



## Feminist Pocketbook

# INTRODUCTION

### What is COFEM?

The Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM) is an advocacy collective of thought leaders, activists, practitioners and academics working globally to end violence against women and girls (VAWG). COFEM was formed in 2017 for those working on VAWG to engage critically with, and address collectively, the challenges in VAWG work. COFEM's key objectives are:

1. To provide a forum for connection, discussion, problem solving, mutual support and activism to advance feminist, women-centred strategies for ending VAWG and promoting the rights of women and girls.
2. To collectively identify and implement strategies and actions to overcome the challenges feminist-informed efforts face to address VAWG, and ensure that women and girls remain at the centre of all efforts to end VAWG.

### What is COFEM's Feminist Pocketbook?

This Feminist Pocketbook is a resource to support practitioners, researchers and others working in humanitarian and development settings to articulate and implement feminist approaches to addressing VAWG, also referred to as gender-based violence (GBV). The Pocketbook consists of 10 'tip sheets' on key topics related to addressing GBV in humanitarian and

development settings. The goal of the Pocketbook is to empower practitioners, researchers and activists to help their colleagues, organisations and other stakeholders improve advocacy, policy and programming efforts by promoting a common theoretical ground for shared understanding and action.

### Why is a feminist perspective important?

A feminist perspective is essential for understanding and dismantling the underpinning systems of power, especially gender inequality, that produce, reinforce and perpetuate GBV.

### Who is the Pocketbook for?

The Pocketbook is primarily for practitioners, researchers and activists working to prevent and respond to GBV in development and humanitarian settings. We hope the Pocketbook will help its users engage more effectively with policy-makers, donors and other stakeholders on these issues in a variety of settings across the globe.

### How to use this Pocketbook

The Pocketbook as a whole can provide an overview for understanding and implementing a feminist perspective in GBV work. Additionally, individual tip sheets can be shared and used to guide GBV work around specific issues. The Pocketbook is a tool that practitioners can use in program implementation, as well as when

advocating with key stakeholders, partner organisations, policy-makers and donors. These tip sheets also provide valuable guidance for researchers when considering feminist-informed questions and methods. The series starts with a review of feminist perspectives in GBV work and then applies this analysis to distinct areas of this work. The tip sheet titles are listed below.

**Tip sheet 1:** Why does a feminist perspective matter in work to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls?

**Tip sheet 2:** Why does GBV programming focus on women and girls?

**Tip sheet 3:** Connecting gender-based violence, sexual harassment and everyday sexism

**Tip sheet 4:** Staying accountable to women and girls

**Tip sheet 5:** Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV

**Tip sheet 6:** Men as allies and activists

**Tip sheet 7:** Violence against men and boys

**Tip sheet 8:** Maximising impact: Understanding the risks and benefits of coordinated efforts to address different forms of violence

**Tip sheet 9:** Backlash: What is it and how do we address it safely?

**Tip sheet 10:** Feminist movement building: Taking a long-term view

## Call to action

Although the late 1990s and early 2000s introduced positive developments in GBV programming and policies, we are currently witnessing the erosion of women's human rights to live free from violence and exercise their full and equal rights in many domains. It is important to recognise and celebrate the work and achievements of past and current women's rights movements that allow us to continue moving forward. The feminist GBV community must continue to be clear, vocal and united to regain the momentum and accelerate the transformation necessary to secure women and girls' full and equal rights. As such, this Pocketbook aims to provide support to help activists in this pursuit.



[www.cofemsocialchange.org](http://www.cofemsocialchange.org)

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