

AGE, GENDER, and DIVERSITY (AGD) TIP SHEET

Helping to Ensure Age, Gender, and Diversity Inclusive Pledges and Good Practices for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF)

Investing in age, gender, and diversity benefits everyone

What is the Purpose of this Tip Sheet?

This Tip Sheet builds on the progress made at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF) to help ensure pledges address gaps related to age, gender, and diversity (AGD), including disability, in refugee responses. An initial [AGD Tip Sheet](#) was developed in advance of the 2019 GRF. A recent analysis of GRF pledges showed that only 30% mention support to diverse groups of refugees. This updated Tip Sheet is intended to help stakeholders ensure that the design, implementation, and monitoring of pledges put “people first” by incorporating considerations that are inclusive of AGD, including disability.

Figure: Simplified representation of how diverse characteristics can compound discrimination.



What is an AGD approach?

An AGD approach requires inclusive policies and activities, which consider how an individual’s age and gender interact with their other characteristics and attributes (including but not limited to disability, LGBTIQ+ identities, religion, ethnicity, political views, income level, language, and education).¹ This approach also examines how one’s age, gender, and diversity may together compound, and often heighten, an individual’s protection risks and experiences of discrimination. To apply an AGD approach requires systematic engagement with a diverse range of people of concern. The meaningful participation of refugees of different AGD groups is essential to understanding and addressing the specific barriers that individuals may face in realising their rights and accessing services. The AGD approach ensures that refugees are not approached as a homogeneous group when designing policies, programmes, and activities. Refugees of various ages may have different gender identities, disabilities, belong to a minority group, or all of the above. Responses must be designed with an understanding of individuals’ experiences, identities, and characteristics that impact – and often hinder – their access to protective environments and meaningful participation.

Why is an AGD Approach Important?

An AGD approach improves the effectiveness of responses by ensuring that no one is left behind.

An AGD approach helps stakeholders understand and address the identified and expressed needs and priorities of all persons of concern in order to ensure

¹ LGBTIQ+ is an inclusive acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, and other sexual orientations, gender identities and expression, and sex characteristics.

protection and build upon individuals' capacities. An AGD approach in refugee responses helps to identify those who may face barriers and discrimination and why they can – or cannot – access services, enjoy their rights, or participate in decision-making. Responses that do not consider AGD risk further exacerbating existing inequalities and putting people at risk of further harm.

An AGD approach is critical for the success of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). The GCR explicitly mentions that “the programme of action is underpinned by a strong partnership and participatory approach, involving refugees and host communities, as well as age, gender and diversity considerations, including promoting gender equality and empowering women; ending all forms of gender-based violence [GBV], trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation and abuse [SEA], and harmful practices; facilitating the meaningful participation of youth, persons with disabilities and older persons; ensuring the best interests of the child; and combating discrimination.”²

Supporting self-reliance and the financial potential of all refugees. Enabling traditionally marginalized groups of refugees to access self-reliance opportunities, including employment, creates economic opportunities for refugees, as well as host countries. Research conducted in six refugee hosting countries shows that if discriminatory norms and regulatory and administrative barriers were lifted for refugee women – and men – it could boost the country's gross domestic product (GDP) by USD 53 billion.³

Principles for incorporating and supporting an AGD approach

1. Help ensure that GRF pledges are meaningfully inclusive of refugees' age, gender, disability, and diversity;
2. Support the development of pledges in critical areas for diverse groups; and
3. Recognise the imperative to leave no one behind.



Checklist for Pledges/ Good Practices to Ensure an AGD Approach

The list below is not exhaustive; it provides stakeholders with tools and ideas in order to incorporate AGD into their pledges. Achieving any one of the following will further integrate the AGD approach into a stakeholder's pledge or good practice:

- Does the pledge acknowledge and address the different barriers, needs, and capacities of girls, boys, women, and men, including people of all ages and gender identities, those with disabilities, and other diverse groups?

Collecting, analysing, and using data is essential to the design and implementation of AGD-inclusive programmes and pledges. Pledges should mention specific efforts to mitigate barriers faced by groups at higher risk of discrimination and exclusion, including measures to address stigma, discrimination, and ensure accessibility.

- Does the pledge advance gender equality and address the structural barriers that prevent the equal participation of all, particularly of women and girls and LGBTIQ+ individuals of all ages and diverse backgrounds?

Gender equality is fundamental to the well-being and human rights of all persons of concern. Striving for gender equality includes promoting equal rights, dignity, well-being, and equitable access to services for all persons of concern. Essential to strengthening gender equality is recognizing that women and girls do not always have equal access to opportunities or to information and services in appropriate languages. Stakeholders must make deliberate efforts to support women and girls' equal and meaningful participation in all decision-making and ensure their equal access to economic opportunities, quality education, health services, and activities to prevent, mitigate the risk of, and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of abuse and exploitation. Gender equality also requires deliberate support to engage men and boys of all ages, including those with disabilities and those with diverse

² See Global Compact on Refugees, UN. Doc. A/73/12 (Part II), para. 13. See also paras. 74-77 for more AGD-specific references.

³ See International Rescue Committee, *Unlocking Refugee Women's Potential*, July 2019

sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and/or sex characteristics, through dialogue, awareness-raising on gender equality, and behaviour change strategies, without taking away resources dedicated to women and girls.

- Does the pledge promote the full, equal, and meaningful participation of refugees and host communities in decision-making – which is inclusive of all women and girls, young people and children, and individuals belonging to diverse groups – to ensure accountability to all affected people?

Strengthening the active participation of marginalised groups is at the core of the AGD approach.

Examples of providing support to persons of diverse AGD groups include:

-  Financial support to create participatory methods and channels at each stage of developing policies, laws, or national plans;
-  Targeted funding to organisations led by individuals of various AGD groups within refugee and host communities, which identify and build upon individuals’ capacities;
-  Incorporating the priorities of affected people of all ages, genders, with and without disabilities, and other diverse backgrounds;
-  Considering individuals’ age, gender, disability, and diversity when designing programmes to ensure access to protection, assistance, and solutions; and
-  Facilitating refugees’ access to information and supporting individuals to make informed decisions to hold humanitarian actors accountable.



Please explore these resources

To learn more about how you can support specific groups of refugees:

- [Global Refugee Forum Pledging Guidance: All Resources](#)
- [GRF Pledging Guidance: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [GRF Pledging Guidance: Inclusion of Older Refugees](#)
- [GRF Pledging Guidance: Inclusion of Women and Girls](#)
- [Pledging for Youth: A Tip Sheet for GRF Pledges](#)
- [INiTiAtiVe for Child Rights in the Global Compacts: Enhancing the Protection of Children and Promoting Child Focused Pledges and Good Practices to Advance the Objectives of Global Compact on Refugees](#)
- [Implementing the Global Compact On Refugees For Children: Examples of Child Focused Work](#)

Organisations supporting this Tip Sheet

ACT Alliance, Action for the Needy in Ethiopia (ANE), ADRA, Asia Pacific Network of Refugees, Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Australian National Committee on Refugee Women, CARE International, CLEAR Global, DRC - Danish Refugee Council, Education for All Coalition, Empower Youth, Equal Asia Foundation (Stichting EqualA Foundation), European Coalition for Refugees and Migrants (EU-Comar), Forcibly Displaced People Network, FUVADIS (Fundación de atención, inclusiva, social y humana), Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, Global Independent Refugee Women Leaders, Global Refugee Led Network, Global Refugee Youth Network, GOAL, HelpAge International, INiTiAtiVe for Child Rights in the Global Compacts, International Detention Coalition, International Disability Alliance, INTERSOS, Jesuit Refugee Service, Lutheran World Federation, New Women Connectors, Oxfam International, Plan International, Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table, Relief International, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNSW Forced Migration Research Network, Women’s Refugee Commission.