

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING In ERRA

As a consequence of the October 2005 earthquake vulnerable groups were more at risk of becoming poorer. In particular, women headed households representing over 27% heads of households eligible for the Livelihood Cash Grant in the affected areas, in addition to widows and orphaned children, mostly girls, were reported by a number of stakeholders as having little or no access to supplies and services during the relief and recovery phase. Reasons given for this situation being among other limited mobility or absence of proper identity documents that could support them in making these claims.

Also as a result of the earthquake, women's and men's roles have shifted. Women's roles have changed partly as a result of the loss of male partners, and their responsibilities have increased as they not only assume the additional burden of caring for orphaned children and persons with disabilities but are now also emerging as heads of households and decision makers.

Women and men are important resources in delivering assistance and rebuilding societies. Women in particular cannot play these roles if their basic security needs are unmet, **if decision makers ignore them**, and if they fail to receive support such as appropriate food and medical assistance. Experience shows that understanding the gender dynamics in communities is a crucial element for effective relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Gender considerations remain extremely important in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase.

While efforts were made to reach women in the relief phase, gender equality considerations were not fully integrated with the strategies and plans of ERRA. Although, ERRA and its partners had access to a number of technical experts in key sectors, they did not always have access to adequate gender equality expertise.

Cognisant of the importance of gender issues, which was reflected to some extent in recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation policies and strategies, technical assistance (TA) to address gender considerations in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts was engaged.

The Canadian International Development Agency has provided technical assistance in August 2006 for an initial period of two years to enable ERRA to reflect principles of participation and sustainability and pay attention to gender specific impacts of disasters for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Under the TAMEER Programme, with DFID replenishment funds, 10 gender coordinators for PERRA/SERRA and DRUs have been recruited to operationalise the Gender Policy for Earthquake Affected Areas and ensure gender considerations are integrated in programmes and projects. UNIFEM will be funding the setting up of district level gender R&R networks. The ADB is providing funds for rural housing, associated to the implementation of a gender and vulnerability action plan.

### **Vision**

ERRA's gender equality<sup>1</sup> vision articulated in the Goal of the Gender Policy for Earthquake Affected Areas approved by ERRA Council in September 2007 is to ensure that the benefits of reconstruction and rehabilitation accrue to women, men, girls and boys, as well as to members of vulnerable groups, recognizing that often they have different needs and priorities, face different constraints, have different aspirations, and contribute in different ways.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender equality does not simply or necessarily mean equal numbers of men and women or boys and girls in all activities, nor does it necessarily mean treating men and women or boys and girls exactly the same. It means recognizing that men and women often have different needs and priorities, face different constraints, have different aspirations, and contribute to reconstruction and development in different ways

## **Objectives**

The specific objectives to translate the Gender Policy into action are to:

- Enhance the capacity of ERRA to integrate gender considerations at all levels (organisationally, in policies, strategies, and programmes)
- Develop, with respective program heads, operational strategies for relevant sectors, namely social protection, livelihood, health, education, water and sanitation, and housing
- Increase the sharing of information and foster linkages with key internal and external stakeholders
- Improve performance measurement of GE results
- Increase availability of tools (i.e. sectoral checklists and guidelines), documentation of lessons learned and best practices promoting GE in the context of rehabilitation and reconstruction

## **Implementation Methodology**

The overall approach to achieve gender equality is to mainstream gender considerations in the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts by strengthening gender capacity within ERRA at all levels and particularly in programme design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To accomplish this, the following infrastructure for gender mainstreaming has been established:

<b>Implementation Framework</b>		
Strategic level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ ERRA Board and Council</li> <li>□ Federal Ministries</li> <li>□ POs</li> <li>□ Donors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Gender Policy</li> <li>□ Gender Core group</li> <li>□ Gender Team</li> <li>□ Programme Teams</li> <li>□ M&amp;E Wing ( Sectoral Expert)</li> </ul>
Operational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Provincial Steering Committees</li> <li>□ PERRA/ SERRA/ DRUs</li> <li>□ District Reconstruction Approval Committees</li> <li>□ Line Departments</li> <li>□ Communities &amp; Pos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 2 Senior Gender Coordinators in PERRA &amp; SERRA</li> <li>□ 8 Gender Coordinators in DRUs</li> <li>□ District Gender R&amp;R Networks</li> <li>□ Establishment of Women Development Centres in AJK and NWFP</li> </ul>

The basic principles underlying implementation are as follows:

- (a) Achieving gender equality requires the recognition that every policy, program and project affects women and men differently
- (b) Gender equality must be considered as an integral part of all ERRA policies, programs and projects
- (c) Intervention strategies in support of gender equality must take into account the specific socio-cultural context and develop strategies to minimize risk of backlash against women and girls in particular
- (d) Balanced and active participation and representation of men and women is a precondition for the success of the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation
- (e) Equal access and opportunities for women and men to economic resources is essential to achieving sustainable livelihoods and development
- (f) Women's social and economic empowerment is central to achieving gender equality