



Better Gender Outcomes in Food Assistance through Complementary and Multi-Modal Programming

PROMISING PRACTICES TIP SHEET

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This Tip Sheet is excerpted from the research report, “Better Gender Outcomes in Food Assistance through Complementary and Multi-Modal programming.”

The study sought to answer, “How can the design¹, implementation and monitoring processes of projects using a combination of modalities maximize gender outcomes²” and employed a participatory qualitative approach towards the identification of promising practices through a structured desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), and the Delphi technique³ to validate and create consensus on findings.

Over 30 documents were reviewed which were all projects funded by Food for Peace (FFP) – [Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) and Development Food Security Activity (DFSA)] and Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and explicitly or implicitly incorporated a gender-focus.

The Tip Sheet gives promising practices by the cycles of project cycle management, as well as at the response level. Additionally, there are expert tips and wisdom practices that support the use of a gendered approach in development or humanitarian programming using multi-modal approaches.

The study was coordinated by [CARE](#) and contributes the gender and cash sub workstream’s workplan, which is part of the [Grand Bargain’s Cash Workstream](#).

Promising practices to maximize gender outcomes during Situation Analysis

PROMISING PRACTICE 1

Integrate gender into programming by conducting a sex, age and disability disaggregated gender and barrier analysis.

Sex, age and disability disaggregated (SADD) analysis should capture the differences between men and women in a given community as well as access to different delivery mechanisms and financial service providers. In circumstances where collecting disaggregated data may be difficult, such as primary emergencies and insecure environments, note the absence of SADD and provide an estimation based on existing data or small sample surveys.

- 1 Here “design” will include the response analysis as well as the budgeting.
- 2 Gender outcomes are those related to gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- 3 The method entails a group of experts who anonymously reply to questionnaires and subsequently receive feedback in the form of a statistical representation of the “group response,” after which the process repeats itself. The goal is to reduce the range of responses and arrive at something closer to expert consensus.

EXPERT TIPS:

- SADD analysis should be done at situation analysis stage to be captured in the program design. Such analysis can then be conducted periodically during implementation to take necessary measures and adapt programs as needed.
- Where necessary, it is useful to go further on SADD by further analyzing by disability, ethnicity, level of income and literacy levels.
- To reduce opportunity costs borne by women as a result of unpaid time to respond to questionnaire and survey, rely first on secondary data. For example, consider using existing statements or reports from women's right organizations.

PROMISING PRACTICE 2

When conducting need, market or security assessments ensure women's voices are heard and analyzed separately.

EXPERT TIPS:

- Hearing women's voices separately during need assessments is necessary but not sufficient. It should be complemented by the gender and barrier analysis mentioned above.
- Capture information on the distinct purchasing power of men and women (i.e., if there is a price difference in the market for women buyers/customers).
- Ensure the assessment also captures the gender determinants of food security and livelihoods related strengths and vulnerabilities.

PROMISING PRACTICE 3

To define outcomes to be met via a combination of modalities, use methods that promote a participatory approach to problem and solution identification.

Such methods can include [Community Voice and Action](#) or [Participatory Rural Appraisal](#). Also consider participatory capacity and vulnerability assessments to capture marginalized groups in the community when incorporating Gender and Social Inclusion elements.

EXPERT TIPS:

- When engaging the community, facilitate distinct discussion groups so that men and women voices are heard separately.
- Consider the role that local authorities could play in identifying the problems and more importantly proposing solutions (e.g., joint needs and challenge prioritizations such as the process followed in Community Voice and Action exercises).

Wisdom-related practices – Situation Analysis:

These practices have not yet been documented in the literature about multi-modal programming but have been flagged by the expert group and key informants:

- Based on your context, set a target for the % of assessment team members who should be female.
- Based on your context, set a target for the % of data collection respondents who should be female.
- Ensure a gender focal person or advisor support the design of your multi modal activities

Promising practices to maximize gender outcomes during Program Design

PROMISING PRACTICE 4

Where the priority is to target women as primary end-users, adopt a “woman plus” approach to targeting and build in intentional space to engage the whole household.

Establish a process by which a named recipient is selected or nominated following the gender analysis and protection assessments. Do not automatically assign the man ‘household head’ but base the decision on the outcome of the gender and protection assessment, ensuring reduced risk of harm.

PROMISING PRACTICE 5

When choosing intervention modalities to use to deliver your program, consider the distinct cash out costs, risks and opportunities as well as relevance to men and women.

For cash transfers, consider how likely men and women will each be able to complete cash-out without incurring extra costs, be they opportunity costs or costs related to accessing the cash out point. On the basis of financial literacy rate in between men and women consider how likely they will be able to complete cash out with incurring extra costs.

Wisdom-related practices – Program Design:

These practices have not yet been documented in the literature about multi-modal programming but have been flagged by the expert group and key informants:

- Based on your context, set a target for the % of program team members who should be female.
- Ensure there is sufficient gender expertise with your staff or through technical advisor, consultants or partners to mainstream gender and if relevant implement specific gender interventions. Implementers should have prior experience with the methodologies they implement (or sufficiently similar interventions).
- Ensure workplan and budget include time for gender training for all staff, including also training on prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination at work.
- These trainings should follow best practices. Facilitators should have followed training of trainers to see sessions modelled correctly, reflect on session content, receive training on facilitation skills, and practice sessions).
- Ensure design looks at gender from an intersectional lens, including how gender intersects with other oppressed categories such as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex Plus (LGBTQI+), race, ethnicity, religion, class, disability status or age (e.g. elderly, youth).
- Ensure gender interventions are correctly budgeted. There are some cases where gender is integrated into the narrative but is not reflected at all in the budget, which makes getting it done near impossible.

Promising practices to maximize gender outcomes during Implementation

PROMISING PRACTICE 6

When identifying service providers integrate protection and equal access as part of the engagement process.

Consider who will be the counterpart of cash transfer or voucher end-users when cashing out the transfer or redeeming the voucher.

Support service providers to develop products and customer experiences that are suitable for both men and women.

EXPERT TIPS:

- Make sure you spend some time to raise service providers' awareness on gender equality and prevention of sexual harassment/exploitation. This can take on the form of brief sensitization messages to structured capacity building sessions depending on resources and willingness of the service providers.
- Work with service providers to ensure gender sensitive customer services to cash recipients.
- Ensure the service provider signs your Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA) policy and/or code of conduct.
- During service providers selection process, add protection and equal access considerations as part of the selection criteria.

PROMISING PRACTICE 7

With targeted households, utilize peer group methods to raise awareness about the different delivery modalities, create buy-in towards gender and sectorial outcomes of the program as well as to build horizontal and vertical social capital.

Peer groups are particularly pertinent in multi-modal programming as they can be used to complement and propagate messaging on program components or outcomes.

Using peer groups to communicate messaging reduces the risk of unintentional exclusions that might be caused as a result of choosing mediums that may not be accessible to women or men due to remoteness, workload or limited access to technology.

EXPERT TIPS:

- Use cash transfers, SIM or ATM cards distributions as an opportunity to share awareness raising messages about gender equality, women empowerment, leadership and participation.
- To push the practice a step further, if you have the expertise in your team to do so and paying specific attention to ensure women's safety and minimize unintended harm, consider piggy backing distributions with evidence-based gender transformative interventions. These can challenge restrictive gender norms, behaviors and attitudes and maximize the outcomes of your program. Potential interventions include curriculum-based sessions for men, women or both together⁴, community activism programs meant to shift social norms at the local level, or edutainment/media interventions. These interventions can work with women or men and women together, paying specific attention to ensure women's safety and minimize unintended harm.

PROMISING PRACTICE 8

Hold gender-disaggregated participatory community meetings in the early stage of a project to sensitize the community members, especially leaders, on both the intended outcomes as well as the modalities used, with the aim of generating support.

Hold community meetings periodically throughout the project with the aim of broadening exposure to key messages and receiving feedback.

Engage traditional leaders in consultations as allies in planning and developing messages to increase the uptake of positive Social and Behavioral Change on the access and use of resources within households, gender norms and roles Maternal Child Health and Nutrition and outcomes.

⁴ See for example [Indashyikirwa](#)

PROMISING PRACTICE 9

When your program includes intended gender outcomes, engage males in promoting gender equality.

The engagement of males should be informed by the gender and barrier analysis conducted at the beginning of the project, to be intentional with activities and at the same time avoid doing harm.

EXPERT TIPS:

- Adapt gender transformative evidence-based methods to engage males in promoting gender equality. These include curriculum-based interventions or community activism approaches. These methodologies can be applied with men and boys or can be adapted to work with men and women together.

Promising practices to maximize gender outcomes during Monitoring, Evaluation & Accountability activities

PROMISING PRACTICE 10

Use indicators to track both intended and unintended outcomes that may result from the use of a given modality or combination thereof and analyze these in a sex-disaggregated manner.

In addition to collecting data in a sex disaggregated manner, capture age and disability. Ensure a gender focal person or advisor supports the inclusion of such considerations so it does not put respondents at risks.

Use qualitative processes to understand women's, girls', men's, boys' and non-binary people's personal accounts of change and preferences for different modalities.

PROMISING PRACTICE 11

Collect monitoring data on gender outcomes but also processes, segregated per modality, with the guidance of a gender focal person.

Do not limit the data collection to household or institutional levels but also consider individual level so as to capture both women and men perspectives.

The gender focal person should be responsible for training staff and providing technical support and mentorship regarding but not limited to the cash or voucher components of the project.

PROMISING PRACTICE 12

When using a combination of modalities, ensure beneficiaries and community members have access to multiple complaint and response mechanisms that cut across modalities.

It is a commonly agreed good practices across reviewed literature and key informants for project end-users to have access to multiple channels (e.g. toll-free hotlines, suggestion boxes or contact persons). Complaint and response mechanisms (CRM) should be safe and offer confidentiality to women, girls, men, boys and non-binary people.⁵

Most people, and especially women are more comfortable with face-to-face interactions.⁶ These interactions often take place informally hence the importance of trying to structure feedback and complaint lodging to ensure consistency in the answers given and quality of the process.

EXPERT TIPS:

- While a given program should offer multiple CRM, it is important to ensure they cut across the different modalities used. Having distinct CRM for each modality (e.g. an Financial Service Provider Help Desk for the cash transfer, the NGO hotline for in-kind distribution and the training provider suggestion box for the capacity development element of the program) will likely dilute the CRM process and create additional access barriers.

⁵ See for example : CARE Emergency Toolkit "[Feedback, complaint and response mechanism](#)"

⁶ WFP. (2019). "[The potential of cash-based interventions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment](#)". A multi-country study". This was also confirmed by key informants.

Wisdom-related practices – Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability:

These practices have not yet been documented in the literature about multi-modal programming but have been flagged by the expert group and key informants:

- The [Cohorts Livelihoods and Risk Analysis](#) (CLARA), guidance and tool can be useful if monitoring Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risks associated with livelihood activities and interventions for displaced persons. The CLARA takes an Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) lens, so the tools help identify what risks mitigation strategies and gender transformation benefits of livelihoods interventions can be.

Promising practices to maximize gender outcomes during Coordination

PROMISING PRACTICE 13

Collectively support the capacity development of stakeholders active in fields that may positively impact gender outcomes.

Multi-modal interventions require linkages among different sectors and administrative bodies. This highlights the need for shared capacity building among stakeholders such as government, local-traditional authorities and professionals on areas that have the potential to positively impact gender outcomes such as health, nutrition or sanitation.

PROMISING PRACTICE 14

Map and put in place formal agreements with the institutions charged with the responsibility of providing complementary social protection services.

As part of the agreement, clearly spell out roles and responsibilities of each implementing institution. Where possible, leverage legislative frameworks, keeping in mind the reach and applicability of the frameworks.

PROMISING PRACTICE 15

Map existing projects with intended gender outcomes in your program intervention areas to develop synergies and maximize the use of the modalities within your program.

EXPERT TIPS:

- Make sure you are aware of all GBV service providers in your program implementation area, create referral relationships, and train staff to make referrals for participants who self-identify as survivors of GBV. To do so, you can use existing guidance on developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) from the GBV humanitarian community⁷

Wisdom-related practices – Coordination:

This practice has not yet been documented in the literature about multi-modal programming but has been flagged by the and key informants:

- Maintain impartiality in the capacity development of government/local authority personnel where competing interests exist between authorities. This would allow access to hard-to-reach areas with perceived security concerns.

⁷ [Establishing Gender-based Violence Standard Operating Procedures \(SOPs\) for Multisectoral and Inter-organizational Prevention and Response to Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian Settings.](#)