

FOOD SECURITY 1 (FOOD ASSISTANCE)

WHY DOES GENDER EQUALITY MATTER IN EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE INTERVENTIONS?

In an emergency, the focus is on primary needs and on meeting them through the delivery of aid as quickly as possible. However, distributing food – directly, or through food-for-work or food-for-training projects - will not automatically guarantee their optimal use or a positive impact on individuals or on the affected population; only a gender-sensitive, participatory approach at all stages of the project cycle can help ensure that an adequate and efficient response is provided. In order for a food assistance project to have a positive impact, women, girls, boys and men must be involved equally in the process.

Projects that analyse and take into consideration the needs, priorities and capacities of both the female and male population of all ages are far more likely to improve the lives of affected populations. The IASC Gender Marker is a tool that codes, on a 2 -0 scale, whether or not a humanitarian project is designed to ensure that women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally from it, and that it will contribute to increasing gender equality. A full description of the IASC Gender Marker and its application can be found in the Gender Marker Overview Tip Sheet.

NEEDS ASSESSMENTS → ACTIVITIES → OUTCOMES

A **NEEDS ASSESSMENT** is the essential first step in providing emergency food assistance programming that is effective, safe and restores dignity. A gender analysis is critical to understanding the social and gender dynamics that could help or hinder aid effectiveness. The gender analysis in the needs assessment will identify gender gaps, such as unequal access to food assistance for women/girls and men/boys that need to be addressed. These should be integrated into **ACTIVITIES**. The project's **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.

GENDER IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROJECT NEEDS ASSESSMENTS	
✓	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)
✓	What is the nutritional status of the affected population (disaggregated by sex and age)?
✓	How is food shared within households? (Intra-household food distribution and consumption - who eats first and most – women, girls, boys or men?)
✓	Who receives food aid on behalf of the household (men, women, girls or boys)? Do women or men decide on its use?
✓	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 (e.g. ethnic, caste, racial) of the population at large?
✓	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?
GENDER IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROJECT ACTIVITIES	
✓	Work with women to design a transparent and effective distribution system and ensure information about it reaches eligible women.
✓	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.
✓	Establish a monitoring system to ensure similar proportions of registered women and men are accessing food relief.
✓	Arrange food distribution so it does not add burdens on women.
GENDER IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROJECT OUTCOMES	
✓	[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.

DESIGNING MINIMUM GENDER COMMITMENTS FOR EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

In order to translate the cluster and organisational commitments to gender-responsive food assistance 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 by all, in terms of value added to current programming and in terms of the concrete actions that 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 cluster partners; they should be practical, realistic and focus on improvement of current approaches rather than on 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 with cluster members and/or within the organisation. A first list of commitments should be identified and then discussed, amended and validated by the national cluster and sub-clusters and/or organisation's staff working in the sector. It is important to note that commitments need to reflect key priorities identified in a particular setting. The **ADAPT and ACT-C Gender Equality Framework** (detailed in the Gender Marker Overview Tip Sheet) outlines basic actions that can be used when designing or vetting a gender integrated project, and can be a useful reference in designing minimum gender commitments. *The commitments, activities and indicators below draw on elements of the ADAPT and ACT-C Gender Equality Framework and are provided as samples only:*

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

Sample Activity	Sample Indicator
<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>

2. **Work to ensure that women, men, boys and girls of all age groups can **ACCESS** food assistance by registering 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 as 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>

3. **Take specific **ACTION** to prevent and respond to GBV, including establishing 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>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>
<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>

4. **DESIGN services to meet the needs of women and men equally, ensuring that women and men participate equally in food distributions and receive equal pay for the same work.**

Sample Activity	Sample Indicator
<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. **COLLECT, analyse, and report sex and age disaggregated data; analyse and develop profiles on the different needs and realities of males and females of all ages in the affected population—including whether and how those needs are being met**

Sample Activity	Sample Indicator
<i>Routinely collect, analyse and report sex- and age-disaggregated data on FFW, FFT, THR and supplementary feeding initiatives.</i>	<i>All data on FFW, FFT, THR and supplementary feeding initiatives is disaggregated by sex and age</i>

For more information on the **Gender Marker** go to www.onereponse.info

For more information on Food Security (Distribution), see **The Sphere Handbook 2011** and **WFP's Gender Policy 2009**

For the e-learning course on **"Increasing Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action for Women, Girls, Boys and Men"**,

September 2012—Food Security 1 Food Assistance Gender Marker Tip Sheet

