



Step 1: Reviewing existing information

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Before launching a participatory assessment with refugees in a specific situation, it is important for multifunctional teams to compile all the relevant information and existing documentation on the refugee and host populations and to organize themselves. Teams should look over and discuss previous assessments and analyses, as well as any documents and reports concerning the local social, economic, political, legal, physical and security environment. Teams should also review all relevant UNHCR reports, such as Standards and Indicators Reports, Annual Protection Reports, Country Reports, and reports on SGBV, education, health, food-basket monitoring, and income-generating projects.

While reviewing the documentation, teams should keep in mind the following factors that may lead to significant inequalities between persons of concern and place some at risk:¹⁵

- Inequalities between women and men (the different roles assigned by society to women and men can lead to exclusion from decision-making opportunities and place women and girls in particular at a disadvantage in the family and community);
- Age (in certain societies, young and older people can be considered as having little to contribute and can be overlooked);
- Ethnicity (in relation to more dominant groups or in relation to host communities);

- Socio-economic group (poorest, middle-income, highest-income);
- Religion (especially where different from other groups or the host population);
- Family composition/type/size of household (e.g. extended, single-headed, child-headed, all-male);
- Stage in the refugee cycle (new arrivals vs. earlier arrivals, urban vs. camp-based setting);
- Health status (pregnant or lactating women, malnutrition, poor health, chronic illness, etc.);
- Disabilities (possibly leading to exclusion from training, income-generating opportunities or food distributions, etc.);
- Educational level (literacy, skills, including language skills, non-school attendance);
- Non-participation in organized activities/associations/organizations;
- Land/shelter/housing availability, access to land, plot sizes, location of key infrastructure, natural resources, local markets, services, known zones of conflict or violence, etc.;
- Cuts/reductions in services owing to limited budgets (on whom—women, girls, boys or men—they impact, the reasons these areas were selected for cuts);
- Other differences between refugee and local host populations.

Teams must consider what effects these factors can have on the protection of individuals and groups of concern. Structural inequalities combined with other conditions (such as poor health, disabilities, illiteracy and fear) may affect a person's capacity to access and claim her/his rights to basic services and assistance. Taking these points into account while reviewing the existing documentation will help to better identify gaps and key issues for discussion.