



EVIDENCE BRIEF



Rwanda: Interagency Gender Assessment of Refugee Camps (2017)



Why is it important?

This report looks at how women in Rwandan refugee camps are faring in comparison to men in the economic, health, educational and political spheres.

The report would be useful for policy and programme planning, as well as for gaining a better understanding of gender inequalities in a refugee camp setting.

Methodology

The assessment included the collection of primary data and a review of secondary data in six refugee camps. The secondary data review looked at reports by partners and online sources. A desk review of the secondary data and information from the Rwandan government, One UN and other partners compliments the research.

The primary data collection involved gathering information through individual interviews and focus group discussions. Key informant interviews were conducted with humanitarian actors on site, as well as UN and government staff.

Key findings

Positive findings were identified, such as good practices in water, sanitation and health services that address gender equality, good practices in education in line with the Ministry of Education's standards, promising practices in maintaining a maternal mortality rate of zero in all health facilities, and a model of integrated, multi-sectoral prevention and response services for survivors of gender-based violence and child abuse. However, significant challenges persist in achieving gender equality regarding refugee

protection. Gender gaps are generally found in all sectors, signalling that gender inequalities persist in the refugee camps. Gender gaps in camp coordination are evident in participation, lighting, access to services and environment.

The quantity of cash and food assistance is marginally sufficient for refugees to survive on. In the education sector, conditions work against refugee girls; differences are found in health outcomes between refugee women and men. Livelihood interventions offer limited scope to escape the cycle of poverty for men and women. Gender gaps are noticeable in the areas of physical safety, child protection and gender-based violence. Gender stereotypes and disparities are replicated in shelter committees and activities. In spite of good practices, challenges in water, sanitation and hygiene strongly impact girls and women.

Conclusion

The assessment recommends the development of a strategic framework and work plan that enables the strengthening of gender equality outcomes in refugee protection in Rwanda. The key elements of the framework would focus on creating an enabling environment at policy and operational levels; capacity building of refugees, their leadership and humanitarian actors on gender equality issues and how to address them in refugee response; implementing selected high impact gender equality interventions; and measuring results on gender equality.

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