

The importance of coordination meetings

Decreasing the burden of people who receive assistance

In affected areas, there are many organizations undertaking various types of activities. However, it is sometimes observed that relief supplies and events are concentrated on particular areas, evacuation centers and temporary housing community, and a lot of “researches and interviews” became a burden on affected people.

In order to avoid overlapping of assistance, many attempts are made. There was an area that held local coordination meetings of disaster response organizations that worked in the same community, in order to share the information of activities and future plans of each organization to avoid an overlap, and sometimes it promoted cooperation among them. Another area had a meeting for information-sharing among not only voluntary organizations from outside but also with the local social welfare council and the local government officials.

Once the life in temporary housing started, many activities were held using a community room in the temporary housing site and again an overlap and concentration of assistance was observed. One local government in Miyagi prefecture utilizes a calendar on the Internet to share schedules of assistance events in each temporary housing community among assistance organizations. It mitigated the biased assistance contents among temporary housing communities.

Working together to plan projects

Reinforcement of local organization

Local governments and funding organizations provide money for disaster reconstruction. They receive applications from local private groups, however, these groups, which lack the experience of grant application, found the procedure difficult. During the emergency relief period, assistance organizations implement projects by the funding they have obtained, but for reconstruction, local organizations are expected to be the main actor. In the reconstruction process, it is more important to strengthen the capacity of local organizations than to implement projects.

There is an example where one assistance organization continued patiently advising a local organization, which did not have NPO experience of the administrative procedures, from opening a bank account to establishment of an organization. It built up trust and helped the local organization to initiate a reconstruction project. The local organizations know the community well, but do not have experience in grant application or organization management. What the outside support organization can do is to be a consultant in the process and give advice upon request.

An organization, which supports NPOs in disaster reconstruction, introduces a way to conduct a participatory workshop to reflect the opinions of various people while paying respects to the way that local organizations operate. A staff member at an assistance organization who was dispatched to a local social welfare council tried to voice certain opinions, because some opinions are easier to surface with the help of outsiders. She advised placing women in a support center in temporary housing community. It would be rare to listen to the outsiders' opinions without

mutual trust, but sometimes outsiders' opinions will be received favourably if the outsiders understand the local situations and establish good relationships in the community. It is therefore necessary to build mutual trust before planning a project.

Placing volunteers in appropriate places

Knack to assign tasks

A volunteer coordinator must place volunteers who vary in terms of gender, age, techniques, specialties, and experience into appropriate places. There follows some examples to make a good environment not only for volunteers to work effectively but also for affected people to welcome volunteers:

*Place men and women in the same team to go and visit each house of evacuees staying at home, or to have interviews, so that it is easier for the households, which have only women or men to accept them and to talk.

*Place at least one woman into a team, which helps moving from evacuation centers to temporary housing, so that female evacuees can find it easier to ask for help in sorting her belongings.

*Visit evacuees staying at home or people living at temporary housing by a pair of one man and one woman to hand out information magazines, and to check up on their conditions.

As time passes, it is more difficult to form pairs of men and women because of a decrease in volunteers. Temporary housing sites are scattered in remote locations so that only one person has to visit them when there are not enough volunteers available.

“Please come into the house to talk since it is cold at the front door,” “Would you mind helping us inside?” When an individual volunteer is asked to come inside, it is important not to accept the offer immediately but to contact other volunteers who are around through a two-way radio or telephone and respond with more than two people, including both men and women.

*Refer to tasks, not by sexual differences, such as “heavy physical work for men, light ones for women” but by respecting aptitude.

*Sometimes volunteers themselves do not know their own aptitude. It is necessary to make them use materials and tools in order to judge whether they actually carry such materials and know how to use these tools.

One female volunteer leader was looking for volunteers who could do cleaning work using a special machine. However, people who wanted to do that work were mostly women. She worried as to whether they could complete the work in the time available, and wondered if the recruitment for this work should be limited to men since many men are supposed to be able to handle machinery well.



It is possible to seek workers with a certain proviso, such as, “a person who is good at driving a stick-shift car and deals with engine trouble,” not by gender in order to look for experience similar to handling a car or dealing with engine trouble by oneself for that work. It is a part of the leaders’ qualifications to evaluate required techniques and experience, aptitude for this work and properly write down the recruiting terms.

For the safety of volunteers

*It is important to ensure a changing room for volunteers. If there is no space available in the building, set up a separate tent for men and for women.

*Ensure separate toilets for men and women in volunteer centers and/or workplaces.

*Ensure stocks of sanitary goods at female toilets in volunteer centers, and it is better to inform female volunteers about it by posting notices regarding this in a place where they will see them.

Concerns about staff residence

Create a safe working environment for disaster response workers

Stress from communal living

It is sometimes necessary for disaster response workers to prepare a tent for themselves or to sleep in a car for a while due to lack of available accommodation. Even though an organization could arrange accommodation for staff members at affected areas, they could not prepare rooms for individuals and had to continue communal living, using shared rooms separated only by men and women. One organization was able to rent another building and proposed to accommodate men and women in separate buildings. However, it was women that opposed the proposal, saying they were worried about security if there were only women. It is difficult to coordinate the accommodation because each staff member feels differently and it is also necessary to consider various aspects including location, indoor equipment and the capacity of the accommodation.

Arduousness of staffs

Besides the fact that living with a group of people causes stress, disaster response workers who continued to live in a shared house with a small number of people, such as only one man and one woman, felt more mental constraint than living in larger groups. A female staff member from one voluntary organization rented accommodation with a male member of staff. She felt there was no choice during the emergency stage, but as it continued, experienced more difficulty. However, it took time to make her organization understand the situation. She laments the fact that the organization considered the affected people, but did not understand the arduousness of the staff.

Respecting individual ideas and feelings

It is difficult for staff members at the site to demand a better living environment for themselves because they put more priority on the affected people. Under the same conditions, each individual feels differently. Some feel that living in group is painful whereas some find it fun. Hierarchical relations in the workplace sometimes make it difficult to communicate their feelings. It is necessary for disaster response organizations, which dispatch staff, to have individual hearings from each member of staff, not from certain ones, in order that everyone work comfortably, and to take certain measures before particular persons feel their working conditions to be arduous.

Training about sexual harassment

Necessary measures on a regular basis

The disaster response organizations, which could improve the environment to ensure security of staff members promptly at the site during the emergency relief period, have had an understanding of gender issues inside the organization on a regular basis. These organizations have women as operational directors and in managerial positions so that they understand deeply sexual harassment and gender issues, and set up anti-sexual harassment committees and have dealt with them in the workplace. A female field manager felt it comfortable to work there because she can consult her boss with full trust if sexual harassment occurs.

Be aware of sharing personal information and photo shots

Behavior between volunteers

Information management as one of the manager's tasks

One of the enjoyments of participating in volunteer activities is getting to know other volunteers who they meet for the first time through activities. In some cases, it develops into friendship and boyfriend/girlfriend relationships. However, not all of them feel the same way. Volunteer coordinators and leaders have to pay attention to manage the volunteers' personal contacts and information.

Take pictures after consent

One volunteer coordinator found a male volunteer who acted weirdly during briefing time in the mornings. He said he would like to take pictures of a briefing, but actually he was secretly taking pictures of a particular female volunteer with his mobile phone. The coordinator soon warned him because he was taking these pictures without her consent, but was worried if there were other volunteers who were breaching the correct code of conduct during activities.

For purpose of searching a marriage partner?

Most of the volunteers wanted to do something useful, but there were some people who acted inconsiderately in such an extraordinary environment. There was a person who asked many other-sex peers for their phone numbers and email addresses, and was thought to be there "for marriage purposes".

Preventing harassment and its counter-measure

Volunteer leaders have not only to coordinate actual work but also to make the working environment comfortable for volunteers. The leader is expected to respond quickly to any strange actions of volunteers and to avoid trouble between them. Any acts, which are considered to be harassment in daily life, such as asking for relationships with other volunteers, repeatedly asking for dates, and slandering him/her when the offer is turned down, are not tolerated among volunteers, or between volunteers and affected people.

When someone comes to consult about a trouble, it is a coordinator's role to listen to each party, and to take a severe attitude against the harassment act. If harassment acts or stalking behaviour continue even after warnings, it is better to respond without delay by changing volunteer scheduling arrangements or temporarily removing that person from the situation.



Photo above: A volunteer center; Photo below: Volunteers exercising in the morning before heading to the site

Difficulty in relationships with affected people

Responding to sexual harassment or stalking behaviour

Respond carefully and strictly

One volunteer organization sent female volunteers in response to a request from a male local leader at an evacuation center. However, a male volunteer reported that the leader had repeatedly harassed female volunteers sexually by touching their bodies too much or hugging them. The organization did not stop sending females but keep sending both male and female volunteers, and checked on the situation before it talked to the leader to refrain from the reported behaviour.

The difficulty of this problem

This leader has worked vigorously on managing the evacuation center and had no further problems. It is not possible for disaster response organizations and volunteer dispatch organizations from outside to conduct activities unless they have built up relations with local leaders. They face a difficult situation to respond to such incidents relating to these local leaders. It is difficult to arrange the intervention of police or government, and sometimes they have failed to make a charge, just like sexual harassment cases in daily life.

Consulting system for disaster response organizations

A male staff member at this organization, who was in charge of this case, looked back and said, "We sent mixed volunteers of both men and women, but this case could have been discovered earlier if women had had an opportunity to talk by themselves." "It was

difficult to station a female staff member who knew how to deal with it." He added, "There was no-one who had enough knowledge for consultation of sexual harassment."

It is important to cultivate people who are able to be consulted about sexual harassment or security issues inside of the organization and at the same time, to prepare a consulting system through expert organizations outside. It makes a difference if the organization is familiar with the measures to prevent problems and the places to consult with when a problem arises.

Measures before suffering damage

One organization explained to student volunteers about a situation and distributed a card to raise awareness of safety for women and children. The organization made an inquiry as to whether there were students who suffered damage after the activities finished, and asked for cooperation from female student leaders if a follow-up was necessary.

Burdened with affection

Disaster response workers and volunteers from outside look compassionate and reliable towards affected people. It might be natural for those affected to have favourable feelings toward them if it is considered to be an extension of their appreciation. However, in some cases, the special affection from a particular person disturbed the activities of the staff and volunteers.

Consult when in doubt

One female volunteer leader became friends with residents in temporary housing community and worked on supporting activities. However, when she realized that one man was watching her from behind the building, she was not sure how to react. The man started stalking her, and then she went to consult with staff at the local social welfare council. She was advised not to go to that area and moved into another area to continue her assistance work.

Men's burden

One male volunteer leader was favoured by many affected women and female volunteers for his devoted attitude to work. He was afraid of having too much attention. Having one-sided affection makes it uncomfortable for men as well as women.

Make an environment for consultation

People who told us of their experiences had difficulty finding a person to consult with inside of the organization or were worried of being teased if they told someone. In the field of emergency relief or disaster reconstruction, both affected people and those who provide assistance felt mentally elevated. It is possible that people are more conscious of the opposite sex than in ordinary times.

It is necessary to have a system to consult about these concerns or to receive appropriate advice within the organization. It is also useful to be informed about available services on the outside when people think it is difficult to consult inside of the organization, by posting relevant telephone numbers of consultation services in the neighbourhood.

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Target Audience

☐ the Administration ☐ Community-based Organization ☒ Voluntary Organization
☐ Funding Organization ☒ Volunteer

Care for disaster response workers and volunteers after finishing activities

Care for volunteers who encountered tough situations

Pain of volunteer work

Inexperienced volunteers are sometimes dispatched without enough explanation of the work, such as removing debris that does not require direct contact with affected people because they are thought to be less burdened mentally. However, everyone must feel reluctance when entering buildings damaged by a disaster and a space where toys and furniture are left. It is natural to ache for the dead.

Help recovery from damage

Volunteers often find corpses or body parts during the removal of debris in the affected area where many people are missing. A volunteer who helped remove debris for the first time found a corpse and felt shocked. Since even professionals experience pain when seeing a severely damaged body, it must be a shocking event for an ordinary volunteer. The organization which this volunteer belonged made sure that the volunteers who had painful experiences during operation were protected from mental damage by making regular phone calls.

In the field, care for affected people takes priority and care for staff at organizations and volunteers is deferred. When staff and volunteers are in the field, they might not notice because they are tensed up, but once away from the field, the damage might appear. It is necessary to check on staff and volunteers who have finished activities as regards their condition regularly.

Disaster response teams with mixed gender

Responses to needs of affected people and prevention of sexual harassment

Difficulty in visiting individual houses

One organization sent two male staff to an affected area in Miyagi prefecture, and started supporting activities by visiting individual houses. However, only women tended to be at home during the daytime and these women hesitated to talk. The male staff themselves could not easily imagine the issues with women, so that they felt the limitation of their visit being by males only.

Placing staff according to those who receive assistance

Another organization formed teams including both men and women for visiting and talking to affected people. In addition, there is an organization which not only sends both men and women but also sends staff that have close attributes to affected people, for example, placing staff members who have children for the support of mother and babies.

Security of staff

Having multiple staff is also useful for ensuring the security of staff when visiting houses in the community. A female member staff at an assistance organization felt insecure when a man, who was involved in management in the evacuation center where she visited for distribution of supplies, called her by her first name (the practice which is uncommon in this situation in Japan) and took her picture with a mobile phone. Since staff members were told to act in pairs and she was not alone, she did not get into more danger.

However, there is an incident that a male member of staff touched a female member of

staff's lap when the two of them moved around by themselves. Later, a team was formed of over three people. It may decrease the efficiency of the work, but it is necessary to place priority on the security of staff.

Establishing a code of conduct for staff and volunteers

Usage of a pledge form

In order to ensure that disaster response is sensitive to gender and diversity, it is important to inform and implement it at, (1) the project level, such as content of assistance; (2), the organizational level, such as forming teams of staff and volunteers who engage in assistance; and (3), the individual level, such as attitude and behaviour of those who engage in assistance. There are organizations, which asked staff members and volunteers to sign a pledge form for the protection of the person concerned, observance of confidentiality, and preservation of neutrality.

not to rely on individual judgment about their actions and behaviour. With the code, it is possible to warn those who deviate and to be accountable to victims.

In the case of protection of children

One organization has “a code of conduct for the protection of children” and prepares a written pledge which stipulates important points when having contact with children and appropriate behaviours. The behaviours that are not allowed are: “To commit obscene acts, or to make children do obscene acts,” and “to have physical contacts that are uncomfortable or unnatural for child(ren).”

Standards for common understanding

A relationship of trust is easily broken in a power imbalance between affected people and those who provide assistance. It is important to be careful about relationships with affected people. It is better that each organization develop a code of conduct in order to avoid denying the diversity of affected people, to treat them discriminatively, and to avoid overlooking sexual violence and infringement of human rights. It makes it possible to call for observance of the code;

Example of a pledge form

Pledge Form

I, as a staff member of the Disaster Response Center, pledge to comply with this “code of conduct for gender and diversity sensitivity” and to act upon it in the field of disaster relief.

<Code of Conduct for Gender and Diversity Sensitivity>

For all people concerned, any acts below are not allowed:

- *To deny various needs that have stemmed from the differences of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabilities, ethnicity, nationality, family relationship, employment situation, religion, political affiliation, and social status of affected people.
- *To treat particular affected people discriminatively due to the differences above.
- *To exclude particular affected people from being a target of assistance due to the differences above.
- *Not to give information to particular affected people due to the differences above.
- *Not to give a chance for an affected person to relate an individual situation.
- *To avoid implementation of peer group (group of people concerned) gatherings, counselling and consultation sessions according to individual circumstances.
- *To impose sexual relations based on the power imbalance between affected people and disaster response workers and/or volunteers or between them.
- *To have sexual relations with affected people. Sexual acts based on the power imbalance between disaster response workers and/or volunteers and affected people can result in a loss of trust around disaster response activities.
- *To retain humanitarian assistance or give priority to certain people in order to receive money, job opportunities, goods or sexual services, i.e. making use of the position of disaster relief workers and/or volunteers.
- *To be involved in harassment, or sexual violence, by making use of his/her position.
- *To perform obscene acts, or make others perform obscene acts, by making use of his/her position.
- *To buy sexual services or make a profit from sexual services, regardless of whether during working hours or out of work; this applies at any time.
- *To have sexual relations with children under 18 years of age, with or without consent. The defence that they did not know the age of the child is not considered acceptable.
- *To ignore, or take a part in, sexual violence and infringement of human rights among disaster response workers and/or volunteers.

Any party relating to the Disaster Response Center should consider the following when having contact with affected people with various needs.

- *To collect data which reflect the diversity of affected people in order to grasp the situation of affected people who have unique needs.
- *To create an environment in which the proposals and claims of affected people made against staff and volunteers are reported without hesitation.
- *Each staff member should be aware not to overlook any infringement of human rights and violence on the both sides, whether affected people or disaster response workers and/or volunteers.
- *To report without delay when infringement of human rights and violence occurring at the site of disaster response activities.
- *Each staff member must understand in advance how to deal with any infringement of human rights and violence at the site of disaster response activities in order to protect the human rights of affected people.

I fully understand the above “Code of Conduct for Gender and Diversity Sensitivity.”

Signature 草花 董

Date: 2012 / 5 / 1

Made by: Women's Network for East Japan Disaster

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Target Audience

- ☒ the Administration ☐ Community-based Organization ☒ Voluntary Organization
☐ Funding Organization ☐ Volunteer

Place for communication between evacuees and local people

Innovations within Women's Centers

Evacuation life is expected to be prolonged due to the nuclear power plant accident. In Nagoya City, Kawasaki City and Saitama Prefecture, the activity that connects affected people has begun based on centers for promoting gender equality. At the connecting places, residents from the designated evacuation area, mothers and children who spontaneously evacuated from outside of designated areas and local supporters gather.

Preventing isolation

Many of the evacuees from the designated evacuation area moved into individual residences from the group living environment. They tend to be isolated from both the original and new communities. A gathering place provides a chance for them to avoid isolation and to connect affected people with each other as well as with local residents who are willing to support them. Relief supplies are also provided through these places.

Many of the spontaneous evacuees are little children and their mothers, so that these places offered a good opportunity for them to meet other women with young children in the same area, to connect with them, and to share concerns over bringing up their children.

Importance of taking over work from a predecessor

Making the best use of human resources offered by local governments outside the affected areas

Problems of short-term dispatch

Many local government officers were dispatched to the affected area from all over Japan. Some said, “It was appreciated, but we would like a person who was dispatched to stay at least a month. An inadequate takeover of the work or a weekly replacement of support staff made affected people feel anxious. This gap of takeover of the work rebound upon the local government officers or the leaders at the evacuation centers.”

It might not be easy, but if local governments outside the affected areas can dispatch at least some officers for a long term, which improves the takeover of the work and information sharing, they are able to support the affected local governments in a better way.

Information sharing from the community

In one local government in Miyagi Prefecture, district nurses from all over Japan held a meeting to inform local district nurses about difficult points and serious cases which were understood during visits to the local area. On the other hand, local nurses explained a summary of each district and the situation during the disaster in order to make nurses from outside understand the feelings of local residents. In fact, local district nurses would not have enough time to share the information because they were very busy, but it is very important to share information about beneficiaries and damage situations to support staff to produce results.

Gender and Diversity Sensitivity Check List Based on “The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response”

The original document is The Sphere Project 2011, The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (2011 Edition). (Available at www.sphereproject.org)



1. Are there any international standards for gender and diversity sensitivity in disaster response and recovery?

Even if you understand the importance of gender and diversity sensitivity in disaster response and recovery, you might not be sure what and how to act. There are internationally accorded guidance and it has been used in the overseas post-disaster fields. We would like to introduce the widely used international standard, “The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response.”

The Sphere Project was started in 1997 by international NGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in order to stipulate minimum standards (hereafter, the Sphere Standards) that should be met in relief activities after disasters or conflicts. Gender and diversity sensitivity is stipulated as a cross-cutting theme that is necessary in any humanitarian response. The Sphere Standards can be referred to by thematic sectors or by sections. It is useful for many people in different positions: officers of governments, staff of private voluntary organizations, volunteers, and people who work on disaster prevention at the local level.

2. Affected people have “a right to life with dignity” and “a right to assistance.”

The biggest reason why the minimum standards were created and gender and diversity sensitivity was prioritized within it is that people who need support most and who are in the most vulnerable position are unlikely to receive assistance. In the confusion, assistance may continue without knowing if it is provided to people in the most vulnerable

position and people who are discriminated against. If assistance is provided without being aware of various unfairness and discrimination embedded in society, certain affected people might be further damaged without intention.

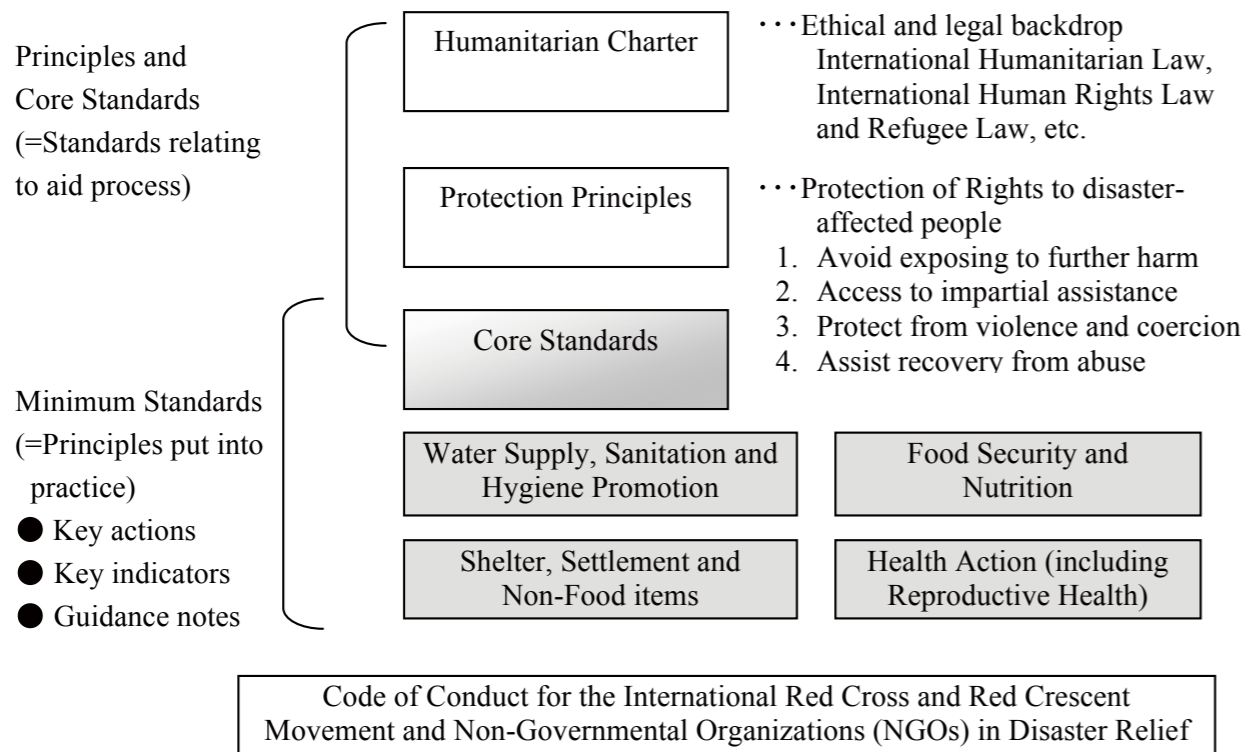
The Sphere Standards stipulate two core beliefs; 1) that those affected by disaster or conflict have a right to life with dignity and, therefore, a right to assistance; and 2) that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict. The ethical and legal backdrop to these beliefs is “the Humanitarian Charter” and “the Protection Principles”. “The Humanitarian Charter” contains international legal instruments relating to international human rights and humanitarian action: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, etc. The Protection Principles set out principles of actions to ensure individual rights in accordance with “the Humanitarian Charter”; that inform all humanitarian action: 1) Avoid exposing people to further harm as a result of your actions, 2) Ensure people’s access to impartial assistance – in proportion to need and without discrimination, 3) Protect people from physical and psychological harm arising from violence and coercion, and 4) Assist people to claim their rights, access available remedies and recover from the effects of abuse.

<What is the Sphere Standards?>

Two Core Beliefs

1. Those affected by disaster or conflict have a right to life with dignity and, therefore, a right to assistance.
2. All possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict.

Makin of the Sphere Standards



Minimum standards are a practical expression of these beliefs and principles and consist of “the Core Standards,” which are common to any actions; and other minimum standards in “water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion”, “food security and nutrition”, “shelter, settlement and non-food items”, and “health action (including reproductive health)”.

3. Who are the vulnerable people?

The Sphere Standards use the term “vulnerable people.” This term refers to those who are especially susceptible to the effects of disasters. Due to age, gender, disability, class, ethnicity, political affiliations or religion, people have different experience in disasters. The Sphere Standards focus on vulnerable people, especially women, children, elderly people, persons with disabilities and people

living with HIV, and also point out that people who are displaced due to disaster into unfamiliar places are likely to face difficulties.

However, it is not effective to grasp issues of vulnerable people from the individual perspectives of women, children or persons with disabilities, or to understand difficult situations as stable ones, which ignore overlapping vulnerabilities (for example, women with disabilities) and the changing nature of vulnerabilities over time. Above all, it may ignore the fact that vulnerable people have various capacities to manage and recover from disaster.

Therefore, the Sphere Standards emphasize the fact that, “Humanitarian responses are more effective when they are based on an understanding of the different needs,

vulnerabilities, interests, capacities and coping strategies of women and men, girls and boys of all ages and the differing impacts of disaster or conflict upon them.”

4. Gender and diversity sensitivity in the Sphere Standards

The following is the checklist prepared to confirm the summary of excerpted points on gender and diversity sensitivity from the Sphere Standards, and the comments.

1) The Core Standards which are essential to all assistance

*Discussions for people-centered humanitarian response

1. Ensure a balanced representation of vulnerable people in discussions with the disaster-affected population. If there is a group facing social difficulties in order to participate, understand the barriers and remove them.

*Assessment of necessary assistance

2. Collect disaggregated data by gender and age
3. Provide the disaggregated data by gender and age in a report
4. Listen to an inclusive range of people in the assessment – women and men of all ages and other vulnerable people affected by the disaster
5. Conduct the assessment in a space where women and girls are able to speak comfortably when listening to their needs. If necessary, prepare a separate space, and staffs that have the skills to deal with sexual violence should attend.
6. Conduct a separate and detailed analysis of groups, which might be more vulnerable because they are discriminated against or do not have a voice after disaster.
7. Assessment teams should be composed of a mix of women and men, including those with skills in collecting gender-sensitive data and communicating with children.

*Design and implement the program

8. Using disaggregated assessment data, analyse the ways in which the disaster has affected different individuals and populations, and design the programme to meet their particular needs.
9. Promote the participation of women, men, girls and boys of all ages in the design of the programme in order to ensure that vulnerable

people have full access to assistance and protection services.

10. Analyse all contextual factors that increase people’s vulnerability, designing the programme to progressively reduce their vulnerability.

*Aid worker performance

11. Recruit teams with a balance of women and men, age and social background so that the team’s diversity is appropriate to the local culture and context.

12. Publicize among aid workers and local people relating to supporting codes of conduct that protect disaster affected people from sexual abuse, exploitation and other violations of people’s human rights.

13. Publicize that aid worker should be aware of the power that those who give assistance have, and avoid abusing power and any engagement of sexual activity or other acts in exchange for assistance.

<Comments>

Leaders who have the power of decision-making in the management of evacuation centers and temporary housing communities were mostly men. Women and persons with disabilities were few (1). Under this situation, it is difficult to assess the needs for assistance of women and persons with disabilities ((8) and (9)). Observe and decide what makes them afraid of voicing their opinions and what make it easy for them to participate. Devices for places or a system for assessment make it easy for those who have not had a chance to speak out ((5) (7) (11); also refer to the cases of 01 and 07). Including both men and women into disaster response workers especially shows great improvement.

It is difficult to understand the real situation of various affected people when only able to listen to local leaders or the heads of households and consider them as opinion of the whole community or all the family members. It is necessary to assess individual situations. It is easy to give up because they do not want to come out or speak out, but it contributes to discrimination and exclusion behind the reason of being unable to do so (not complying with “the Protection Principles”). It is also important to make the way acceptable to the local culture and society.

It is important to assess the situation of affected people by gender and age in order to provide prompt and appropriate assistance and ensure that no-one is excluded from assistance ((2) (3) (4) and (8)). Data disaggregation is rarely possible initially, but disaggregate it by sex and age at the earliest opportunity, and utilize it. The example of disaggregation is, 0-5 male/female, 6-12 male/female and 13-18 male/female, and then in 10 year age brackets, e.g. 19-29, male/female.

More assistance is needed to provide for “people in vulnerable positions = those who require assistance the most” rather than “average assistance and equal for everyone.” If vulnerable people overcome their difficulties and become active agent of assistance, not remaining as beneficiaries of assistance, it contributes to building disaster-resilient communities.

2) Water supply, toilets and hygiene promotion

*Hygiene promotion

1. Consult all men and women of all ages on the priority hygiene items they require. Especially consult women and girls on appropriate materials for menstrual hygiene.
2. Ensure that no one group (e.g. women) within the affected population is overburdened with the responsibility for hygiene-promoting activities (e.g. cleaning or waste disposal).

*Water supply

3. The location, design and maintenance/management of water collection and bathing facilities should be decided in consultation with the users, particularly women, girls and persons with disabilities.
4. Provide separate bathing facilities for men and women, and private laundry areas for women to wash and dry undergarments.
5. Water collection and bathing facilities should be located in central, accessible and well-lit areas with good visibility, in order to ensure the safety of users.

*Toilets

6. Separate toilets for men and women. The ratio should be 1:3. (1 (men): 3(women))
7. Consult and secure the approval of all users (especially women, the elderly and people with limited mobility such as older people and persons with disabilities) on the siting and

design of toilet facilities.

8. Toilets should be appropriately designed and located to ensure that they are used safely by all disaster-affected people (children, elderly people, pregnant women and persons with disabilities).

9. Toilets are sited in such a way as to minimize security threats to users, especially women and girls, throughout the day and the night.

10. Toilets should allow for the disposal of women’s menstrual hygiene materials and provide women with the necessary privacy for washing and drying menstrual hygiene materials. This point should be decided in consultation with women and girls.

<Comments>

The siting and design of toilet and bathing facilities, and washing and drying areas should be decided in consultation with people with limited mobility such as older people and persons with disabilities, and women and girls who are concerned with security. This is the knack of making user-friendly facilities for everyone ((1) (3) (7) and (10)).

Providing separate facilities for men and women and ensuring that women and girls feel safe when using the toilets provided are essential to a life with dignity in evacuation centers and reduces the risk of sexual violence ((5) (6) (8) and (9)). Facilitating unisex “multi-purpose toilets” is useful as the gender of caregivers’ may be different from that person who needs help.

Even when there is no option for the provision of facilities due to space limitation or physical structure, it is very meaningful for women, older people and persons living with disabilities to participate in the discussion regarding the design of facilities and rule-making for users.

When consulting women, it is necessary to consult women of all ages; such as middle-aged women, young girls, single women, and junior-high and high school students. Having both men and women in charge of managing or supporting toilet and hygiene promotion activities makes it easier to listen to various opinions and deal with any problems.

3) Food security and nutrition; Income-generation employment

*Food security and nutrition

1. Ensure participation of both men and women in the design of, and support for, food security and its implementation. Women should participate because women, in many cases, have the role of preparing meals in the household.
2. Give priority to pregnant and breastfeeding women to access food.
3. Share the information on accessibility, safety and hygiene management of cooking facilities with the users. Especially consult the women.
4. Contents of meals and care for persons with disabilities and older people who have difficulty in the intake of meals should be considered.

*Income generation and employment

5. Ensure that women and men have equal access to appropriate income-earning opportunities.
6. Give alternative opportunities to pregnant women and persons with disabilities.
7. Provide care facilities for babies and family members so that family responsibility should not increase the workload of particular persons (usually women).

<Comments>

In many evacuation centers, only women were in charge of the preparation of meals. Some of them were exhausted by the all-day-long cooking. Some had to juggle taking care of the family, going to work, cleaning houses and workplaces, and job-hunting, and were suffering. If there had been a system to include both men and women in the preparation of meals, it would have avoided putting such a burden just on women (1).

The unemployment ratio increased in women more than in men in the disaster-affected area compared with the pre-disaster period. Not only job creation but also other assistance for affected people often produces a gap between men and women at the goal point even though the assistance is designed for both genders to have equal access at the starting point. Consideration is needed for women and persons with disabilities to have easy access to the support offered ((5) (6) and (7)). There are countries, which reserve a quota of new employment for women in post disaster.

4) Shelter, settlement and non-food items

1. Include the opinion of vulnerable groups on the usage of space in the evacuation facilities.
2. Ensure privacy by separating space with partitions in the passage to the facilities and between family/individual units in the evacuation centers.
3. All affected family members should be involved in decisions of support relating to residence.
4. Ensure participation of the wide range of vulnerable people into the planning and construction process so as to avoid the disadvantage and difficulties of female-headed households, persons with disabilities and older people in evacuation facilities, temporary housing and housing reconstruction.
5. Provide clothing and hygiene products, according to the separate needs by gender and by age, appropriate to the season and culture.
6. People who have chronic disease and pregnant women need extra clothing and hygiene products. Infants and the elderly have difficulty in controlling their body temperature. For these people, distribution of clothing should be considered carefully.
7. Especially consult women on the need for cooking tools and dishes.

<Comments>

It is necessary to include the opinions of women and vulnerable people in the usage of space and management in evacuation centers and temporary housing. Reflection of the opinions of elderly people, persons with disabilities, women and girls makes the evacuation centers accessible to everyone ((1) and (4)). Protection of privacy is a basis of evacuation life with dignity (2).

Even when there is no option for the usage of evacuation centers due to the limitation of space or its physical structure, it is meaningful to include women, older people and persons with disabilities into the discussion on the usage and the rule of extra space in evacuation centers.

When consulting women, it is better to consult women of all ages; such as middle-aged women, young girls, single women, and junior-high and high school students ((3) – (7)). Having both men and women in charge of managing extra space and distributing supplies in evacuation centers makes it easier to listen to various opinions and deal with any problems.

5) Health Action

- 1. Include women in medical staff to give health service to disaster-affected people (to ensure women’s access).
- 2. Ensure medical service in response to reproductive health needs of affected people (e.g. provision of contraceptives for family planning and prevention of HIV, emergency contraceptives for victims of sexual violence, and support for pregnant women.
- 3. All actors in disaster response must be aware of the risks of sexual violence and must work to prevent and respond to it.
- 4. The incidence of sexual violence should be reported anonymously and shared to inform prevention and response efforts.
- 5. Ensure services for clinical management of sexual violence, including access to consultation with confidentiality, transportation to appropriate treatment facilities and legal assistance (based on the survivor’s will) as part of health services in disaster management.

<Comments>

Having a woman among medical staff who conducts direct services to affected people makes it easier for women to ask for a consultation (1).

It is regrettable that sexual and domestic violence have increased in the past during major disasters including in Japan and other countries. Survivors are reluctant to speak about their damage from sexual violence even in ordinary times; even more so during disasters. Therefore, all actors in disaster relief and reconstruction should attend workshops and training, including prevention of sexual violence and prepare for how to deal with it ((2) and (3)). It is not tolerated to take an attitude that sexual violence does not have anything to do with one’s activity ((4) and (5); 3 and 4 in the Protection Principles). It is necessary to express a stance that sexual violence is not tolerated in daily life. It is also important to research consultant services at local government and women’s centers and support system of the local police, medical care and the judiciary.

5. Study the Sphere Standards and incorporate them into disaster response activities

The Sphere Standards are used widely in the field of humanitarian assistance abroad. It is regrettable that the standards were not fully used in relief activities in the East Japan Disaster. However, study sessions and workshops about the Sphere Standards are gradually being held in many places in order to use them as a reference in the long reconstruction process ahead or to prepare for any future disasters.

Some say, “It is impossible to force local people who struggle to run evacuation centers to apply international standards.” “It may be impossible to listen to every single person when there are many evacuees, due to the time constraint. There is no room to do it.”

The Sphere Standards and the checklists for gender and diversity sensitivity above can be referred to in each point. They do not become meaningless even when all standards or sections are not complied with. It is possible to start with a particular section which may be easy to use and introduce it gradually. It is also possible to make original standards in the community, in accordance with Sphere’s two core beliefs, “Those affected by disaster or conflict have a right to life with dignity and, therefore, a right to assistance,” and “All possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict,” as well as the Protection Principles.

It is possible to review disaster prevention drills, drills to set up evacuation centers and supply stock, referring to this checklist. This can be referred to when it is unclear what to do for gender and diversity sensitivity.

It is impossible that local organizations, local governments and voluntary organizations, which are supposed to start relief activities first in the disaster field, practice gender and diversity sensitive activities unless they promote a better understanding in ordinary time. The Sphere Standards are useful for learning not only a perspective of gender and diversity, but also human rights in disasters.



Organizations that cooperated with this collection

(Japanese alphabetical order)

- RQ Citizens Disaster Relief Network Japan
- Asian Japan Women’s Resource Center
- Americares
- Peace Boat Disaster Relief Volunteer Center
- With You Saitama Saigai Tsunagari Cafe Jikkou linkai
- Kawasaki City Gender Equality Center Scrum 21
- The Nippon Foundation
- Civic Force (Kinkyu Sokuo Team)
- Save the Children Japan
- Nippon International Cooperation for Community Development (NICCO)
- Fukushima-ken Seishonen Ikusei Danjo Kyosei Suishin Kiko (Fukushima Gender Equality Center)
- Sampaguita F.L.
- National Federation of Regional Women’s Organization
- DPI Women’s Network Japan
- Asia Nippon Sougo Koryu Center ICAN
- Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation
- Sankaku Planet (Nagoya City Gender Equality Promotion Center)
- Sanakaku Planning Iwate
- ShaplaNeer=Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support
- Single Mothers’ Forum
- Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI-Japan)
- Tono Magokoro Net
- Japan Association for Refugees
- Association for Aid and Relief, Japan
- Japan International Volunteer Center
- Japan First Aid Society
- Mori no Dengon Yururu
- Higashi Matsushima City Office
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