GENDER EQUALITY MEASURES IN NUTRITION

This Tip Sheet offers interventions, guiding questions and an example of how 4 Key Gender Equality Measures (GEMs) support gender equality in Nutrition projects and programs. It should be read together with the GAM Overview. The IASC GAM identifies and codes projects based on the extent to which key programming elements are consistently present in proposals and implemented projects. Four steps (GEMs) are assessed in the design phase, and twelve GEMs are reviewed in monitoring.

Girls and boys – and men and women – have different nutritional needs at different life stages. They also face different risks and challenges in accessing adequate nutrition. Gender inequality exacerbates food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in humanitarian crises. All gender and age groups entitled to equal access to nutrition services and the foods they need to live a healthy life.

Nutrition actors can take the following steps to ensure everyone is equally able to access and benefit from nutrition programs:

- Integrate the gender perspectives from rapid participatory assessments with women, girls, boys and men of diverse backgrounds into the initial nutritional status analysis. Use this to identify groups most at risk of poor nutrition and health.
- Examine whether at-risk groups (for example, female-headed households, older women or men, people living with HIV/AIDS) are accessing adequate food and the food basket meets their specific needs. Take action to address barriers following consultation.
- Use information on age- and sex-specific incidence of illnesses, nutrition indicators and health conditions to tailor activities.
- Review the effectiveness of the nutrition programs for women and men as well as boys and girls in different age groups.

QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE ACTION

| Needs Analysis Set | Gender Analysis | How does the crisis affect nutritional well-being of girls and boys, women and men? What cultural beliefs and practices such as food taboos affect their nutrition? Who controls household resources, and how does this affect access to food and feeding patterns? How do individuals with disabilities access food, and does it meet their specific needs?
| Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD) | What are the relative rates of malnutrition? How does rate of access to the project vary for different groups?
| Good Targeting | Should interventions be for everyone, or do efforts need to be targeted? How do gender and age affect ability to access nutrition projects? What efforts are made to ensure people with mobility issues can access the project?
| Tailored Activities | How do food baskets and information campaigns differ to ensure different nutritional needs are met? Do campaigns target family members who make decisions about child feeding, who may not be the mothers? Are there special access provisions where disabilities, domestic or care work limit access for women or girls? Do supplementary feeding and malnutrition treatment include elderly women and men, PLW, as well as girls and boys? Are there activities to build child nutrition knowledge of fathers?
| Protect from GBV Risks | Is poor nutrition contributing to early marriage or transactional sex? Do targeting of individuals within the family increase tension or violence? Are staff aware of referral pathways?
| Coordination | Does the project fit with the cluster response plan & complement other clusters’ actions? Is the gender analysis and data shared?
| Influence on Project | Are girls and boys of different ages and backgrounds consulted equally and appropriately about the content and review of the nutrition project? Is there gender-balanced representation on nutrition committees?
| Feedback | Are there safe feedback & complaints channels for affected boys & girls, women & men? Are they responsive?
| Transparency | Is everyone given information about access to nutrition projects and feedback processes? Is communication adapted to make sure everyone gets the right message?
GENDER MAINSTREAMING, OR A TARGETED ACTION?

Some Nutrition interventions may target actions to address specific discrimination or gaps resulting from gender norms and expectations: these are “targeted actions” (T.) For example, a project may focus solely on changing community perceptions about preparation roles through working with adolescent boys who returned from war to teach them how to prepare nutritious meals or a project may focus on changing community attitudes about pregnant women eating meat.

However, the majority of humanitarian interventions will aim to assist everyone in need while adapting activities to meet the roles and priorities of girls and boys (or women and men) in different age groups: gender mainstreaming (M.) An example would be a project to improve the nutritional status of the affected population for pregnant and lactating women, girls and boys under the age of 5 years, and chronically ill people. The GAM Overview explains the coding for GEMs and GAM.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING IN NUTRITION

(Key GEM Code 4T – can you work out why? See the GAM Overview)

### Key GEM A: Gender Analysis
The needs, roles and dynamics of women, girls, boys and men in different age groups are understood.

Some adolescent boys and young men, ex-combatants, living in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Eritrea were showing high levels of malnutrition. Despite additional food rations, malnutrition increased. They were living separately from other households. Traditionally, women and adolescent girls are responsible for preparing meals. The male youth were eating the bulgur wheat and other rations raw, which their bodies could not process and resulted in their severe malnutrition and some male youth died.

### Key GEM D: Tailored Activities
How did the project address the Gender Analysis?

Women and men from surrounding communities were mobilized to teach the adolescent boys and young men how to prepare the rations into nutritious meals.

### Key GEM J: Benefits
What benefits do affected groups gain in this example?

The adolescent boys and young men started to thrive physically. The local women and men reported better relationships with the youth (and youth with the adults) as a result of working together.

### Key GEM G: Influence on Projects
How women, girls, boys and men in different age groups were involved in decisions in this example:

Men asked the ex-combatants about what they ate and how they ate it. The adolescents/young men asked for lessons on how to cook the food. Several women and men surrounding communities were asked to provide lessons on cooking to the youth. The locals agreed. After the lessons, the IDPs receiving the lessons and the local women and men were asked to review the project.

Using Gender Equality Measures in projects or cluster programs leads to better quality programming, responsive to gender and age issues.

**GOOD TO GO?** Apply the IASC Gender with Age Marker to your proposal or project.

**RESOURCES?** Refer to iascgenderwithagemarker.com