



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Understanding Gender in Northeast Syria

1. Post information

Post Title:	Gender Analysis
Reporting to:	Direct reporting to: Zahid Muhammed Khan (PaQ Manager)
	Technical Reporting to: Rania Hibri (Gender & Social Inclusion, Protection, Safeguarding Technical Advisor) Jinda Mohammed (Protection and gender mainstreaming Coordinator-NES)
Project Management Team:	Giovanni Mainetti (DoP) Amy Rebecca Marsico (PM) Ibrahim Sheik Muslem Kader (PM) Mamed Refaat Weli (PM) Hozan Suleman Mohamad (PM)
District and sub-districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raqqa (Ar Raqqa , Ath-Thawra, Karama, Jurneyyeh, and Mansura) ● Al-Hasakeh (Al-Hasakeh, Shadadeh, Markadeh, Areesha, Tal hamis, and Tal Tamer, Safaya, Tal Baydar) ● Qamishili (Qamishili) ● Qahtaniyyeh
Duration & Dates	Estimated 12 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design of tools: 5 days (1 week) - Mobilization and Training: 5 days (1 week)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data Collection: 15 days (3 week) - Data Entry and Analysis: 15 days (3 week) - Report Writing: 10 days (2 week) - Report finalization: 10 days (2 week) 	
Does this assignment require the lead evaluator/evaluation team to have either one-to-one contact, regular or frequent contact with children, young people (under the age of 18) or vulnerable people?	Yes	No

2. Background

Eleven years of conflict in Syria has taken a toll on the life and economy of the Syrian people. The overall People in Need (PIN) has increased from 14.6 million in 2022 to 15.3 million in 2023, including 5.3 million IDPs, 9.9 million residents and 52,700 returnees.¹ The social and economic impact continues to worsen due to the lack of sustained access to health care, education, housing, and food. The devaluation of the Syrian pound has further intensified the precariousness of people living in Syria.

Protection needs are widespread throughout Northeast Syria and are driven by the cumulative long-term consequences of active hostilities, displacements and worsening economy. Inadequate living conditions in Northeast Syria coupled with loss of livelihood opportunities have exacerbated protection risks such as gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection concerns. GBV remains a major protection risk for women and girls, especially domestic and family violence, early/forced marriage and sexual violence and harassment. Disrupted social and public services and a lack of specialized actors in areas such as Dier-Ez-Zior remains a barrier for survivors to access services. Girls and boys, including adolescents and children with disabilities are also more at risk of other forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation and the psychosocial needs of many girls and boys are left unmet.

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Working in Syria since 2012 Mercy Corps’ programs focus on immediate life saving assistance and creating economic and social opportunities for marginalized youth, households

¹ HNO, 2023

and communities. Mercy Corps seeks to create wide reaching and systemic solutions to addressing the needs of IDPS, host communities and returnees in Syria.

3. Objectives

The main purpose of this assessment is to update Mercy Corps knowledge about the changes in gender relations in the household and community as a result of shifting needs, coping strategies, decision making, participation and levels of access to rights, security and humanitarian support for men and women, boys and girls. The assessment is one of Mercy Corps regular practices that aims to inform Mercy Corps NES programming and to make recommendations on the integration of gender into our sectoral work (Food Security and Livelihood, Basic needs (cash based intervention), Social Cohesion and WASH) and improve our understanding on how harmful gender norms fuel not just gender inequality but also conflict, broader discrimination, exclusion and violence.

Crisis creates and exacerbates gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities. In Syria, existing gender inequalities are increasing and the roles of women, girls, men and boys continue to shift and create new dynamics which are being shaped by overlapping economic, social and political factors and the COVID-19 pandemic. Mercy Corps Syria is undertaking a gender analysis in Northeast Syria (detailed above - in areas where Mercy Corps has operations) to gather essential information about gender roles and responsibilities, capacities and vulnerabilities in order to inform programming decisions. The analysis will assess gender roles and relations from interpersonal, household, and community levels and the changes to these parameters as a result of the past ten years of conflict, Covid-19 and continued economic degradation. It should take into consideration both public and private spheres and seek to understand the differing priorities, needs, activities and responsibilities of men and women, boys and girls across different life stages, status, ethnicity, rural vs. urban and in the various roles they play, specific to the above mentioned sectors.

Specific dimensions / issues to analyze with a focus on integrating gender into programming /

Key Guiding Questions:

Roles and Responsibilities (Who does what?)

- **Q1.1:** What are the roles and responsibilities within the household (for men, women, boys, and girls)? Within the target program sectors or systems?
- **Q1.2:** What are the roles and responsibilities on the community level (for men, women, boys, and girls)?
- **Q1.3:** Do roles and responsibilities differ between female-headed and male-headed households?
- **Q1.4:** How have gender roles changed over time or as a result of a crisis and COVID-19 (positively or negatively)? What are the gains and losses for women, men, boys and girls

in this process and have programming contributed to these gains or losses?

Access (Who has what? Who can use what?)

- **Q2.1:** Do men, women, boys, and girls have equal access to resources and services? (i.e. Including different ethnic groups, people with perceived affiliations, persons with disability, older persons)
- **Q2.2:** Which types of resources does each group have access to? (Men, Women, Boys, Girls) Specifically access to housing, land and property.
- **Q2.3:** Resources may include income, credit, financial services, employment, natural resources, agricultural inputs, education, knowledge, skills and information
- **Q2.4:** Who can go where? Why? Do women and girls need to ask permission and have freedom of movement restrictions? Are there safety concerns?
- **Q2.5:** What are the capacities and strengths that men, women, girls and boys have that help them to cope with the stress and adversities?
- **Q2.6:** What are some ways that marginalized groups who are excluded from resources are able to access it and who do they turn to for support in their communities?

Decision-making and Influence (Who makes decisions?)

- **Q3.1:** Who makes decisions at the household level? At the community level? and at the government level?
- **Q3.2:** For which types of resources can men make decisions about? Women? Boys? Girls?
- **Q3.3:** What are the barriers that prevent people from participating in decision-making? Are these barriers different for women, men, boys and girls?
- **Q3.4:** What is the representation of men, women and youth in community groups? Civil society? Government?
- **Q3.5:** What is the representation and participation of men, women, and youth in mechanisms that prevent and respond to conflict?
- **Q3.6:** What kind of interactions are there between older men and boys/male youth; or older women and girls/female youth?

Time (How is time used?)

- **Q4.1:** How much time do men and women spend on non-income work vs income-generating work?
- **Q4.2:** How do men, women, boys, and girls spend time on a typical day?
- **Q4.3:** Do they have similar amounts of free or leisure time?
- **Q4.4:** Is there a big imbalance in workloads between men, women, boys and girls? Does this vary by economic bracket, livelihood, or other variables – like IDP, host community?

Cultural and Legal context (What is the influencing context)?

- **Q5.1:** What are the cultural perceptions, norms and attitudes that influence the behavior of men and women? Boys and girls? (be quiet, be aggressive?)
- **Q5.2:** What are the social expectations regarding male behavior? Female? (age of marriage, types of employment?)
- **Q5.3:** What are the formal laws and policies that impact men, women and excluded groups? (I.e. land titles? inheritance rights, gender policy?)
- **Q5.4:** How do social institutions such as the media, school, religion and family influence the behavior of males and females?

Gender Based Violence and other Protection Risks(What are the potential GBV and protection risks?)

- **Q6.1:** Who is subject to what form of violence?
- **Q6.2:** Who commits acts of violence and what is the purpose?
- **Q6.3:** Are women and girls more exposed to domestic violence in response to changing gender roles?
- **Q6.4:** What types of violence, threats and risks particularly affect boys and men and girls and women?
- **Q6.5:** What do communities do to counter such violence?
- **Q6.6:** Are there any potential risks (including backlash) resulting from livelihood, cash, social cohesion, and WASH program interventions?
- **Q6.7:** What roles do men, women, boys and girls play in conflict. Do they instigate, fuel, de-escalate or contribute to the resolution of conflict? Are there specific religious or cultural gender roles or rituals that are performed to positively or negatively impact conflict? How do gender norms contribute to preventing or response to conflict?
- **Q6.8:** What are the gender dynamics of formal and informal dispute resolution processes?

4. Methodology

The analysis should include primary data collection triangulated against secondary analysis so as to ensure that the needed information to integrate gender perspectives into activities at all levels are captured.

Secondary data review and identification of data gaps. A desk review should be conducted to identify the dynamics, norms and roles influencing women, girls, men and boys in Syria. It should specifically look at NES wide trends but also to identify the specificities of local realities and

dynamics for the locations and integration of gender into other sectors. The literature review should highlight relevant gaps in data, for specific issues, areas and sectors, and provide recommendations for further investigation.

Primary data collection and analysis. Primary data collection should provide essential information about gender roles and responsibilities, capacities and vulnerabilities to inform the integration of gender into other sectoral programming. The consultant should consider collecting quantitative and qualitative data to enhance the utility of the data and to triangulate for trends or discrepancies. The primary data collection should consider a mix method approach and adapted tools from [CARE Rapid Gender Analysis Toolkit](#):

- [Sex and age disaggregated data](#)
- [Focus group interviews](#)
- [Key informant interviews](#)
- [Community mobility mapping](#)
- [Individual story](#)
- [Household level survey questionnaire](#)

Potential candidates will be evaluated based on the technical and financial proposal submitted. The consultant will also be responsible for developing detailed assessment methodologies, planning and conducting a consultative discussion with Mercy Corps NES protection and FSL team, training and hiring of field enumerators, managing the data collection, as well as writing up the reports and presenting the findings and recommendations along with a dissemination plan.

5. Expected Outputs

- Inception meeting with Mercy Corps NES project management team, Food Security and Livelihoods Technical Advisor and Protection and Inclusion Technical Advisor to review key background documents and agree on data collection tools
- Detailed inception report including draft methodology and sampling approach, data collection tools finalized in agreement with Mercy Corps
- Recruitment and training of field enumerators
- Detailed work plan
- Draft secondary literature review
- Data collection, entry and analysis
- Draft study report submitted for comments must be written in line with the attached [Gender Analysis Template](#)
- Presentation of the report to Mercy Corps NES office
- Final study report, responding to comments
- De-briefing with Mercy Corps staff and stakeholders in relation to research findings

6. Expected deliverable

- **Inception Report along with finalized tools:** An inception report should be produced outlining the consultants understanding of the assessment and the proposed methodology. The inception report should be approved by Mercy Corps before any field work commences.
- **Materials/Data:** Electronic copies of all assessment documents, materials, and data collected / analyzed, including translations of qualitative data.
- **Findings Summary:** A 5-page summary of lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations (Word Document / PowerPoint Presentation)
- **Final Report (maximum 30 pages, excluding annexes):** Assessment findings must be articulated clearly and in a way that maximizes the potential for these findings to inform decision-making. Mercy Corps is interested in separate sub-district profiles with consideration for each thematic area, in addition to a summary report. The final report should also include a separate gender assessment. There should be clear recommendations for integration of programming per sub-district. The final report should be visually engaging and in line with Mercy Corps brand guidelines. The evaluation report must also include limitations of the evaluation findings and guidance on how to interpret these findings, preferably as an annex. Mercy Corps will have primary ownership of all deliverables.
- **PowerPoint presentation:** covering the key findings and programmatic recommendations as well as challenges, limitations and learning.

7. Desired skills and Experience

To ensure the success of the assignment, the Consultant /Consultancy team must show documented evidence in the following areas:

- Advanced degree in Gender Studies, Behavioural Sciences or Social Sciences with more than 5 years progressive experience in research.
- Track record in conducting various types of research using qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.
- Previous experience conducting research or consultancies in Syria required.
- Established and credible body of work on gender, social inclusion, violence against women and girls and cash and voucher modality.
- High level of self-awareness and sensitivity to gender and inclusion.
- Familiarity with humanitarian programming and inter-agency coordination systems.
- Experience in comparative studies, using participatory data collection and analysis methodologies preferred.

8. Written proposal

Mercy Corps is inviting written proposals for the above assignment released on TBD. Your written proposal should comprise of two documents:

(a) A Technical Proposal consisting of

- An up to date curriculum vitae;
- A methodology and work plan for the assignment, and comments on the Terms of Reference if any (1-2 pages max);
- Two samples of work (articles, report, book chapters, etc) published in the past ten years in English (PDF or hyperlinks).

(b) A Financial Proposal for the assignment divided according to the tasks outlined in above which should be quoted in US dollars only.

Your proposal and any supporting documents must be in English.