General information and guidance about Protection, Accountability to Affected Populations & Gender Based Violence:

- **WFP Protection Guidance Manual** 2016
- **WFP Guidance on Protection and Response to Gender-Based Violence** 2016
- **Accountability to Affected Populations: IASC Commitments** 2011
- **IASC Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Guidelines** 2015
- **PSEA Taskforce**

**WHAT**

**Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)** is an active commitment to give account to, take account of, and be held to account by the people WFP seeks to assist in order to achieve food and nutrition security for all persons; recognizing that, within households and communities, the needs and preferences of individuals may vary significantly depending on a range of characteristics including age, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, ethnicity, religion, health and socio-economic background.

**Protection** is ‘designing and carrying out food assistance activities that do not increase the protection risks faced by the crisis-affected populations receiving assistance, but rather, contribute to the safety, dignity, and integrity of vulnerable people’. **WFP Humanitarian Protection Policy**

In its work to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, WFP must not expose women, men, boys or girls to risk; create or exacerbate household or community tension; or cause women, men, boys or girls to be discriminated against or marginalised. Rather, efforts to integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment in WFP’s programmes should contribute to enhancing community and household autonomy; promoting the inclusion of men and women, and boys and girls, and ensuring equality of outcomes.

**Gender-Based Violence:** Some protection risks arise as a consequence of violence directed at people because of their gender. Gender-based violence (GBV) is present in every country and so in every context in which WFP works.

**Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (SEA)** is a form of GBV and, within the UN system, refers to acts committed by aid personnel against affected populations. WFP has a zero tolerance policy against SEA, in accordance with the **2003 Secretary-General’s Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.**

**WHY**

**AAP:** Ensuring that programmes are accountable to affected people is a key aspect of rights-based programming. WFP’s commitment to AAP is based on the right of every woman, man, girl and boy to be actively involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Plus, engaging affected people, in all their diversity, in programme decisions makes food assistance more effective.

**Protection** is a focus for WFP because:
- Food assistance is a fundamental tool to protect the basic right to life.
Hunger can cause and exacerbate existing protection risks, such as forced displacement, child labour, gender-based violence, exploitative and dangerous work environments and human trafficking.

Food is a key factor impacting people’s exposure to and ability to cope with protection risks. Food assistance that integrates protection can help keep people safe and maintain their dignity.

Tackling threats to the safety, dignity and integrity of women, men, girls and boys – including GBV – is crucial to achieving gender equality which is, in turn, needed to realize a world of zero hunger.

To ignore protection would risk causing harm to the women, men, girls and boys in the communities and countries in which we work. WFP assistance can inadvertently create new risks or cause further harm to vulnerable populations who are already at risk.

WFP has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse because SEA:
(a) Violates the universally recognized human rights of all persons, as well as international law.
(b) Reflects a failure of United Nations employees to adhere to their obligations to protect assisted populations.
(c) Undermines the relationship of trust between the WFP (and the UN system) and the people we serve.

WHEN & WHERE

Protection and AAP are ‘cross-cutting’ issues applicable to every context in which WFP works, at all times. Protection risks can occur in all contexts and at any time. And WFP is always accountable for its actions.

Protection should be integrated into all of WFP’s programmes, so that the activities strengthen and maintain the safety, dignity and integrity of the women men, girls and boys with whom we work, regardless of the environment in which the programmes are implemented.

GBV considerations must be addressed in all programmes and operations in order to ensure that interventions do not create, exacerbate or perpetuate gender inequalities and discrimination.

WHO

All WFP staff, employees, contractors and partners should uphold WFP’s commitment to protection, AAP and preventing and mitigating GBV. This includes:
• Country Directors
• Country Office Protection Focal Points, Protection Advisors and Gender Advisors
• HQ and Regional Humanitarian Advisors
• HQ and Regional Gender Advisors
• Programme and Policy Advisors
• Security and Safety personnel
• Cooperating Partners

HOW
1. Accountability to Affected Populations

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) contributes to mainstreaming gender throughout programming and operations by, for example, ensuring that the needs and priorities of women, men, girls and boys are addressed and that women, men, girls and boys are able to make complaints and provide feedback.

To operationalise its commitments to give account to, take account of, and be held to account by affected populations, WFP focuses on information provision, consultations, and complaints and feedback mechanisms.

**Provide information:** Provide accurate and timely information about the assistance being provided, ensuring that it reaches, is understood and engages the diverse women, men, girls and boys in the affected population.

The information provided must be clearly understandable by everyone, irrespective of age, gender, sexuality, literacy, language, disability and other factors.

**Use diversity mapping to:**
- determine AAP mechanisms
- identify the diverse women, men, girls and boys in the affected population
- understand the opportunities, obstacles and preferences for how the different individuals and groups can engage in sharing information and in the WFP interventions

Using the gender and protection analyses, tailor the AAP mechanisms to the particular characteristics, needs and preferences of women, men, boys and girls of different ages and backgrounds.

**For women, men, girls and boys separately, consider:**
- **time** – the amount of time and the times they are available to participate
- **physical safety** – when travelling, in public spaces, at particular times of days and on certain days
- **access** – restrictions on their access to, and freedom to participate in, discussions and consultations
- **confidence** – experience and self-assurance in speaking out – voicing personal needs and preferences publicly
- **influence** – their ability to make, or influence, decisions that affect them
- **communication** – familiarity, access to, preference and confidence with different communication channels (e.g. mobile phones, community meetings involving women and men, ‘head of household’ spokesperson in surveys and consultations) and social media.

Ensure that communications – in participatory analysis, programme planning, designing AAP and complaints and feedback mechanisms – are appropriate, safe and effective for the diverse women, men, girls and boys in the affected communities.  

**Consult:** WFP must seek the views of all segments of the affected population and invite feedback across all stages of programming.

In relation to GBV, WFP should invite all sectors of the community (taking into account different gender, ages, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, etc.), paying particular attention to at-risk groups in programme design, implementation and monitoring activities.

**Establish and manage complaints and feedback mechanisms**
- **Accessibility** – Provide equitable access to women, men, girls and boys. Discuss, understand and address the economic, social, cultural and physical obstacles women, men, girls and boys may experience in accessing complaints and feedback mechanisms.
- **Safety** – Address safety issues, including GBV. Identify and address the particular safety risks associated with making a complaint or providing feedback, for the different women, men, girls and boys.
• **Risk awareness and acceptance** – Inform all ‘beneficiaries’ about the complaints and feedback mechanisms.

• **Link with referral pathways** to ensure prompt follow up and assistance.

• **Link with the PSEA focal point**

• **Provide timely feedback** to concerned parties.

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### 2. Protection

Specific guidance on how to incorporate protection – including gender - into WFP operations and programmes is set out in the [WFP Protection Guidance Manual](#).

Key considerations include the following:

**Analysis:** Undertake protection and gender analyses, in development and humanitarian contexts, to understand:
- the protection risks for women, men, girls, and boys
- context-specific vulnerabilities and capacities of women, men, girls and boys
- the causes of the protection risks
- how WFP can avoid exposing the diverse women, men, girls and boys to harm
- what actions WFP can take to reduce and eliminate protection risks for women, men, girls and boys

**Participation:** Involve and seek the advice of:
- protection and gender advisers when gathering information on protection issues
- local civil society organisations, including women’s rights organisations
- respected women and men community leaders

**Assessment:** Include protection-related questions in food security assessment tools, such as the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) and Joint Assessment Mission (JAM). Train staff in gathering protection information. Ensure that the diverse women, men, girls and boys are included in the assessments.

**Programme Design:** Design programmes so that they do not exacerbate existing inequalities or create new protection risks. Integrate protection outcomes for women, men, girls and boys in food security and nutrition programmes.

**Targeting:** Identify potential protection risks for the different women, men, girls and boys when targeting provision of food assistance. Ensure targeting criteria promote the dignity of, and empower, women and men (and girls and boys, as applicable).

**Sensitive Transfer Modality:** Consider the context-specific risks to women, men girls and boys when selecting the type of food assistance – in-kind, voucher, cash, combination. Address the preferences, opportunity costs, safety, security, access, technology, and family and community dynamics, as they apply to women and men (and girls and boys, as applicable).

**Access:** Ensure that measures are in place so that the diverse women, men, girls and boys can access the food assistance safely.

**Monitoring:** As part of the gender-responsive monitoring, continually assess for protection risks, and address accordingly.

**Prevention of Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (PSEA):** In accordance with WFP’s zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, report any suspicions or incidents of sexual exploitation or abuse of women, men, girls or boys.
Addressing GBV Incidents through Referrals: When witnessed or informed of GBV incidents and threats, whether they are related to food insecurity and WFP operations or not, refer the particular woman, man, girl or boy in need of protection assistance to the appropriate protection actor or service provider (in accordance with the established and agreed referral pathway).

When Interacting with GBV Survivors:

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<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ensure your own safety and that of other staff and Cooperating Partners.</td>
<td>✗ Investigate the incident or try to verify if the abuse is true</td>
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<td>✓ Ask if affected person(s) are safe at present so as to assess any immediate or medium term risk.</td>
<td>✗ Interview the affected person(s)</td>
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<td>✓ Alert medical services if assistance is required.</td>
<td>✗ Interview witnesses or others implicated in the incident</td>
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<td>✓ Be supportive and show empathy.</td>
<td>✗ Provide counselling to the affected person(s)</td>
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<td>✓ Inform your WFP manager and a trusted protection actor by appropriate means as soon as possible.</td>
<td>✗ Cut off or send away the person(s) seeking to share their experience</td>
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<td>✓ Provide accurate information about where to receive assistance, e.g. address, phone number</td>
<td>✓ Document, monitor, or otherwise record details of the incident</td>
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<td>✓ If immediate assistance is necessary (e.g. medical care), facilitate by requesting others to find transport or making phone calls on their behalf.</td>
<td>✗ Encourage the affected person(s) to report the abuse to the authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Maintain confidentiality.</td>
<td>✗ Encourage the person to return to the source of abuse e.g. family member</td>
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<td>✗ Do anything against the survivor’s wishes or without his/her consent (unless others’ lives are endangered).</td>
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3. Preventing & Mitigating Gender Based Violence

Preventing and mitigating GBV requires a comprehensive understanding of the operational context, with a particular focus on its socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions, and reflecting this analysis in WFP programmes.

A GBV analysis, incorporating elements of both protection and gender, needs to be carried out when planning a programme, during implementation, and as part of gender-responsive monitoring.

For guidance on how to address GBV in WFP programmes and operations see the WFP Guidance on Protection and Response to Gender-Based Violence, which contains specific instruction on addressing GBV in:
- general distribution
- livelihood, agriculture and market access programmes
- school feeding
- nutrition & HIV

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1 As listed in the WFP Gender Based Violence Manual.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Berg, Mattinen et al (2013). *Examining Protection and Gender Issues in Cash and Voucher Transfers: Case Studies of WFP and UNHCR.*

Global Protection Cluster, *Age, Gender Diversity Essential Guidance and Tools*

Global Protection Cluster, *Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility*

A global level forum for coordination and collaboration on GBV prevention and response in humanitarian settings.

GBV Responders’ Network

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**Resources for addressing violence against women and girls in humanitarian settings.**

Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Global Protection Cluster*


ILO International Training Centre (2016). *Resource Kit on Preventing and Addressing Gender Based Violence in Global Supply Chains.*

PSEA Taskforce