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## Technical Meeting

# Responding to Female Genital Mutilation **in the Face of Climate Change**

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION  
DONOR WORKING GROUP



29 JUNE 2023



# 01. Opening

**Harriet Akullu,**

Child Protection Specialist,  
Prevention of Harmful Practices,  
Child Protection, UNICEF HQ



## 02. Presentation:

# FGM and Climate Change Key messages from the evidence

### **Manahil Siddiqi, Research Scientist**

Technical Co-coordinator, Strategic Technical Assistance for Research (STAR) Initiative to End Harmful Practices for FGM Research, UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight



**1**

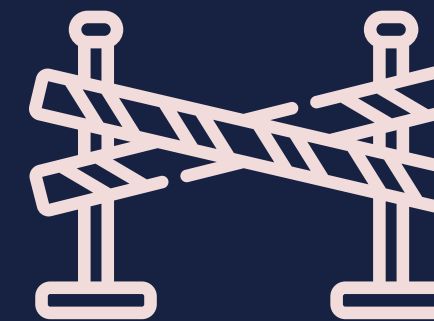
# The world is unequal for women and girls



More likely to  
**live in poverty**  
than men



Less access to  
basic human  
rights than men



Face social and  
political barriers

**..and climate change intensifies gender inequalities.**

## Climate change

Extreme heatwaves

Droughts

Flooding

Land degradation



Food and water scarcity

Displacement

## Women and girls are:

- 14x more likely to die than men in the aftermath of disasters (e.g hurricanes, wildfires, and flooding) (African Development Bank)
- More likely to be the first to drop out of school to help families make money, do chores and look after siblings
- More likely to go hungry when food is in short supply
- More at risk of gender-based violence

## Extreme events and gender-based violence: a mixed-methods systematic review

Kim Robin van Daalen, MPhil  \*  • Sarah Savić Kallesøe, MPhil \* • Fiona Davey, BSc •

Sara Dada, MSc • Laura Jung, MD • Lucy Singh, MD • et al. [Show all authors](#) • [Show footnotes](#)

[Open Access](#) • Published: June, 2022 • DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(22\)00088-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(22)00088-2) •

41 studies included in the Review

20 quantitative

14 qualitative

5 mixed-methods

2 grey literature

19 studies included in the thematic analysis

14 qualitative

5 mixed-methods

Extreme weather events **exacerbate** drivers of gender-based violence.

- ⇒ Economic and food insecurity contributing to neg. Coping mechanisms (e.g. child marriage)
- ⇒ Inc. in daily stressors leading to escalated patterns of violence
- ⇒ Inc. opportunities for perpetrators to access women (e.g. emergency shelters, damage to physical infrastructure)

# Female Genital Mutilation



## DRIVERS

### SOCIAL FACTORS

Belief that FGM ensures virginity for marriage; controls female sexual desire; enhances male pleasure; marriage precondition

### ECONOMIC FACTORS

Financial gain for families (bride wealth) and for practitioners

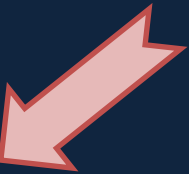
Gender Inequality

2

Evidence base on climate change and FGM is limited, but growing.



Kenya



Arab States  
(E.g Djibouti, Somalia)



Uganda



**3**

**Climate change and FGM are linked in certain contexts through various, interconnected pathways**

**Poverty**

**Child  
marriage**

**School  
disruption**

**Displacement  
and Conflict**

## **Child marriage, Poverty, and FGM**

- Loss of education, perpetuation of child marriage, FGM as precursor (Kenya)
- FGM at younger ages as a result of child marriage driven by economic hardship (Key Informant, UN, Somalia)
- FGM to ensure a more economically advantageous marriage (Key Informant, UN, Djibouti)

## **Displacement**

- Reduction and abandonment of FGM when exposed to non-practicing communities (Somalian refugees in Norway (Mackfarlane 2019, Idi—Oztig 2022) and UNFPA 2022 report on FGM among refugees and migrants in Jordan)
- OR.. FGM as a way to cope against marginalization to a keep their identity in a discriminating environment (Jinnah and Lowe 2015, Somali women in Nairobi)

## **Economic livelihood of cutters**

- Women turning to FGM as a source of income during economic downturns, Door to door FGM reportedly driven by economic hardship and income losses (Plan International 2020)
- Conflict, famine and climate change contributing to the migration of cutters to different regions (Key informant, CSO, Somalia)

## **Disruption to services**

- COVID-19 disrupted large national anti-FGM campaign to be launched in 2020 in Kenya (Wadekar 2021)
- Disruption in health, justice and legal services

# 4

## Programmes and policies must become climate resilient, context-specific and gender-responsive

- Recognize differences in vulnerabilities and needs with respect to climate change, gender, context.
- Leverage the voice, agency and resistance of women led movements

# 5

## **Generate data and evidence to understand impacts of climate change on FGM and strengthen evidence-based action.**

- Research to further elucidate mechanisms through which climate-related events link to FGM
- Sex disaggregated data on climate change consequences including disaster-related mortality and morbidity, disaster risk management, women's rights to lands and natural resources
- National gender and environment assessments by region to establish baseline context
- Evidence to inform action focused on interventions, adaptation and implementation

# 04. Q&A



# 03. Panel Discussion



**Esmael Omaris**

Head of Policy and Advocacy,  
AMREF Health Africa,  
The Girl Generation



**Marcel Kaboré**

Voix de Femmes,  
Burkina Faso



**Muktar Abdi**

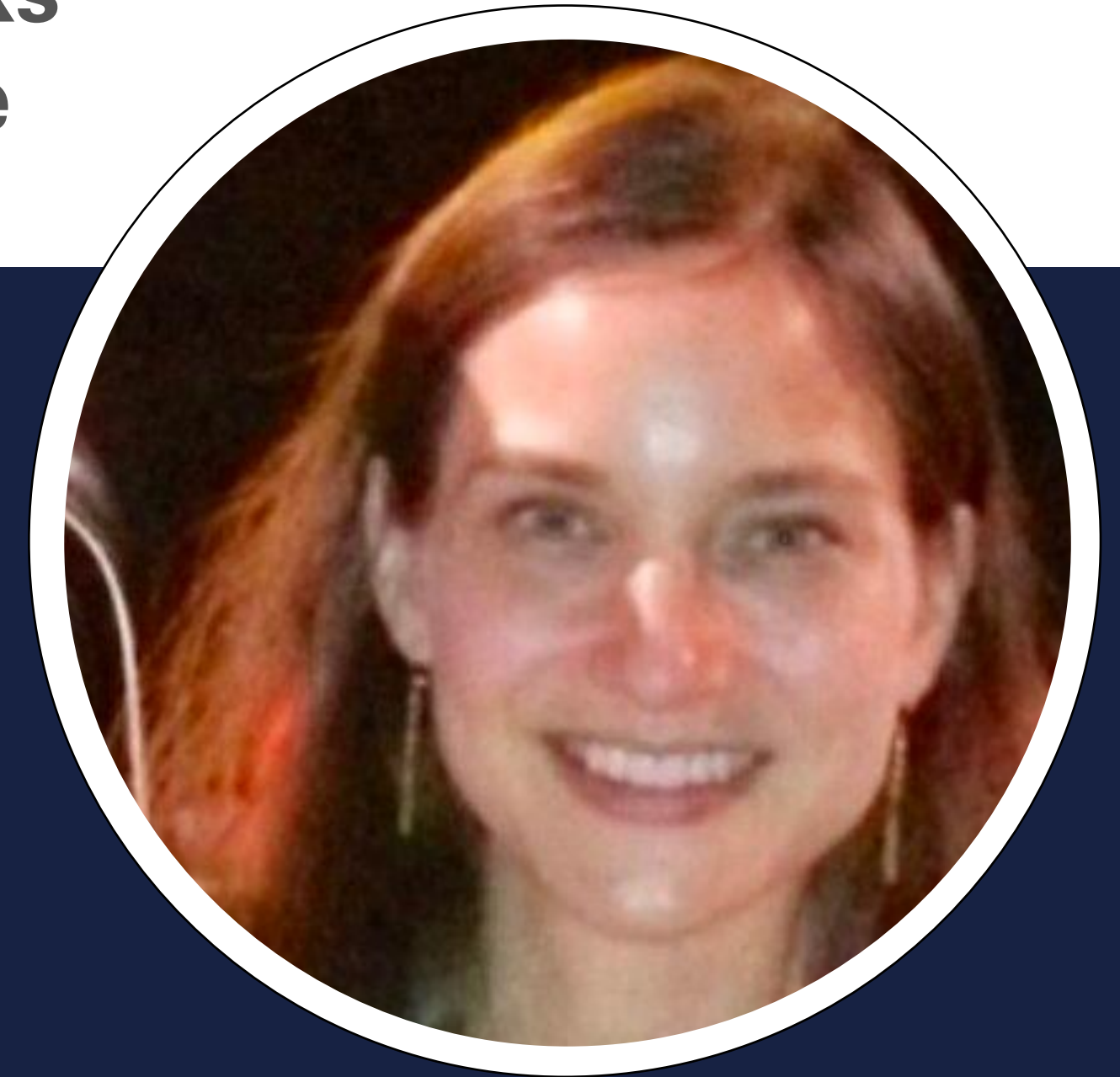
Child Protection and Capacity  
Building Program Manager,  
Imagine 1 Day



# 04. Q&A

## 02. Presentation:

# Climate Change and GBV: defining the links and entry points in humanitarian response



**Emily Krasnor**

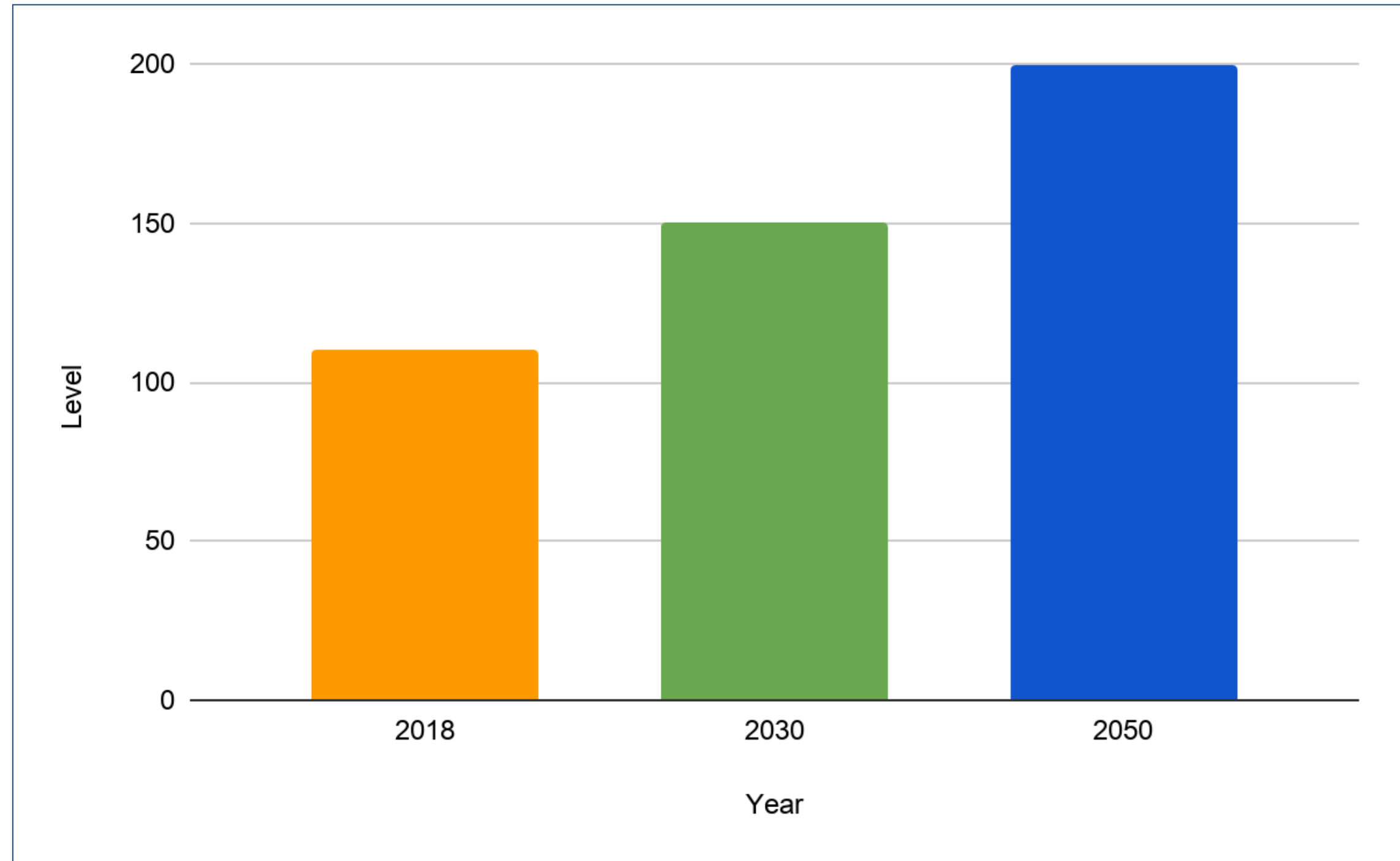
Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Specialist,  
Humanitarian Response Division, UNFPA



# Increased need for humanitarian assistance due to climate change

Disaster-related humanitarian needs are expected to increase by 50 percent by 2030, In 2022, there were 60.9 million people internally displaced, of which 53% were triggered by disasters (IOM GMDAC 2023).

Funding needs under this scenario would rise from the current \$3-12b per year to \$20bn by 2030



**Increase of population in need of humanitarian assistance as a result of climate-related disasters by 2030 and 2050 (under pessimistic scenario)**



# Gendered impacts of climate change

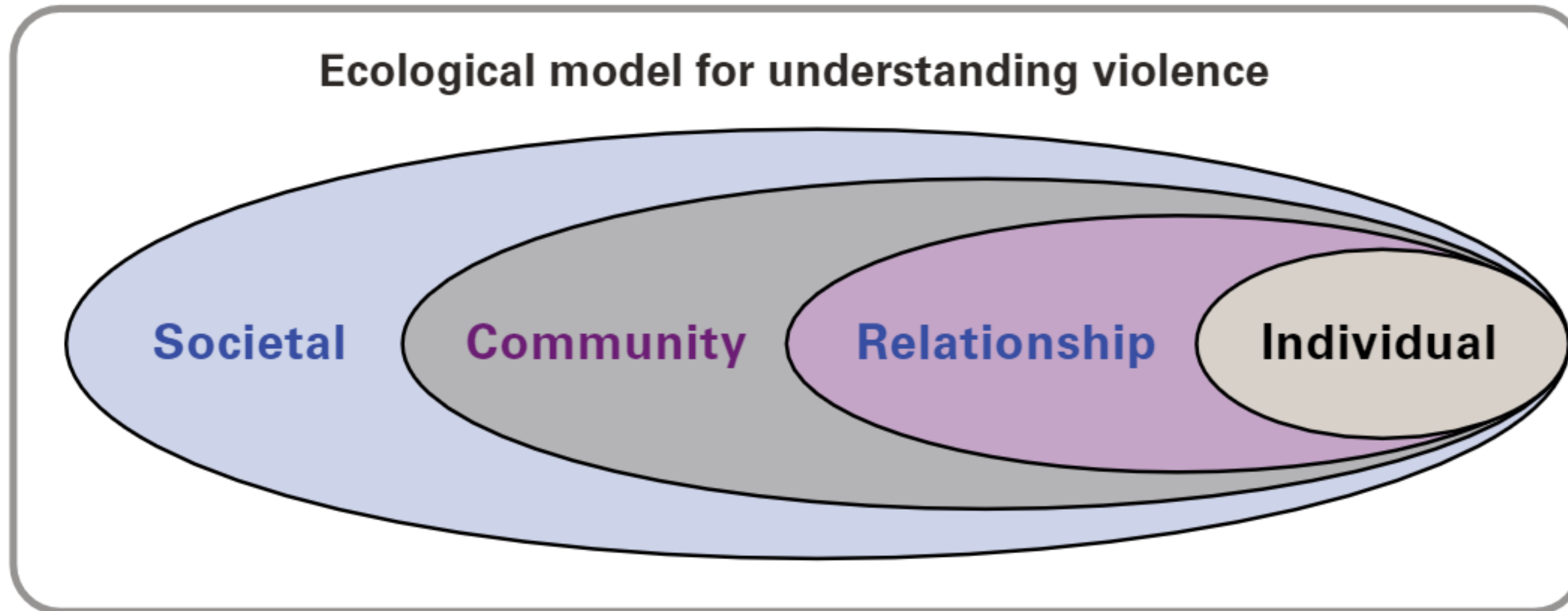
**Climate change can amplify and accelerate pre-existing gender inequalities.**

**This impact in turn affects women and girls' ability to adapt or recover from a climate-induced emergency.**

10 of the 15 countries most affected by climate change have chronic humanitarian problems and have most pronounced gender inequality.

Over 84 million women and girls are in need of GBV prevention and response services across 27 of the most dire emergencies. .

# Understanding the link between climate change & GBV



A useful way to understand some of the norms and practices that increase vulnerability of women and girls to climate change is through the ecological model.

# Context Specific Risk Factors for Women and Girls

<b>Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High dependence on natural resources and agricultural sustainability (making <b>women farmers</b> particularly vulnerable)</li><li>• Less experience with <b>skills</b> that could mitigate risk (climbing a tree or swimming)</li><li>• Lack of access for women to <b>credit or insurance</b> to assist recovery from disasters</li></ul>
<b>Relationship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Domestic responsibilities</b>, including caring for children and older relatives, making flight during a disaster particularly challenging</li><li>• Domestic responsibilities, including food preparation contributing to women being involved in subsistence agriculture and fetching water (each of which are impacted by climate change)</li><li>• Low <b>socio-economic status</b> at the household level</li></ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gender discriminatory <b>education</b> systems</li><li>• High <b>unemployment</b>, and gender discriminatory employment practices, relegating women to the <b>informal sectors</b></li><li>• Weak communication or early warning systems targeting women and girls</li></ul>
<b>Societal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Poverty and dowry practices</b></li><li>• Economic, social and gender inequalities</li><li>• Poor integration of attention to women and girls in <b>laws and policies</b> related to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)</li></ul>

# Pathways of impact of climate-related hazards: Acute and Slow-onset

## Slow-onset events:

- Communities under stress shift to conservative or customary patriarchal practices
- Extreme stress, property and communal loss, and scarcity of food and water may contribute to community conflict over resources and increased incidents of violent behavior by men, including GBV

## Acute disasters:

- Displacement
- Poorly designed relief efforts



# Regional/Country Impacts of Climate Change on GBV

**Uganda:** During a period of drought in Uganda from 2014 to 2018, domestic violence, sexual abuse and female genital mutilation (FGM) rates all rose.

## **Somalia:**

In Somalia, drought and flood conditions in 2019 caused the internal displacement of 2.6 million people, heightening GBV risk. Intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and FGM reportedly increased in this setting.

## **MENA and Arab States Region**

-GBV risks such as IPV, FGM, sexual violence, and child marriage are prevalent.  
-In Somalia, drought and flood conditions in 2019 caused the internal displacement of 2.6 million people, heightening women and girls' vulnerability to GBV, including FGM.

## **Kenya:**

-A 2021 study revealed that climate change eroded the Maasai social and economic fabric. These changes have resulted in widening of gender inequalities and further disempowerment of women and girls, through the loss of education, perpetuation of FGM, and increasing child marriages.

# Humanitarian Frameworks and Approaches to Support Attention to Climate Change Impacts and Gender-Based Violence

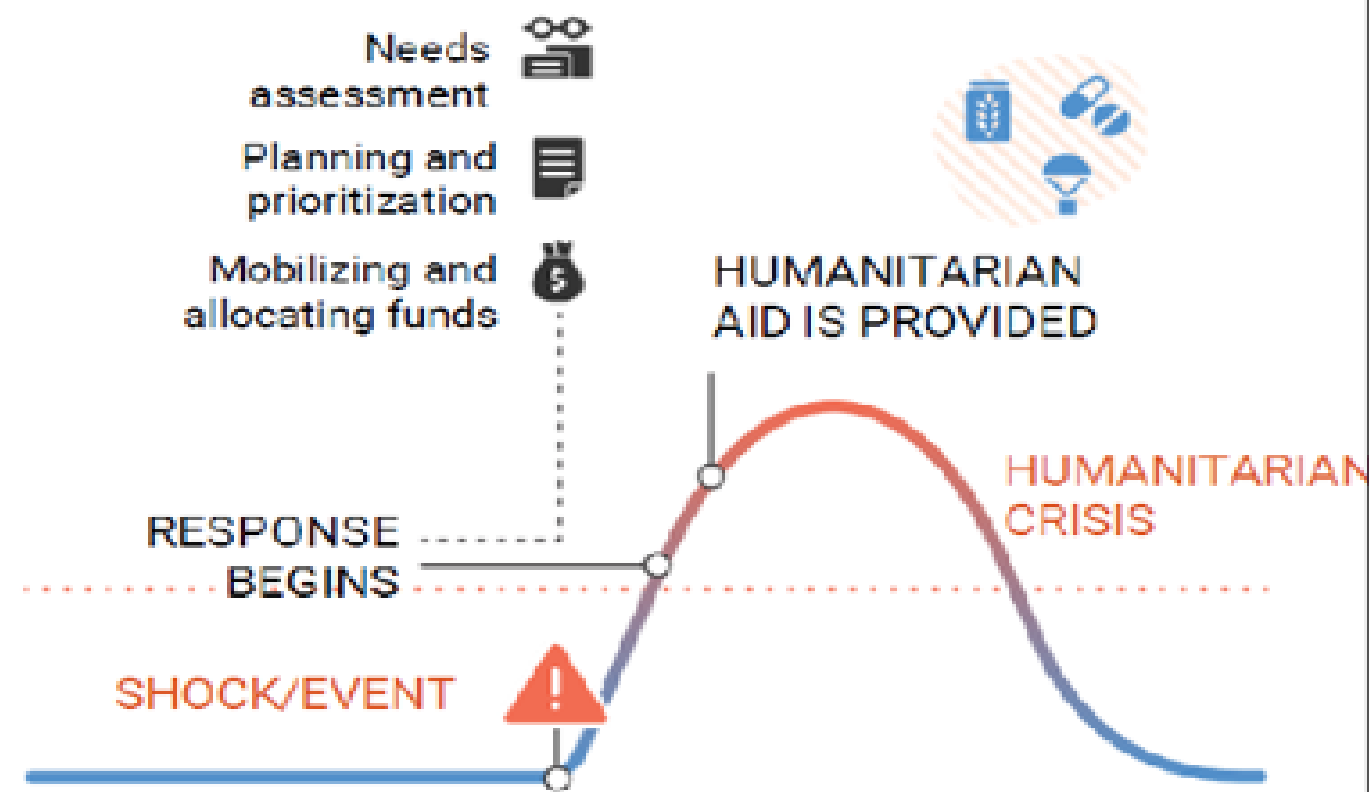
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Preparedness and Contingency Planning
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Resilience
- Anticipatory Action



# Anticipatory Action to Support Attention to Climate Change Impacts and GBV

## Anticipatory action (or FbA)

### Traditional response



### Anticipatory action





# Impact of humanitarian situations on harmful practices

## Impact of humanitarian situations on FGM

- ✓ HP often driven by pre-existing social and cultural norms exacerbated in humanitarian situations;
- ✓ Complex and multiple drivers

## ... but rarely considered a priority in humanitarian settings

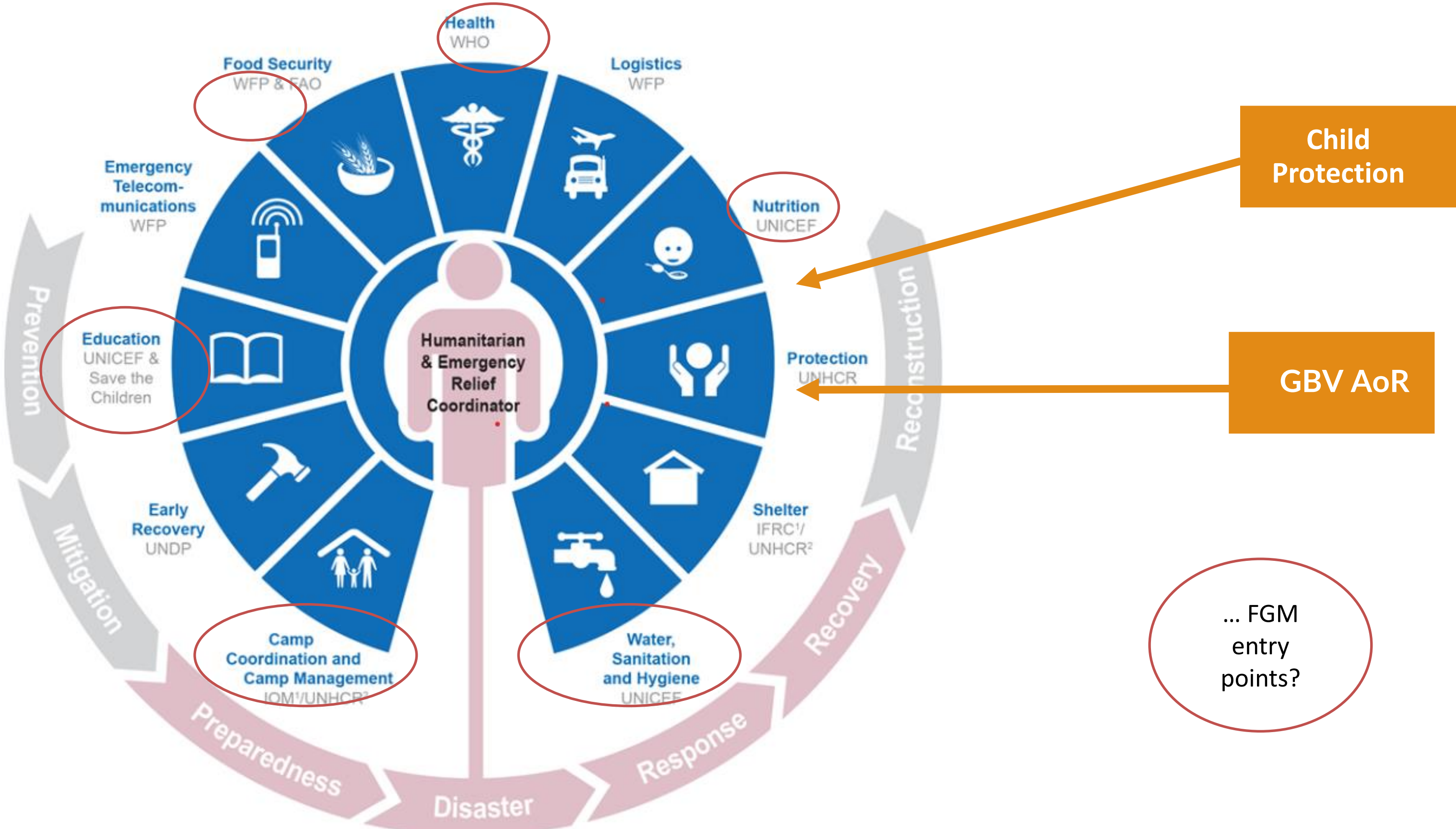
- ✓ Limited funding for GBV
- ✓ Limited collaboration between humanitarian and development actors / different stakeholders
- ✓ Focus on response vs. prevention
- ✓ Not considered “life-saving” and contributing to “resilience”
- ✓ Social norms require time vs. short funding / project approach

## Evidence Gap

- ✓ Lack of data and evidence on incidence of HP in these contexts
- ✓ Challenge of prevalence studies in fragile settings



# Situating FGM within the IASC humanitarian cluster / sector system



# Moving Forward

## Policy

GBV actors should influence climate change policies and NAPs to access climate change funds to support GBV prevention and response.

## Investment

Greater investment in system strengthening related to GBV within global, regional and national climate change plans. Further investment in women's organisations & groups.

## Risk Mitigation

Focus climate change action beyond food security but support food security actors to integrate GBV risk mitigation measures as outlined in the IASC GBV Guidelines. Ensure girls' education and build adaptive livelihoods as a core strategy for promoting resilience to climate shocks.

## Response

Within climate change adaptation approaches and anticipatory actions, ensure comprehensive and safe services are available to survivors affected by either slow-onset or acute climate-related emergencies.

## Coordination

Address GBV in climate change action, create appropriate interventions before a disaster. Also support GBV coordination as an essential component of effective systems building.

# Key Resources

## Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery

- Camp Coordination and Camp Management
- Child Protection
- Education
- Food Security and Agriculture
- Health
- Housing, Land and Property
- Humanitarian Mine Action
- Livelihoods

## Thematic Area Guide for Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery

### Nutrition

- Camp Coordination and Camp Management
- Child Protection
- Education
- Food Security and Agriculture
- Health
- Housing, Land and Property
- Humanitarian Mine Action
- Livelihoods
- Nutrition
- Protection
- Shelter, Settlements and Recovery
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- WFP



www.gbvguidelines.org

IASC

## Thematic Area Guide for Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery

### Food Security and Agriculture

- Camp Coordination and Camp Management
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www.gbvguidelines.org

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## THE INTER-AGENCY MINIMUM STANDARDS for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming



GBV Risk Mitigation

GBV in Emergencies Programming with key actions during preparedness stage

# 05. Closing Remarks

**Hilde Røren**

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Department for Human Development, Gender  
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**THANK YOU!**

