

Food Security: Gender and Inclusion Tip Sheet Lebanon's Flash Appeal 2020/ Emergency Response to the Beirut Port Explosion

Introduction

This document aims in supporting the Food Security Sector partners in promoting a gender sensitive response while ensuring that the needs of vulnerable people are meaningfully represented. Should any gender-analytical support be needed, please consult UN Women: Claire Wilson (claire.wilson@unwomen.org) and Olivia Schmitz (olivia.schmitz@unwomen.org). For support on PSEA, please contact Eva Modvig (modvig@un.org).

Food Security: Why Does Gender and Inclusion Matter?

According to preliminary assessments in response to the Beirut Port explosions, both women and men of affected households have adopted negative coping mechanisms related to food consumption, to cope with the harsh economic situation ([ACAPS 25/08/2020](#)). Gender disaggregated data from that time shows that 66% of women, compared to 43% of men, eat less preferred food; 85% of women compared to 57% of men are limiting the portion sizes of food at mealtime while both men and women limit their intake in order for smaller children to eat or reduce the number of meals they eat ([CARE 05/2020](#)).

The lack of livelihood opportunities coupled with undermined capacities of at-risk groups to access adequate and sufficient food, expose women and girls to the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and consequently the adoption of negative coping mechanism. Also, existing patriarchal norms and systems that restrict women's freedom of mobility and engagement in livelihood activities as well as gender inequalities in intra-household food sharing and gender barriers, including access restrictions to food assistance, put women and girls at higher risk of food insecurity. Specifically, gender inequalities in intra-household food distribution put women and girls at higher risk of malnutrition. In particular, young children and pregnant and lactating women are at risk.

In addition, older women living alone made up a significant percentage of those who remain in the radius of the blast site. A gender assessment of the first 4,200 samples of the multi sectoral needs assessment found that 13% of women reported living alone, of which three quarters were over the age of 60 ([UN Women, OCHA, ACTED 20/08/2020](#)).

To promote a gender responsive food security response and to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable people are meaningfully represented throughout the response the following issues should be considered:

Needs Assessment and Analysis

- ✓ Ensure a gender balance in Food Security and Nutrition needs assessment teams.
- ✓ Ensure baselines captures sex-age-disability disaggregated data (SADDD) analyzing the composition of the affected population and identify the most vulnerable groups.
- ✓ Identify potential power dynamics that might deprive certain groups of equal access to food security services and address these in programme activities.
- ✓ Assess equal access for women and men as well as for at risk-groups such as LGBTIQ+¹, elderly, persons with disabilities to livelihood opportunities and skills trainings, markets, cash-for work, cash assistance and loans, land ownership, productive assets, and agricultural inputs, and identify potential barriers for women, girls, men and boys accessing these.

Strategic Planning and Resource Mobilization

- ✓ Include budgeted resources for protection, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and gender.
- ✓ While planning staffing, plan for enough staff to take on important protection work: including protection managers, gender-based violence (GBV) specialist, social workers, and PSEA focal points.

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning

Implementation and Monitoring

- ✓ Utilize SADDD for implementing programmes/projects, monitoring purposes, and measuring outcomes.
- ✓ To empower women and increase their ownership in food- and household-related aspects register adult women as the primary household recipients of food assistance (except for single-male headed households).
- ✓ Set-up gender-responsive, inclusive, and confidential feedback and complaint mechanisms, including SEA reporting measures for Food Security staff and beneficiaries. Make sure that communities/beneficiaries have information on how and where to report misconduct.
- ✓ Ensure oversight of distributions by aid workers (female and male) who are trained on sexual and gender-based violence and [PSEA](#) and codes of conduct are signed by staff, volunteers and contractors.
- ✓ Consider the specific dietary needs and labour capacity of certain groups such as the elderly, pregnant and lactating women, children under five and people with chronic illnesses.
- ✓ Support and promote exclusive breastfeeding practices and consider the construction of secluded and safe spaces for breastfeeding.
- ✓ Provide mothers with the needed support to breastfeed and re-lactate as well as guide mothers on safe and proper use of breast-milk substitutes by adopting the [SOPs for Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergency in Lebanon](#) that aims to closely guide and support agencies to assess caregivers and infants' needs and plan response accordingly, preserving mother and child's health and nutrition status.
- ✓ Provide flexible schedules for women and men to participate in cash-based interventions (CBIs) and offer childcare, which can be provided as cash-for-work options for mothers increasing the value of women's care work.
- ✓ Involve the male community in awareness raising initiatives about the importance of women's economic empowerment, and shared household responsibilities related to food preparation, production, and procurement.

Further Information:

https://www.gihahandbook.org/media/pdf/en_topics/food_security.pdf