This document provides information on the integration of gender in supply chain. The practices listed are not mandated elements of WFP-related rules and regulations.

General information and guidance about Supply Chain in WFP:

WFP Procurement Policies, Guidance and Information
- WFP intranet Supply Chain
- WFP Operations website Supply Chain section
- WFP Goods and Services Procurement Manual
- WFP Procurement Forms and Templates
- Guidance Note 1: P4P Food Procurement Transactions

Logistics Information
- WFP internet, Logistics
- WFP intranet Logistics
- Global Logistics Cluster

Gender-Based Violence in Global Supply Chains: Resource Kit

WHAT

In the supply chain, gender – the roles, responsibilities and relations of women and men – influences the needs assessment, procurement, delivery and distribution of food (and other) assistance, across humanitarian and development contexts.

Whether in response to the Ebola crisis in western Africa, earthquakes in Central Asia, cyclones in Central America or reaching refugees and IDPs in camps, gender is relevant to the different stages in the supply chain.

Needs Assessment: Gender norms and practices shape the lives of women and men (and girls and boys); their situations, needs, priorities, vulnerabilities, capacities, opportunities and coping strategies. Women and men experience natural disasters, humanitarian crises and protracted conflicts differently; their experiences of and priorities for ‘development’ also differ. While there may be common needs, women and men will also have different needs. There will be differences in women’s and men’s strengths, vulnerabilities, ways of coping and adapting. In some contexts, restrictions on the mobility of women, such as not being able to freely leave their households or to access transportation, may mean that they do not have equal access to assessment teams as do men. Where assessment teams are made up of only, or mostly, men, women may not be able to communicate their needs, and may be overlooked or not prioritised. We need to assess the particular needs of the women, men, girls and boys in ‘affected populations’, which requires (a) assessment teams comprised of women and men; and (b) conducting needs assessments in ways that reach women and men (and girls and boys). This also applies to Logistics Capacities Assessments.

Procurement: If gender is overlooked in the needs assessment, the items that are purchased may not meet the needs of the diverse “end beneficiaries”; purchasing is gender-insensitive. Gender is also a factor in
sourcing of goods. Particular companies, vendors, organisations etc. profit from an organization’s ‘purchasing power’. Just as gender equality is integral to the UN system’s efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including ending poverty and hunger, gender is part of the policies, standards, workforce and workplaces of the entities which supply the food, and provide other types of assistance.

**The Last Mile:** Gender is present in how food assistance is distributed – in the individual women and men who distribute the food, when they distribute and how they distribute. Gender influences the ability of women and men (and girls and boys) to access the food assistance. Along with transportation, infrastructure and personnel, getting food to the ‘end beneficiaries’ is contingent on being aware of, and addressing, gender norms and practices. If women cannot reach distribution points because of security risks or cannot carry 50kg bags of food, while also supervising young children, the last mile is not completed. Reaching the ‘end beneficiaries’ thus requires seeing the role of gender and delivering and distributing food assistance in ways that ensure equitable access for women and men (and girls and boys).

Gender is part of assessing the needs of women and men (and girls and boys), of procuring the food assistance that meets their particular needs and of ensuring that women and men can access (and equally determine the distribution of) the food assistance.

Another key area where gender is part of the supply chain is the workforce – the mostly men and some women who plan, implement and control the purchase, transportation, storage and delivery of food and other assistance. Reflecting occupational segregation along gender lines, engineering, logistics and procurement have (incorrectly) been represented and perceived as professions more suited for men, than women.

**WHY**

All women, men, girls and boys affected by humanitarian crises or involved in ‘development’ have an equal right to assistance that meets their needs, interests and priorities.

In order to fulfil the purpose of a supply chain – of effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of the ‘end’ beneficiaries – how gender influences the needs and lives of the diverse women, men, girls and boys must be understood.

The consequences of ignoring gender in the supply chain include:
- failing to identify the particular needs of women, men, girls and boys
- procuring goods that only meet the needs of some groups in the ‘affected population’
- women, men, girls and/or boys not getting the assistance they need (the ‘push’, rather than ‘pull’)

The objectives of the WFP **Gender Policy** (2015-2020) are directly relevant to the different stages in the supply chain, including:
- adapting food assistance programmes and activities to the different needs and capacities of women, men, girls and boys; including gender in needs assessments
- ensuring that “women and men participate equally in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender-transformative food security and nutrition programmes and policies”; including gender in supply chain planning and management
- increasing women’s and girls’ decision-making regarding food security and nutrition; including gender in the supply chain workforce and in ‘the last mile’.

As stated in WFP’s Food Procurement Policy: “The main objective for WFP food procurement is to ensure that appropriate food commodities are available to beneficiaries in a timely and cost-effective manner. Consistent with this, WFP purchases should also be fair and transparent.” For food commodities to be “appropriate”, gender must be included in planning, assessment and procurement. For purchases to be “fair”, both women and men must benefit whether, for example, in the procurement decision-making processes or economically through contracts.
It is also important to attend to gender in relation to supply chain because one element of a diverse and inclusive organisation is gender parity among staff at all levels and functions. Thus, logistics and procurement officers can and should equally be women and men, with equal opportunities for learning and career progression, in environments that meet their needs and interests.

Recalling that the practices listed describe how gender can be integrated into supply chain and are not WFP-mandated requirements.

1. Workforce & Workplace

Recruitment

Recruiting qualified women
This is needed in order to:
- achieve gender parity in staffing
- ensure that the diverse women and men ‘beneficiaries’ can be reached and their needs documented
- ensure that the diverse women and men have equitable access to the food assistance (the supplies)

Issuing Gender Inclusive Vacancy Announcements
Vacancy announcements can be drafted in a way that encourages both women and men to apply by, for example, giving equal emphasis to:
- general management skills, such as finance, IT, change management, risk management, project management
- functional logistical skills, such as transport management, inventory management, warehousing, procurement and purchasing, forecasting, port/airport management
- problem solving skills, such as problem identification, information gathering, problem analysis
- interpersonal skills, such as listening, oral communication, written communication, people management, negotiation, stress management, leadership

Inclusive & Respectful Workplaces

Promoting inclusive and respectful workplaces that value both women and men can be done by, for example, addressing both the physical environment (such as ensuring toilets for women and for men) and the workplace culture (such as zero tolerance).

Removing Barriers to Women Working in Supply Chain
- Challenge stereotypes. For example, do not assume that the woman in the team should take meeting minutes.
- Ensure equal opportunities for learning and leadership. For example, aim for equal numbers of women and men in decision-making positions; ensure that women and men are part of logistics and succession planning teams; enable women’s equal participation in Logistics Capacities Assessments.
- Ensure that the workplace contains separate facilities for women and men, such as toilets, showers, prayer rooms, sleeping quarters, breastfeeding room etc.
- Raise awareness about gender, gender equality and unconscious bias.
Advocate with governments and other partners for equal inclusion of women in emergency preparedness planning initiatives.

Act. Rather than remaining silent, call out disrespectful, discriminatory or abusive language and behavior, including ‘jokes’.

Promote a workplace culture that values diversity and equality.

Common Barriers to Women Working in Supply Chain

- Gender inequalities in education and employment opportunities.
- ‘Subject streaming’ in secondary school and vocational training, where girls are not encouraged to study the subjects that lead to jobs in supply chain.
- Logistics being seen as a physically demanding job, which is linked to the stereotype that women are not strong enough for such jobs. (Stereotype: “men are strong, women are weak”.)
- General perception that logistics is best done by men; and women should focus on the 5Cs of caring, cashiering, cleaning, catering and clerical work.
- ‘Macho’ workplace behaviour
- Safety and security issues
- Long, inflexible working hours, which is inconsiderate of the fact that responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work is most often assigned to women.

2. Procurement

More detailed information on the integration of gender in procurement is contained in the separate document “Gender-Responsive Procurement”; which can be downloaded from the WFP Gender Toolkit.

Inform Vendors of Gender Commitments

Existing and potential suppliers (vendors) can be informed and educated about organizational commitments to gender equality, including the minimum standards for all operations. This can be done through information sessions, workshops and provision of print materials.

Gender Criteria in Procurement Notices

Gender-related criteria can be included in procurement notices. For example, vendors could be asked to supply:

- copies of their policies that relate to gender, equal opportunity and prevention of sexual harassment and abuse
- data on the governing body
- summary of staff data, indicating the number of women and men employees, by level

Gender Criteria in LTAs

Gender-related criteria can be included in the requirements for qualifying for long-term agreements (LTAs). For example, vendors could be asked to supply information on:

- the gender composition of staff
- the representation of women at senior (decision-making) levels
- the sex of the director
- the existence of work/life balance and family-friendly measures
- adherence to international labour conventions

Relevant ILO Conventions

- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- Minimum Age for Admission to Employment Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103)
- Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)

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1 The common barriers (i.e. seven dot points) apply to the ‘supply chain industry’, not to WFP per se.
Gender can be included in the criteria for assessing tender bids and selecting suppliers. Alongside lowest cost, consideration can be given to extra weightage (e.g. 5 or 10%) for vendors:
- who will ensure that 30 per cent of the staff assigned to delivering on the contract are women
- owned by women
- who invest in developing the capacities of women employees through formal and/or on-the-job training

When reviewing submissions, gender can be considered in relation to competencies, ethical standards, commitment and innovation.

Not favouring – consciously or unconsciously – one segment of a service market (based on sex, age, ethnic group, etc.) also helps to avoid reinforcing economic inequalities.

For the purchase of particular goods and services, quotas (e.g. 30%) can be applied for businesses owned by women.

Gender clauses can be included in contracts. This may include, for example, text that refers to:
- adherence to the core international human rights instruments
- employing a minimum percentage of women to execute the contract
- provision of facilities and infrastructure for women and men, such as separate toilets and a breastfeeding room
- packaging food in quantities that can be carried by women

Databases can be updated so that gender-related information about vendors can be entered and accessed.

Adherence to gender equality criteria and clauses can be reviewed when evaluating vendors.

### 3. Last Mile (Delivery & Distribution)

The different members of the community can be informed – through accessible means – about the food assistance.

#### Community Mobilization

**Key information that can be provided:**
- the size and composition of the food assistance
- beneficiary selection criteria
- distribution locations and times
- complaints and feedback mechanisms

#### Distribution Points

Food distribution points can be made accessible to women and men.

If women in the community cannot access the distribution point – because, for example, they cannot interact with men outside of their family or be outside of their homes without being accompanied by a male relative – consideration can be given to implementing measures through which they can access the assistance. For example, the services of a local women’s organization could be engaged or a distribution site only for women beneficiaries, staffed only by women, could be established.
Food distribution points can be monitored to ensure that women and men continue to have safe and equitable access. This can involve checking protection risks, the time required to reach the distribution point, transportation, childcare (and other care) responsibilities, and the frequency and timing of distributions.

Where the food assistance is food (rather than cash, coupons, electronic transfers etc.), providing food in quantities that can be carried by women and men of different ages and physical capacities can facilitate access; as can ensuring special packaging of relief food for persons with varied physical capacities, as required.

Actions can be taken to ensure that complaints and feedback mechanisms are in place, effective and accessible to women and men (girls and boys).