



GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING IN EMERGENCIES IN FOOD SECURITY

WHY DOES GENDER EQUALITY MATTER IN EMERGENCY FOOD INTERVENTIONS?

Conflicts and natural disasters affect women, girls, boys and men differently; they have different needs, perceptions and experiences which need to be considered by humanitarian actors in ensuring that appropriate assistance is delivered to all segments of the population without putting any group at risk. In an emergency, interventions focus on meeting primary needs through the delivery of aid as quickly as possible. Food distribution alone – directly, or through food-for-work, or food-for-training projects – does not guarantee their optimal use. For food interventions to have a positive impact on affected individuals, families and communities; a gender-sensitive, participatory approach at all stages of the project cycle can help ensure that an adequate and efficient response is provided. Food assessments and activities that take into consideration the distinct needs, priorities and capacities of women, girls, boys and men are more likely to improve the lives of affected populations.

GEP IN FOOD SECURITY SECTOR NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

A **NEEDS ASSESSMENT** is the essential first step in providing emergency food that is safe, effective, and restores dignity. A gender analysis is critical to understanding the social and gender dynamics that could help or hinder aid effectiveness.

Here are examples of questions that can enrich the design of food projects:

1. What are the demographics of the target group? (# of households and household composition disaggregated by sex and age; # of single heads of household who are women, girls, boys and men; # of M/F unaccompanied children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, the chronically ill; # of pregnant and lactating women)
2. What is the nutritional status of the affected population (disaggregated by sex and age)?
3. Who receives food aid on behalf of the household (men, women, girls or boys)? Do women or men decide on its use?
4. How is food shared within households? (Intra-household food distribution and consumption - who eats first and most – women, girls, boys or men?)
5. How is food being distributed and allocated? What systems to register, to distribute, to transport are in place? Are food distribution points equally accessible to males and females of all ages?
6. What are the customs, culture and traditions that may limit access to and control over food to female and male members of the household/community or any sub-section of the population at large?
7. What are the religion- and/or culture-based food restrictions/preferences for women and men in the community?

Examples of ways to incorporate gender concerns in a food security project: The gender analysis in the needs assessment will identify gender gaps, such as unequal access to distributions of food or to food-for-work opportunities for women/girls and men/boys, that need to be addressed. These should be integrated into **ACTIVITIES**.

| Gender Analysis in Needs Assessment | Activities |
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| The needs assessment identifies that 22% of households in the target area are female-headed, but women are restricted in their movements outside the home. They rely on male children or others to procure food on their behalf. | Work with women to design a transparent and effective distribution system and ensure information about it reaches eligible women. Monitor to ensure similar proportions of registered women and men are accessing food relief. |
| Women's incomes and livelihoods have been disrupted to an equal or greater extent than those of men, but most food-for-work and cash-for-work interventions are directed at men. | Involve women and men in identifying work opportunities that can be provided by home-based women. Involve men and women in finding ways to relieve women's household tasks so they have time for more productive work. |

OUTCOMES should capture the change that is expected for female and male beneficiaries. Avoid outcome statements that hide whether or not males and females benefit equally. Examples of gender outcomes include:

- [Number and %] households in receipt of food for [duration], including all households headed by women, girls or boys.
- [Number] children (% girls/% boys) in the affected areas in receipt of a food incentive to address both their short-term needs and encourage school attendance for a period of [duration].
- Up to 50,000 small-scale farmers (context-appropriate % male/% female) are in receipt of food assistance for a period of [duration], through food-for-work and food-for-training activities to reconstruct basic community infrastructure and provide



related support services (e.g. rubble clearing, repair of access to paths/roads, construction of drainage canals, water storage facilities and channels, provision of cooked food to labourers).

- The Food Distribution Team comprises (context-appropriate) % male / % female.

THE ADAPT & ACT-C FRAMEWORK: A PRACTICAL TOOL TO DESIGN/REVIEW FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS THROUGH A GENDER EQUALITY LENS:

The ADAPT & ACT-C Framework is a tool for use when designing or vetting a project/programme to integrate gender dimensions. While the order of the steps in the framework may vary, as many as possible of the steps - ideally all nine - should be taken into account in the design of humanitarian interventions to ensure that the services and assistance they provide meet the needs and concerns of women, girls, boys and men equally.

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| A | ANALYSE the impact of the crisis on women, girls, boys and men and what this entails in terms of division of tasks/labour, work load and access to food assistance, i.e. distributions and food-for-work opportunities. Ex. Ensure that cultural, practical and security-related issues that women, girls, boys and men might expect to face in accessing food assistance are identified through focus group discussions and that the results inform programming. |
| D | DESIGN services to meet the needs of women and men equally. Food assistance actors should review the way they work to ensure that girls and boys, women and men can benefit equally from their services. Ex. Services are designed to reduce the burden that the receipt of food aid may pose for women beneficiaries (food distribution points established as close to beneficiaries as possible; weight of food packages are manageable for women, etc.). |
| A | Make sure that women, men and girls and boys of all age groups can ACCESS food assistance, including distributions equally. Ex. Women's, girls', boys' and men's access to assistance projects and services is routinely monitored through spot-checks, discussions with communities, etc. |
| P | Ensure that women, girls, boys and men PARTICIPATE equally in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of food assistance projects, programmes and strategies, and that women are in decision-making positions. Ex. Women are 50% of participants at meetings to discuss and decide on the location of food distribution points, the criterion for selection of recipients of food assistance, etc. |
| T | Ensure that women and men benefit equally from TRAINING or other capacity-building initiatives offered by the project. Ex. equal opportunities exist for women, girls, boys and men in food-for-training/work; an equal number of women and men are employed in food distribution programmes, etc. |

and

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| A | Make sure that the project takes specific ACTIONS to prevent risks of GBV. The <i>IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings</i> includes a chapter on 'Food Security & Nutrition', and should be used as a tool for planning and coordinating emergency education programming. |
| C | COLLECT, analyze and report sex- and age-disaggregated data; develop profiles on the different needs and realities of males and females in at-risk populations and how and whether their needs are being met by the response. Ex. Sex- and age-disaggregated data on programme coverage are regularly collected, analyzed and reported on. |
| T | Based on the gender analysis, make sure that women, girls, boys and men are TARGETED with specific actions when appropriate. Ex. women are designated as the initial point of contact for emergency food distribution; men who actively prevent GBV and discrimination during food distributions are supported and publicly acknowledged; women are the food entitlement holders (except where men/boys are the single heads of households), etc. |
| C | Ensure COORDINATION and gender mainstreaming in all areas of work. For example, partners in the Food Security sector liaise with actors in other sectors – including Nutrition, Protection, CCCM/NFI/Shelter, WASH, and Health– to coordinate on gender issues. |



DESIGNING MINIMUM GENDER COMMITMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY

In order to translate the Food Security Sector’s commitments to gender-responsive education projects into reality, minimum gender commitments can be developed and applied systematically to the field response. The commitments must be articulated in a way that can be understood clearly by all, both in terms of value added to current programming and in terms of the concrete actions which need to be taken to meet these commitments. They should constitute a set of core actions and/or approaches (maximum five) to be applied by all partners in the sector. They should be practical, realistic and focus on improvement of current approaches rather than on drastic programme reorientation. Finally, they should be measurable for the follow-up and evaluation of their application.

The commitments should be the product of a dialogue among Food Security Sector members and between them and other Cluster/Sectors. A first list of commitments should be identified and then discussed, amended and validated by the Food Security Sector at national level, as well as sub-national sectoral groups and/or staff of organizations working in the sector. It is important to note that commitments need to reflect key priorities identified in a particular setting.

The commitments, activities and indicators below are samples only:

- 1. Consult women and girls as a priority at all steps in project design, implementation and monitoring; consult them separately from men and boys; and, consult particularly on the times and place of distributions**

| Sample Activity | Sample Indicator |
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| <i>Conduct focus group discussions with women, girls, boys and men of diverse backgrounds on the composition of food packages, on recipient selection criterion and on safe distribution points and methodologies; results feed into programming.</i> | <i>All programming on food distribution is informed by participatory consultations with women, girls, boys and men in the affected population.</i> |

- 3. Register the adult woman in all households (except single-male headed households) as the primary recipient of food assistance in order to reinforce ownership and control of women as the primary target of food assistance and avoid excluding second wives and their children in polygamous families.**

| Sample Activity | Sample Indicator |
|---|---|
| <i>Develop a communication campaign - targeting both women and men - about this approach to ensure that communities understand why women are registered at the primary recipients of aid.</i> | <i>By [date], a communication, which can be transmitted verbally, in writing and in illustrative formats – has been developed and disseminated.</i> |

- 5. Establish confidential complaints mechanisms to receive and investigate allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse experienced by women, girls, boys and men in seeking or receiving assistance through food assistance programmes.**

| Sample Activities | Sample Indicators |
|---|--|
| <i>Ahead of planned distributions, a communication on distribution entitlements (written, verbal and illustrative formats) is disseminated widely.</i> | <i>All distribution recipients are fully informed of their entitlements ahead of the distribution</i> |
| <i>Develop (in written, verbal and illustrative formats) and display the Code of Conduct on SEA and where and how people may make reports confidentially.</i> | <i>The Code of Conduct is displayed in public areas throughout the camp in written and illustrative formats.</i> |
| | <i>A confidential complaints mechanism has been established.</i> |

- 4. Equal numbers of female and male residents are involved in distributions and receive equal pay for the same work.**

| Sample Activity | Sample Indicator |
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| <i>Consult women on what arrangements – childcare, transport, lodgings, etc. - would need to be in place for them to work on distribution campaigns.</i> | <i>[Representative %] of all distribution staff are women</i> |



5. Women, girls, boys and men have equal access to all food-for-work (FFW), food-for-training (FFT), take-home-rations (THR) and supplementary feeding initiatives.

| Sample Activity | Sample Indicator |
|---|---|
| Routinely collect, analyze and report sex- and age-disaggregated data on FFW, FFT, THR and supplementary feeding initiatives. | All data on FFW, FFT, THR and supplementary feeding initiatives is disaggregated by sex and age |

FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

- For more information on gender in Food Security (Distribution), see **The Sphere Handbook 2011** and **WFP’s Gender Policy 2009**.
- For more information on GEP in the Food Security Sector, see
 - **IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action** (Dec. 2006) at <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>.
 - **IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies** (Sept. 2005) at <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>.
 - **IASC Guidelines for HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings** (2003) at <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/products/docs/FinalGuidelines17Nov2003.pdf>.
- For more information on the Gender Marker go to www.onereponse.info.
- For the e-learning course on **Increasing Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action for Women, Girls, Boys and Men** register at <http://www.iasc-elearning.org> or ask OCHA Myanmar for CD-version.
- For Myanmar-specific support please contact Maria Caterina Ciampi, Senior Inter-Agency Gender Capacity (GenCap) Advisor, IASC Gender Standby Capacity Project, hosted by OCHA in Myanmar, by calling +95 (0) 92 50 15 19 52 or by sending an email to caterina@un.org.