

## Gender Mainstreaming

### Overview

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, for people of different gender groups, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making everyone's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that all gender groups benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. Gender mainstreaming involves ensuring that a gender perspective and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities. Through its [Gender Equality Policy](#), IOM reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that gender is mainstreamed throughout all of its projects, policies and activities.

Women, men, girls and boys, among other groups, often experience crises very differently due to their different roles within the family and society, as well as unequal power dynamics that exist between and among them. These differences can limit certain groups' access to resources, opportunities and services; hence, the protection and assistance needs as well as ability for recovery can differ greatly among crisis-affected populations. Understanding and addressing the specific concerns and experiences of all individuals affected by humanitarian crises is therefore crucial for emergency response operations. Emergency operations must also account for the often-drastic changes in gender roles and relations that might arise in crisis situations.

### Key Points

- Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the gendered implications for all affected people of any planned action, including policies, programming or legislation with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality.
- A critical aspect of integrating gender equality considerations in programming is addressing gender-based violence (GBV).
- It is essential that interventions related to people of diverse SOGIESC are contextualized in order to avoid doing harm.

### Description

#### IOM Gender Marker

The **IOM Gender Marker** is a project development tool that assesses how well projects integrate gender considerations. It sets out a coding system based on minimum standards for incorporating gender considerations into project proposals on a 0-2 scale.

**Assigning an IOM Gender Marker code is mandatory for all IOM projects.**

The Gender Marker aims at improving the quality of IOM projects by emphasizing the importance of addressing the specific needs and concerns of different gender groups, and of different ages, so that everyone benefits and inequalities are not perpetuated.

Project developers are responsible for assessing their project proposals based on the minimum standards before submitting proposals for endorsement. Project endorsers are responsible for reviewing the proposed code, either confirming the code or suggesting a different code. Project developers are then responsible for entering the agreed-upon code into PRIMA.

#### *Minimum standards and coding:*

The three minimum standards of the IOM Gender Marker are to integrate gender considerations into: 1) needs assessments, 2) outputs, and 3) activities. All IOM projects should strive to meet these minimum standards. There are five possible codes that can be given to projects based on how many of the minimum standards have been met and on the main objective of your project: 2b, 2a, 1, 0 and N/A. If all three areas have sufficiently integrated gender, your project will code either 2a or 2b, depending on the main objective of your project (see below). If only one or two of the areas have sufficiently integrated gender, your project will code 1. If none of the areas has sufficiently integrated gender, your project will code 0. Some IOM projects - mainly those related purely to finance and administration, and concerning additional overhead balance or internal service fees - will have no gender implications and

should be coded "not applicable," or "N/A".

The difference between 2a and 2b projects can be determined by looking at the project objective. If the objective directly targets a gender issue or a gender group, then the project should be coded 2b. If the objective is general with gender considerations mainstreamed, then the project should be coded 2a. A 2b code is not better than a 2a code, as they both meet all the minimum standards. Whether a project should be designed as a targeted project (2b) or a general project (2a) will depend on the context and in particular what you uncover through your gender analysis.

To ensure that gender is sufficiently integrated into a project, please follow the minimum standards as set out below for each of the three areas. For a more detailed explanation of coding process and additional examples in each area, please refer to the [IOM Gender Marker Guide](#) or the e-course available in [I-Learn](#) (for IOM staff) and [E-Campus](#) (for non-IOM staff with an IOM account).

## Relevance to IOM's Emergency Operations

### Gender Mainstreaming Tips for Emergency Operations Projects

- Ensure that a thorough gender analysis is included in any needs assessment and situation analysis and that it informs the basis of programming. Gender analysis is an assessment of the roles of, and relations between, people of different gender groups. It recognizes that all individuals' lives and, therefore, experiences, needs, issues and priorities are different. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments and situational analyses, starting with the conceptualization phase. Ensure that key gender groups such as men, women, girls and boys, as well as non-binary adults and children, are consulted in order to get diverse perspective on needs, concerns and priorities.
- Take into consideration what is considered culturally appropriate for different genders for both migrant groups and host communities. Be aware of and address any potential resentment or backlash towards programming that might occur in communities.
- When participation is significantly or unexpectedly higher or lower among a particular social/demographic group, assess the possible reasons for this and adjust accordingly. Ensure that tolerance, understanding and respect for all, without distinction as to race, gender, religion, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, physical disability or political conviction are embedded within all projects and programmes.
- Ensure that awareness-raising and communication activities have gender-sensitive content and are representative of and accessible to the entire target audience. Moreover, ensure that the appropriate language is used and is gender-neutral, and portrayals of different gender groups are varied, avoiding gender stereotypes as much as possible.
- Ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into any deliverables that will be created as part of a project (e.g. manuals/handbooks, reports, policies and strategies). Also, try to ensure that gender groups are not only portrayed in stereotypical or traditional roles.
- Ensure that all data on beneficiaries is disaggregated by sex and age, wherever possible, and analyzed and reported accordingly. Ideally, data should be disaggregated by sex and age for children <1, 1–5 male/female, 6–12 male/female and 13–17 male/female, and then in 10-year age brackets, (e.g. 50–59, male/female; 60–69, male/female; 70–79, male/female; 80+, male/female).
- For committees, such as a camp or WASH committees, consider gender balance in terms of both numbers and leadership roles, if the context allows for it. If not, ensure that the voices of different gender and age groups are heard (e.g. by establishing women's groups, men's groups, etc.). There are examples and tools available for CCCM actors on the [CCCM page](#) and in the [Women in Displacement Toolkit](#).
- For activities involving building/rehabilitating physical structures, ensure that facilities are appropriate for all gender and age groups, and consider privacy, accessibility, safety and security. Consult with different groups to ensure that all concerns are addressed and that facilities will be used as intended.
- Ensure that all assistance and services are provided in an equitable, accessible, gender-sensitive, confidential and non-discriminatory manner, including livelihood support. Also, ensure that everyone is aware of the services being offered and consider ways to address barriers to accessing these services for certain groups or individuals as they

may arise.

- Consider partnerships with government and non-government entities working on gender equality and/or women's rights or LGBTI rights issues, where relevant.
- Ensure a gender balance (to the extent possible) in project teams and teams of implementing partners, and address any potential barriers to working on the project. Ensure there are interpreters and health professionals of different genders.
- Ensure there is gender expertise in TORs and/or consider providing training on gender mainstreaming.
- Ensure that staff and partners involved in project implementation are trained on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. Training on GBV core concepts and principles, as well as guidance on how to safely and ethically respond to a disclosure, can be found on the Gender-Based Violence in Cases and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: IOM Awareness-Raising and Reporting Procedures pages.

### Gender-based Violence (GBV)

According to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), GBV is defined as, "any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threat of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty."<sup>1</sup> It is one of the most widespread human rights abuses in the world, affecting individuals and entire communities worldwide.<sup>2</sup> This type of violence should not be considered as an ad hoc, isolated phenomena, but as abuses that fall along a continuum of violence, occurring due to unequal power distributions between genders. Although no single factor can cause GBV, gender inequality is at the root of all its forms.

Humanitarian crises and situations of fragility more broadly can further exacerbate exposure to different forms of GBV. As GBV – even in times of stability – is widely under-reported, IOM acts under the assumption that GBV occurs and threatens the crisis-affected population everywhere the Organization operates. Specific measures and interventions to mitigate, respond to and prevent GBV must be undertaken from the onset of a crisis and continue through transition and recovery efforts. In fact, crisis operations that do not take into account vulnerabilities to GBV cannot adequately adhere to common standards that promote protection principles, gender equality and conflict-sensitivity.

For more details please refer to the [Protection Mainstreaming](#) page.

### Addressing GBV in IOM's programming

IOM's Institutional Framework for Addressing GBV in Crises (GBViC Framework) helps IOM to safeguard the safety, dignity and well-being of all crisis-affected persons, especially women and girls. It articulates why and how IOM tackles GBV in crises and defines IOM's vision and scope through three institutional approaches:

- *Mitigating risks:* By taking action to address the risks of GBV in all crisis operations and doing no harm;
- *Supporting survivors:* By facilitating access to survivor-centered, multi-sectoral services; and
- *Addressing the root causes:* By contributing to progressively transforming the conditions that perpetuate GBV.

The GBViC Operational Model presents strategic interventions, which is meant to guide IOM's staff in deciding on the most impactful intervention to address GBV – based on operational capacities and strategic advantages and depending on the overall GBV programming needs and gaps in a given context. Mitigating, responding to and preventing GBV must be a collective endeavor across IOM sectors and units, and with external partners.

Please refer to the [GBV in Crises](#) page for more detailed information.

## IOM's Role

### Integrating Gender into IOM Projects

*Gender Analysis in the Needs Assessment:*

1. To meet this minimum standard, the project needs assessment must set out which are the key gender groups of the beneficiary population and what their specific needs are. This information should be included in the project rationale section.

Some examples of questions to ask include when conducting a gender analysis include: What is the gender and age make-up of migrants crossing the borders in the given context? How comfortable do migrants of different gender and age groups feel in reporting cases of sexual exploitation and abuse through the formal mechanisms? Are lactation rooms and baby changing rooms available? What are the levels of access to goods and services – water, sanitation/hygiene facilities, health services, NFI kits, etc. – for different gender groups? What is the overall safety and security level in the displaced setting, and how might feelings of safety and security differ for different gender groups? For a more exhaustive list of questions to consider, please refer to the list of [Possible Gender Analysis Questions for IOM Projects](#) (also in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)).

Below is an example that would **meet the minimum standard** of gender analysis in the needs assessment:

*Employment has varied by gender, with some 60 per cent of those migrating being female. However, analysis has shown that women are often employed in sectors where low wages, insecure tenure, and sexual harassment are common, leading to significant rates of early return of women as opposed to men. The needs of female and male migrants therefore differ, for example women often need more protection from sexual harassment, and IOM should respond appropriately in particular in relation to early return of women.*

One of the challenges to meeting the minimum standard in needs assessment is insufficient data. In this case, the rationale should note the lack of data and the project should include a data-gathering component. If there is no time to carry out a needs assessment, then a gender-sensitive needs assessment should be a component of the project proposal.

#### Gender-sensitive Project Outputs:

2. To meet this minimum standard, at least one output should include reference to how the project will advance gender equality. **Token references to women or girls are not enough to meet the minimum standard** – there should be a specific focus on improving gender equality using explicit and measurable phrasing, so it is clear whose needs are being met. Additionally, outputs should be linked to the needs assessment by clearly noting how the outputs respond to the specific needs identified in the needs assessment.

Below is an example of an output that would meet the minimum standard of a gender-sensitive output:

*A camp committee is formed among camp inhabitants, which includes a representative number of all gender groups and ensures that all members are able to participate actively and freely.*

Below is an example of an output that does not meet the minimum standard:

*Provision of emergency shelter support kits to vulnerable groups, including women.*

In this example, the use of "including women" is too broad. Shelter support kits may be provided to women, but the content of the kits might not be appropriate for women (or other gender groups). It is also recommended to avoid automatically labelling women as "vulnerable" as this promotes the gender stereotype that all women are vulnerable. Additionally, the entire output is too vague because it does not make clear how gender will be considered, making it difficult to determine and measure what contributions to gender equality are likely to be made.

The output could be **reformulated as follows to meet the minimum standard:**

*Provision of emergency shelter support kits that meet the needs of all gender groups.*

#### Gender Mainstreaming in Project Activities:

3. To meet the minimum standard of gender mainstreaming in project activities, at least one project activity should make specific reference to gender, and there should be a clear connection between activities, outputs, and needs assessment. A project will not reduce inequality or improve conditions for a marginalized group of beneficiaries facing gender discrimination without activities designed for this purpose.

The below example of activities tied to an output that **meets the minimum standard for gender mainstreaming in activities:**

Output: Migration policy outlines the different needs and roles of all gender groups, and policy implementation plan responds to

identified needs.

*Activity: Consult with people of different age and gender groups to determine their needs, risks and concerns.*

*Activity: Develop and pilot the policy to ensure sufficient attention to gender equality.*

*Activity: Formulate implementation plan that responds to the identified needs of all gender groups.*

*Activity: Establish a steering committee that is representative of all groups of the community to ensure gender-sensitive implementation of the policy.*

Please see the [IOM Gender Marker Coding Table](#) or the [IOM Gender Marker Code Guide](#) for more examples and information. The Guidance for Concept Notes and Project Proposals also includes example language for each section of a project proposal.

#### **NOTE on the IASC Gender and Age Marker:**

In 2018, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) updated the Gender Marker with the Gender with Age Marker (GAM), which codes on a 0-4 scale. If you are coding your project using the IASC Gender with Age 7 Marker or the ECHO Gender-Age Marker, you will also need to re-code your project using the IOM Gender Marker. Please see the Project Development in Emergencies page or the [IASC GAM website](#) for more information.

**Assessing the age-sensitivity of your project:** Gender and age intersect in relation to migration in several ways. While age will not be coded in the same way as gender, it is a key variable to consider when developing your project proposal. Age analysis is similar to gender analysis, helping project developers better understand the specific needs and capacities of gender groups of different ages, which is a precondition for programming targeted to the specific needs of different groups.

To assess whether your project sufficiently considers age issues, consider whether:

- Age analysis and age-disaggregated data are included to show how people of different age groups (in addition to gender groups) are being impacted by the situation and how this is affecting their needs.
- Age analysis informs project design so that activities address the needs and concerns of beneficiaries of all ages.

Key areas, some or all of which should be covered **in the rationale section of the project document**, are:

- The roles that different gender groups of different ages traditionally play.
- Who controls resources in the household and in the community.
- Whether any age groups face discrimination or are particularly vulnerable.
- What capacities beneficiaries of different ages have for coping and strengthening their livelihoods.
- What specific needs different gender groups of different ages have for assistance and protection.
- Systematic disaggregation of data by age where there are implications for programming.
- Whether the project will affect different age groups and their roles differently.

IOM's programming should be appropriate to the needs of beneficiaries of all ages, and project activities should support the output(s) which focus on age. At least one project output should reflect the main work of the project on age.

## Links

- [Different Needs - Equal Opportunities: Increasing Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action for Women, Girls, and Men](#)
- [Gender Equality: Ending Widespread Violence Against Women](#)
- [Resources on Gender Mainstreaming in Crises \(INTERNAL\)](#)
- [Global Protection Cluster website](#)
- [IASC Guideline: Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action \(2015\)](#)

- [Online Training: I Know Gender](#)
- [IOM and UNHCR Training Package: Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex \(LGBTI\) Persons in Forced Displacement/in the Humanitarian Context](#)
- [IOM Institutional Framework for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Crises](#)
- [Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies](#)
- [The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#)
- [Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women](#)
- [CARE Rapid Gender Analysis Toolkit](#)
- [IOM Gender & RBM Guidance](#)
- [IOM Gender & RBM Tip Sheet](#)

## References and Tools

- [IOM Gender Equality Policy \(2015-2019\)](#)
- [IOM Gender Equality Glossary](#)
- [IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action](#)

## Other Entries in this Topic

- [Gender-Based Violence in Crises](#)
- [Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment \(PSEAH\)](#)
- [Protection Mainstreaming](#)

## Contacts

For more guidance on mainstreaming gender into programme activities contact the Gender and Diversity Coordination Unit (GDC): [gdc@iom.int](mailto:gdc@iom.int) and DOE at [DOEProtection@iom.int](mailto:DOEProtection@iom.int).

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