

A Gender-sensitive Approach to International Working & Volunteering





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During the Gender-sensitive Approach to International Working & Volunteering Online Event, we met with past participants who shared their experiences during their international placements as well as participants who were interested to find out more about how to engage and gain a unique work experience and make a positive difference in the world. The participants have been volunteering in the Middle East, Caucasus and Europe.

During the second part of the event, Asfar has introduced the gender-sensitive approach - An approach which takes into consideration an individual's needs, specifically in relation to women and non-binary genders. As well as how it means that participants are aware of the different roles and responsibilities different genders have in the community they are working in, and they take these differences into account.

As we think that it is important to understand and consider the gender dynamics of the community, they are working in so we decided to discuss what they think could be gender-specific barriers that could potentially affect someone's experience during a volunteering placement.





The participants worked in break-out rooms and come up with few barriers from discrimination, as well that in some cultures, there may be strict gender roles or expectations that could limit women's ability to participate in certain activities or engage with certain groups of people. This could mean that sometimes women would not be allowed to work with male volunteers.

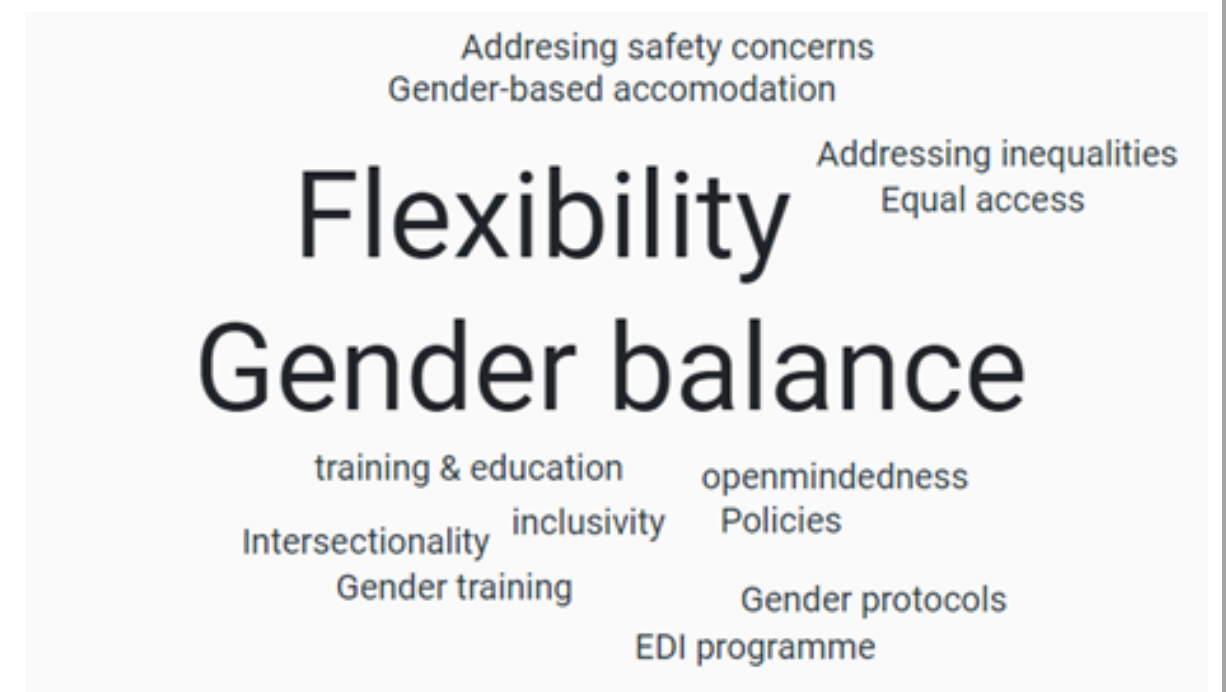
On the other side, women may face greater challenges accessing resources such as transportation, accommodation, or healthcare during their volunteering placement. This could be particularly true in contexts where women have limited mobility or are not allowed to travel alone in a specific country.

It's important to note that these barriers may vary depending on the specific context and cultural norms of the community where the volunteering placement takes place.



It's crucial for organizations to be aware of these potential barriers and take steps to mitigate them, such as providing additional safety measures, offering cultural sensitivity training, or ensuring that resources are accessible to all volunteers regardless of gender.

In the second part of the event, we discussed several gender-sensitive approaches that could be put in place to make it easier for future participants to be gender-sensitive during their placements.





These could include ensuring a gender balance among volunteers which can help create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all participants. This can help to break down gender stereotypes and promote equality. In addition, it has been mentioned that providing gender training to all volunteers before they begin their placement can help them understand gender-related issues and challenges that may arise during their work. This could include training on gender equality, gender-based violence, and cultural sensitivity. Also, addressing gender inequalities in the community can be an important component of volunteering work. This can include supporting initiatives that promote women's empowerment, providing education and healthcare resources, and advocating for gender equality.

Being sensitive to cultural beliefs and practices related to gender can help volunteers to understand and work within the local context in a better way and we should all work together to help them be better prepared for their placements.



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