

Adolescent Girls in Crisis: South Sudan, Bangladesh and Lake Chad Basin and Beirut case studies

How can we improve humanitarian responses to address the needs of adolescent girls in conflict-affected regions throughout the world?

While conflicts impact all members of the community, particularly as ongoing fighting and chronic food insecurity deepens the crisis, adolescent girls face increased risk. Their physical safety, their health and their future prospects are all threatened in ways that differ from those faced by adolescent boys and adult women. Often, too, just because they are young and female, their rights and needs are ignored.

In 2017 and 2018, Plan International Australia commissioned Monash Gender Peace and Security Centre (GPS) to examine four case studies: the current crisis in South Sudan; the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh; and the Lake Chad crisis (Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria) and local refugee populations in Beirut, Lebanon. This research explored how adolescent girls within two age brackets (aged 10-14 and 15-19) understand and respond to the unique impact their country's crisis has upon them. It presented their views on the crisis and on how the humanitarian sector might respond.

This project drew together practitioner experience, scholarly research skills and community engagement to generate research on the needs and capacities of adolescent girls in crisis.

It used a grounded, feminist research approach which centres the lived realities of adolescent girls as the primary site for building knowledge about the threats to their security, and how those threats should be addressed.

As such, the project acknowledged both the vulnerability and agency of adolescent girls in crisis and looked for ways in which the humanitarian sector can support them. It recommended programmatic responses to girls' insecurity that addresses needs and responds to opportunities to support girls' empowerment.

Carefully navigating the ethical concerns surrounding working with adolescent girls in crisis, the research project promoted a safe, community-engaged approach that addresses immediate response and prevention.

The study's conclusions and recommendations on how to improve humanitarian responses to address the needs of adolescent girls in crisis was captured in three reports: *Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices from the Lake Chad Basin*, [Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices of the Rohingya](#) and [Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Voices from South Sudan](#).

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