
- Change in norms

They do not measure:

- Number of women attending
- Number of kits distributed
- Number of meetings conducted

When collecting gender-sensitive data:

- Be sensitive to clan hierarchies and minority exclusion
- Avoid questions that could expose women to retaliation
- Use female enumerators for sensitive topics
- Ensure confidentiality and safe referral pathways
- Do not ask direct GBV questions without referral mechanisms in place
- Frame questions safely (e.g., perception of safety rather than reporting specific perpetrators)

7. Organizational Gender Reform

Definition

Organizational gender reform refers to internal changes in:

- Policy
- Leadership
- Staffing
- Budget
- Culture

This unit is not about perfection.

It is about:

- Commitment
- Accountability
- Continuous learning

Small actions, sustained over time, transform institutions.

And transformed institutions protect the dignity of the Somali people.

- Promote gradual change.
- Apply Do No Harm internally.
- Link reform to credibility and trust.



GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACHES IN SOMALI COMMUNITIES

Participant Handbook
ToGETHER 2.0 Programme



PMWDO



Developed by:



Copyright © 2026

This publication is the intellectual property of DKH and PMWDO.