



Innovations from the Field

Gender mainstreaming from the ground up
for the World Food Programme

Phase One: June 2013 – September 2014



Synthesis report

Alyson Brody, Naomi Hossain, Katy Oswald and Sally Smith



Front cover

Clockwise from top: Images from our programmes from Senegal, Malawi, Kenya, Lesotho and Guatemala.

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Executive summary

Food and nutrition security and gender equality are closely linked and mutually constitutive. The fact that women and girls are among the most undernourished in the world and are often hardest hit by food insecurity underlines this. Women's productive labour and unpaid care work is central to the production, preparation and provision of food. Yet their ability to feed themselves and their families is persistently undermined by institutionalised gender biases in access to resources, markets, social services and social protection, as well as socio-cultural norms which prioritise the nutrition of men and boys and limit women's decision-making power.

Acknowledging the gendered foundations of food and nutrition security, the World Food Programme (WFP) announced 'Enhanced Commitments to Women' and began mainstreaming gender throughout its operations in the late 1990s. Since that time it has successfully targeted the specific needs of women and girls and

enhanced their participation in food security programming. However, it has also recognised a need to go further to address the root causes of gender-based food insecurity across the different contexts in which it operates. As part of its efforts to do so, WFP has entered into a learning partnership with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The premise for the 'Innovations from the Field' programme is that WFP staff and partners at the country level are often adopting innovative practices which respond to, and deal effectively with, local gender realities and priorities, but these are rarely shared.

Taking a 'bottom-up' learning approach to gender mainstreaming will allow successful innovations to be captured, shared and embedded across the organisation.

rarely shared. Taking a 'bottom-up' learning approach to gender mainstreaming will allow successful innovations to be captured, shared and embedded across the organisation.

In this first phase of the programme, IDS has facilitated a process of 'participatory action learning' in five WFP Country Offices: Guatemala, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Senegal. This has enabled staff to reflect on, explore, document and share good practices for gender-sensitive food security programming. It has also allowed wider reflection on current barriers to effective gender mainstreaming in WFP and how they could be overcome. This report summarises the learning so far.

Emerging themes and good practice for gender-sensitive food security programming

A number of themes emerged to which WFP needs to pay particular attention in its programming. The first is protection and WFP's obligation to carry out food assistance activities in ways that contribute to the safety, dignity and integrity of people in the communities where it operates. Gender is central to protection. The degree to which people are exposed to risks is in large part determined by the roles they fulfill based on their gender with some well-known risks to women and girls such as exposure to gender-based violence at, or on the way to, food distribution centres. Based on previous protection assessments, WFP has taken steps to mitigate such risks, but some risks are difficult to detect as part of quantitative monitoring systems currently used by WFP and require that participatory approaches are used for more qualitative monitoring of risks. This was confirmed by learning activities in Malawi and Kenya that found the range of gender-related protection issues to be wider than the issues currently included in the monitoring tools.

A related theme is women and girls' disproportionate responsibility for **unpaid care work**. This is a concern both for protection and gender equality, given the various ways WFP programmes can add to this work (e.g. requiring women to travel distances to collect rations, or relying on women's unpaid labour as community volunteers). Programmes can be designed better to 'recognise, reduce and redistribute' unpaid care work; for example, the School Meals Programme in Malawi is acknowledging the contribution of volunteer cooks with certificates and has introduced kitchen tools to reduce the hazards and drudgery of their work.

Also important is the need to **engage with men** in food security programming. Although long recognised as an important area of focus in WFP, staff reported a lack of understanding of how to do this effectively. The pilots in Guatemala, Senegal and Malawi provided new insights into men's perspectives and possible ways to engage with them, such as reinforcing positive images of men participating in programmes to improve their children's nutrition, targeting male community leaders and local authorities for sensitisation, and forming alliances with networks of men advocating for equal rights.

This also brought out the need to **challenge assumptions** about gender norms and roles in the communities WFP works with. Programme design is often based on assumptions (e.g. that men would

use cash transfers for personal gain) or inadvertently reinforces gender inequality (e.g. requiring girls to serve and clear food while boys supervise in School Meals Programmes). Through interrogating and challenging these assumptions, simple adjustments in design could make a significant difference to gender-related outcomes.

Further strengthening of the incorporation of rights into WFP programming is also called for. As part of the organisations approach to protection, WFP has for a number of years been working to ensure that people's rights are supported through its interventions. WFP staff involved in the pilots repeatedly returned to the need to enhance women's understanding of, and access to, rights as part of tackling root causes of food insecurity, and to ensure women are adequately protected. The Guatemala Country Office has since taken concrete steps towards this by incorporating education on women's rights into its nutrition programmes.

Finally, the role and potential of **women's collective action** deserves greater attention in WFP. Although WFP regularly works with women in groups, this is typically not framed around an understanding of women's empowerment. Programmes such as Purchase for Progress (P4P) and the Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) in Senegal demonstrate that facilitating women's active involvement in single or mixed sex groups not only enables them to contribute directly to household wellbeing; it also better equips them to influence local agendas and lay claims with authorities, both of which are important for tackling structural causes of food and nutrition insecurity.

Learning and recommendations about gender mainstreaming in WFP

Alongside these thematic lessons for programming, there are a number of process-oriented recommendations for how to improve gender mainstreaming in WFP.

1. There are large reserves of latent capacity for gender mainstreaming among WFP staff and partners, but much of this potential is untapped. Gender Advocates and staff in WFP sub-offices and partner organisations are often not given the autonomy, time or resources to drive forward work on gender, nor are they rewarded for doing so. Recommendations include:

- Recognise, utilise and reward existing capacity and enthusiasm around gender among WFP staff
- Ensure Gender Advocates have a clear mandate and adequate time and resources
- Engage more strategically with CO partner organisations on gender issues

2. Strong leadership and accountability on gender mainstreaming are critical. WFP is judged to be strong in terms of high-level political commitment to gender, but leadership at the CO level is uneven

and accountability mechanisms weak. The latter is compounded by a focus on counting numbers of women beneficiaries and committee members, which can give little indication of achievements against gender-equitable food and nutrition security goals. The emphasis on numbers is often reinforced by reporting requirements for COs. Recommendations include:

- Build a robust business case for why gender mainstreaming is mission-critical for WFP, and allocate resources and authority to communicate this effectively to all senior managers
- Strengthen existing accountability mechanisms and indicators to ensure senior managers are held responsible for meaningful outcomes on gender at the CO level
- 3. There is a lack of consistency in the understanding of what gender is and why it matters for WFP's work. This is reflected and reinforced by the lack of systematic attention to gender across the project cycle, which means many chances for smarter programming are missed. As things stand, gender mainstreaming tends to happen in reactive ways and is dependent on individuals' capacity, commitment and interest – not on the corporate or institutional mandate or mission. Recommendations include:
 - Develop staff capacity on gender through training, identification of Gender Advocates within all sections (programmes, Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM), monitoring and evaluation (M&E), logistics and procurement etc), and recruitment of gender specialists to provide additional support
 - Revise the VAM approach and process, considering alternative conceptual frameworks and more gender-sensitive tools for assessing vulnerability
 - Create opportunities for staff to reflect, listen and learn on gender, including problem-based learning specific to programme and country contexts

4. In the 'projectised' culture of WFP, targeted funding prevents the implementation of comprehensive, engaged gender-sensitive programming. Programme budgets rarely take into consideration the true costs of mainstreaming gender and achieving gender-related goals. There is also a lack of resources for the cross-programmatic work needed to build institutional capacity and responsiveness on gender. Recommendations include:
 - Develop better organisational understanding of the true costs of gender mainstreaming and ensure costs for gender-related work are detailed in programme budgets
 - Donors should demand gender-sensitive programme design and reporting, on the condition they support this with adequate resources for work on gender.

Biographies of IDS team

Alyson Brody

Alyson is an anthropologist with over 15 years' experience in the field of gender equality, women's rights and social development. In addition to directing the *Innovations from the Field* programme, she is the manager of BRIDGE – a global gender and development research and information programme – and co-leader of the IDS Gender and Sexualities Cluster. Alyson has authored and co-authored a number of publications on key gender and development issues. She has worked with several NGOs on women's and children's rights, and is a former member of the UK Gender and Development Network Advisory Board.

Naomi Hossain

Naomi is a Research Fellow at IDS. She has worked for 20 years as a development researcher and on programme design and evaluation on issues of poverty and public services in low income countries. She is particularly interested in issues of women's empowerment and in the politics of food and social protection. Naomi has recently led two large projects studying, among other things, people's perceptions of and struggles around the right to food. She is the author of a book on elite perceptions of poverty in Bangladesh as well as numerous journal articles and reports.

Katy Oswald

Katy is a social scientist with a specialisation in action learning methodologies and reflective practice. She has worked with several development charities and UN agencies to support their organisational learning on a wide range of issues. She is co-convenor of the Reflective Practice and Social Change course at IDS.

Sally Smith

Sally is an independent research consultant. Her research centres around trade, development, poverty and gender, with specialist knowledge of global production systems and the gendered economy. She also focuses on institutional learning, including impact assessment and monitoring and evaluation systems. She has provided research and advisory services to a range of organisations and institutions, including Fairtrade International, the Ethical Trading Initiative, Oxfam and Comic Relief. She is a member of various steering committees and working groups, including Comic Relief's Trade, Enterprise and Employment Advisory Group and Fairtrade International's Gender Working Group. Sally was a researcher at the Institute of Development Studies (University of Sussex) from 2001 to 2010 and prior to that spent eight years working in Guatemala and Cambodia.

Glossary

Gender mainstreaming	A process for assessing implications for women and men of policies or programmes and a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, so that gender inequality is not perpetuated. Gender mainstreaming aims to achieve gender equality, and includes positive measures to narrow and close the gender gap.
Participatory action learning (PAL)	An approach to applied learning within organisations, in which the learners are supported to study and reflect on their own organisational practices.
Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)	Forms of violence that are sexual or which target people because of their gender roles. SGBV is often referred to as violence against women, because it often occurs as a result of gender inequalities through which women are dominated by men.
Unpaid care work	Work which is primarily reproductive in nature, and involves at least cleaning and grooming people and homes, gathering water, food and fuel, preparing and cooking food, feeding people and providing physical and emotional care. Such work takes places within personal relationships and is unpaid. Most societies undervalue it and see it as 'naturally' the responsibility of women. It is a primary foundation of gender inequality because domestic responsibilities for care create obstacles for women to earn an income, travel, and engage in public and civic life.

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CO	Country Office
ECWs	Enhanced Commitments to Women
EMOPs	Emergency Operations
GMAF	Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
PAL	Participatory Action Learning
P4P	Purchase for Progress
R4	Rural Resilience Initiative
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SFC	Savings for Change
SMPs	School Meals Programme
SUN	Scaling up Nutrition
UN SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme

1 Introduction

1.1 Gender mainstreaming in the World Food Programme

Food and nutrition security, gender equality and women's empowerment are closely linked and mutually constitutive. The fact that women and girls are among the most undernourished in the world, even in countries experiencing rapid economic growth, such as India, underlines the correlation between gender inequality and food insecurity. Women's work is central to food and nutrition security, whether it is income-earning or unpaid domestic care responsibilities: women produce as much as half of the world's food, are concentrated as family or paid workers in the agricultural sector, and are typically responsible for getting food to families – growing, gathering, buying, preparing, cooking, feeding and associated activities.¹

Yet women are also often hardest hit by food insecurity, because social norms or household coping strategies prioritise the nutrition of men or boys, and because food-related shocks have a direct impact on their work of securing food and nutrition security.² Lower levels of education among women have been linked to malnutrition among children, and pregnancy and lactation often leave women vulnerable to malnutrition, while evidence indicates that women's empowerment translates directly into household nutritional outcomes.³ Across different contexts, women's access to assets, technology, inputs and social protection resources is constrained as a result of gender inequalities in relation to

property regimes, segmented markets, male biases in policy and practice, and other manifestations of unequal gender power relations.⁴

The close positive relationship between food security and gender equality implies that food security programmes need to systematically take into account gender power relations in the contexts in which they operate;

and that more effective and sustainable food security programmes are likely to be those which work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Achieving the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG1), a new Sustainable Development Goal on hunger post-2015, and the goals outlined under the Zero Hunger Challenge, therefore depends on more gender-sensitive food security programming.⁵

“The close positive relationship between food security and gender equality implies that food security programmes need to systematically take into account gender power relations in the contexts in which they operate.”

The WFP has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing these linked issues of food security and gender inequality through an ambitious gender mainstreaming policy and programme first rolled out in 2003 and revised in 2009. The WFP applies the United Nations (UN) definition of **gender mainstreaming** as:

[T]he process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action – including legislation, policies or programmes – in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political and societal spheres so that inequality is not perpetuated. While the ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality, it does not exclude positive measures to narrow and close the gender gap.⁶

The 2003 policy, structured around eight 'Enhanced Commitments to Women' (ECWs), framed women as 'the most effective solution' to addressing food insecurity, recognising the specific needs of adolescent girls and with pregnant and lactating women seen as a priority group.

WFP evaluated the policy in 2007. Its positive outcomes included successes in increasing the visibility of women and girls, and in laying strong foundations for gender mainstreaming. However the evaluation pointed out the need to focus on gender relations and to engage men in processes designed to address women's situation and status. It also identified a disjuncture between the gender mainstreaming policy developed largely at headquarters, and its implementation at the operational level. The evaluation recommended that future WFP interventions should be more informed by needs on the ground and by the local socio-cultural context of gender relations.

A revised WFP Gender Policy was produced in 2009 and stressed the need for a more context-relevant holistic approach, going beyond supporting the needs of women and girls and increasing their visibility, to fostering awareness and understanding of gender inequalities in order to positively influence behaviours and attitudes. The policy builds on the ECWs while also emphasising new programming priorities and institutional support measures, including:

- **Addressing gender-related protection challenges** and engaging men and boys to foster understanding of the links between gender inequality and hunger; involve them in activities to protect women and children from violence, and reduce burdens on women

- Breaking gender barriers in WFP Mother and Child Health and Nutrition programmes by **targeting men and boys for education activities** to improve their knowledge of and commitment to maintaining the nutrition and health of mothers and children
- **Promoting positive gender relations and supporting sustainable livelihoods** through cash transfers, cash for work and food for work and training programmes, making sure women benefit equally with men without negative implications
- **Ensuring women farmers have equal access to markets** while benefiting directly from cash payments for their produce
- Using WFP-supported school feeding programmes as entry points to **promote gender equality during early childhood development**

The new policy made it mandatory for WFP operations to incorporate a gender perspective at all stages of a project cycle.

1.2 Origins of joint WFP-IDS programme

The 2009 Gender Policy emphasised the importance of organisational learning around gender mainstreaming, and of responses to hunger that are based on gender-sensitive evidence. In response the Chief of Women, Children and Gender approached IDS as a potential partner organisation for enabling these objectives. IDS worked with WFP over a six month scoping period to identify the most effective approach to enabling engaged organisational learning that would contribute to the development of more context-relevant, effective gender mainstreaming.

During the scoping phase members of staff from across WFP – many with experience as WFP country office directors – were interviewed. Most recognised the importance of a gender-aware approach at all levels of operations, based on country or field experience of the specific ways gender issues are realised in different contexts.⁷ Key challenges identified by WFP staff included:

- Making gender mainstreaming and gender equality more tangible and meaningful, moving from concepts to practical application
- Overcoming reluctance to challenge deeply rooted gendered cultural norms at the local level
- Persuading those who are unconvinced by the need for gender mainstreaming of its value, particularly in highly pressurised crisis environments; supporting gender mainstreaming in crisis/emergency situations
- Engaging men – WFP staff, partners and beneficiaries – in enabling shifts in gender equality



Naomi Hossain

- Ensuring gender mainstreaming approaches integrate with other cross-cutting issues such as care work, climate change, youth and humanitarian principles.

A key observation was that WFP staff and partners at the country and field level do often take gender-sensitive approaches that are innovative and which respond to local realities, often without even realising they are ‘doing’ gender mainstreaming. The nature of the WFP as a highly operational, decentralised organisation fuels this capacity for creative, flexible and responsive approaches. Yet these practices are rarely shared within and across the organisation, and useful organisational learning is lost. One respondent noted: ‘WFP is a very complex organisation and runs the risk of not learning from what it does – we don’t often have the luxury of stopping, reflecting and learning from what we do and feeding that back’.

Our hypothesis for the *Innovations from the Field* programme was that reflecting on, learning about and sharing these existing innovative practices can result in gender-sensitive programme improvements, more informed understanding of gender and of how to mainstream gender in programming. Instead of assuming that the best and most useful understandings of gender come from the centre and need to be transmitted outward to the rest of the organisation, the programme starts from a recognition that much valuable and effective work to advance gender equality already happens in the field, and learning about these local innovations could benefit the centre and the organisation as a whole.

ABOVE
Girl selling
plums by the
roadside in
Malawi.

2 Programme objectives, design and methodology

2.1 Programme objectives and theory of change

The **impact** the programme aims for is to support WFP's mandate of achieving MDG1, a new Sustainable Development Goal on Hunger post-2015 and the five Zero Hunger Challenge goals through enabling it to deliver more effective, gender-equitable food security programmes that contribute to women's empowerment and gender equality.

The programme aims to achieve this through a set of activities designed to achieve the following **outcome**: WFP is equipped and oriented to mainstream gender equality to deliver on its MDG commitments, new Sustainable Development Goals and Zero Hunger Challenge goals from the bottom up, through learning systems that transform frontline innovations with gender equality into operational learning.

The programme design is rooted in the knowledge that WFP's mandate can be achieved faster and more successfully if gender equality is successfully mainstreamed through its operations,

“ Efforts to impose gender mainstreaming from the top down generally fail. ”

but also that efforts to impose gender mainstreaming from the top down generally fail. The core of the theory of change is that an organisation like WFP, with its unique field presence and multiple

partnerships, is most likely to successfully mainstream gender equality in its programming if it a) learns from and further develops what already works at field and country levels, b) 'trickles up' that learning across the organisation and c) recycles the learning back into changed operational practice. This is because it will enable:

- Closer attention to the diverse contexts of gender relations
- More scope for accountability for gender equality through direct access to the beneficiary experience
- A better fit with frontline practicalities and the challenges of programme delivery
- Organisational gender equality policies to gain local staff ownership and credibility
- A clearer and more direct link between gender equality programming and results

For these advantages to be gained, frontline innovations with gender equality need to be

identified, documented, analysed and communicated across WFP in formats that staff find useful. Staff then need to be enabled and supported to apply their learning to their operational practice.

2.2 Programme design and methodology

At the heart of the programme design is a Participatory Action Learning (PAL) and knowledge sharing approach, which focuses as much on processes of gathering and responding to information as on research findings. The approach is intended to:

- Be led by WFP staff and partners in regional, country and field offices
- Facilitate staff and partners to reflect on their own practices – exploring what works and why
- Support staff and partners to apply their learning to improve programmes and practice
- Capture knowledge and lessons learned, and share these in-country and across WFP in creative ways

This enables participants to build on existing momentum within WFP rather than dwell on gaps and concerns, and to tackle real issues in real situations which are relevant and important to them. At the same time, it builds their capacity to devise strategies which respond to local realities and generates immediate responses and action. The learning that emerges from this process can then be shared horizontally and vertically to enable broader uptake within the organisation.

The programme has involved building a partnership between WFP and IDS, with working relationships at multiple organisational levels. From programme design through to delivery, monitoring and evaluation, it has involved joint planning at every stage. The steps in the process for this first phase of the programme are outlined below.

Scoping phase

A six month, pre-programme scoping phase involved extensive meetings between IDS team members and WFP staff across different departments at WFP Headquarters, plus a review of key WFP materials. Background papers were also written on five core themes.⁸ The outcomes of these activities shaped the design of the joint programme proposed by WFP's Chief of Women, Children and Gender and IDS.

Identifying countries for the pilot phase

It was important for participation from the country offices to be motivated rather than enforced. Countries in the USAID Feed the Future programme were invited to submit expressions of interest (EOIs) for inclusion in the pilot phase, resulting in five countries putting themselves forward: Kenya, Senegal, Lesotho, Guatemala and Malawi.⁹

Inception workshop

An inception workshop was held in Rome in June 2013, attended by the IDS team and representatives from each of the participating countries. The workshop provided an opportunity to:

- Introduce and further develop the programme aims and methodology
- Generate critical discussion on current approaches to gender mainstreaming within WFP
- Map ways in which knowledge flows and is shared within WFP at national, regional and global levels

WFP participants were asked to develop their proposals with their Country Offices (COs) in light of the discussions and to begin planning for in country start-up in liaison with their allocated IDS researcher.

Country office inception phase

Members of the IDS team carried out country missions in each of the pilot countries to initiate the PAL process. This involved two to three day PAL workshops with a cross-section of WFP staff and (sometimes) partners, plus key informant interviews and field visits to familiarise IDS with the context of WFP operations. During the PAL workshops WFP staff engaged in a process of guided reflection to begin to draw out lessons about what has worked (and what has not) to mainstream gender equality in WFP's programming, and to identify critical questions and areas of inquiry for further exploration.

Following the workshops, COs finalised their PAL work plans and budgets, with remote support from IDS staff and the WFP Gender Office. The inquiry themes, questions and methodologies for the PAL activities in each CO are shown in Annex One, with examples being:

- Mapping benefits and constraints for men's involvement in nutrition activities (Senegal)
- Building capacity for gender analysis to improve programming (Guatemala)
- Documenting lessons learned from the Positive Deviance programme (Lesotho)
- Understanding decision-making and control over resources organised within households (Malawi)
- Exploring complaints and feedback mechanisms with a gender lens (Kenya)

Implementation of PAL activities

Each PAL theme was investigated by a small team of interested WFP staff over a period of six to eight months, with ongoing remote support from the IDS team. Activities carried out included: interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries; meetings and workshops with WFP staff and partner organisations; reviews of project documents and M&E data; and preparation of policies and guidance materials. A second country visit was made by IDS staff at the midway point, to review progress, conduct joint analysis and share initial findings between PAL teams and with management.¹⁰

Development of knowledge sharing strategies

Knowledge sharing strategies for each CO were developed during the second IDS country visits, with planned activities and outputs, which have included

- Development of creative, engaging knowledge products – Prezi, videos, case studies, blogs, slide shows – which will stimulate interest across WFP
- Practical tools for gender analysis (including PAL tools) and guidelines for gender-aware practices
- Promoting the work widely within WFP (horizontally and vertically), through existing, effective platforms (e.g. GO website, Gender Advocates Network) as well as informal networks
- Sharing knowledge with local authorities and WFP partners
- Feedback loops to show how voices of men and women on the ground are being taken into account

Further knowledge sharing products and activities will be developed on the basis of this Synthesis Report and once the CO products have been finalised.

BELOW
Members of the WFP PAL team from Tambacounda region in Senegal with local participants in the rural resilience programme.



Sirandou Fall

3 Emerging themes and examples of good practice for gender-sensitive programming

During the PAL workshops and subsequent activities undertaken by staff in different countries, a number of themes emerged as important considerations for gender-sensitive programming in WFP. Six key themes are summarised below, with concrete examples of their relevance to WFP programming and how they are being dealt with in innovative ways.

3.1 Enhancing protection of women and girls through WFP interventions

In recent years the concept of ‘protection’ has come to the fore in the UN system, encompassing commitments to ‘do no harm’ and taking a rights-based stance on humanitarian aid work, including acting to protect and address the underlying risks to the safety and dignity of civilians in crisis or post-crisis situations. This includes advocacy and strengthening local institutions to support people who are particularly vulnerable due to their gender, religion or ethnicity.

WFP has a role in protection on three levels:
 (a) within the design and implementation of

its programmes to make sure that these are safe, dignified and respect people’s rights; (b) by implementing food assistance programmes that also seek to achieve a protection objective; and (c) by supporting advocacy on protection concerns not directly linked to food security and ensuring coordination and referrals on protection issues.

WFP has examined protection in the context of its programmes for close to a decade and in 2012 adopted a Humanitarian Protection Policy. Since then more than 30 WFP country offices have begun actively integrating protection concerns into their programmes. For WFP protection means ‘carrying out food-assistance activities in ways that contribute to the safety, dignity and integrity of people in the communities receiving that assistance’.¹¹ In line with other UN agencies, over the past decade WFP has developed its understanding of the interlinkages between food insecurity, food assistance and protection risks. Food is a key factor impacting peoples’ exposure to and ability to cope with risks, and if programmes are implemented considering these

Danger at work? Gender and protection in Cash and Food For Assets projects in Kenya

In Kenya, WFP staff were concerned about unintended negative impacts on women from a result of being targeted for participation in Cash and Food For Assets programmes. They encourage men to assist their wives and female relatives with asset creation work, but know they are not always successful, meaning women may be burdened with too much work and be exposed to health risks. Building on what had already been found in the study Examining Protection and gender in Cash and Voucher Transfers (2013) the PAL team decided to investigate what was happening on the ground in two contrasting parts of Kenya.

They found interesting differences between the two regions. In the northeast there is a surplus of labour and women find it relatively easy to find someone to replace them when they are ill, pregnant or otherwise unable to work. In contrast, in the coastal region



Group discussion with women who are part of WFP's Food For Assets programme in Turkana county, Kenya.

The PAL team found women struggling to convince husbands or other relatives to step in, as there is a higher level of engagement in other income generating activities. As a result, they often end up working late into their pregnancies and return soon after their babies are born, even though WFP's work norms say they may be excused from duties.

What they also found was that delays in the disbursement of cash transfers can expose women to risks, with women reporting tensions at home as their

husbands question their participation in the programme, and tension with local traders when they are unable to pay off debts. These protection risks are not easily picked up in the standardised monitoring systems and require the use of participatory approaches, such as the focus group discussions used as part of the PAL process. The Kenya country office had already initiated a process to include gender and protection issues more systematically in monitoring by incorporating a section on gender and protection in the Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) tool. This would allow the country office to monitor and respond to protection and gender issues in a more effective way.

The findings from the PAL work endorsed the importance of these processes and have contributed to greater awareness and commitment of management to effective monitoring on gender and protection.

risks, food assistance can be a powerful tool to help keep people safe and maintain their dignity. Gender is a central factor determining the degree and type of risk people are exposed to: widely cited examples include the exposure of women and girls to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as a result of unsafe conditions on the way to and from food distribution sites. Health risks for pregnant and lactating women involved in cash and food for work programmes have also been raised, as well as risks associated with specific types of work that mainly men are engaged in.

Considerable progress has been made in raising awareness among staff, conducting analyses, and incorporating protection considerations into programme implementation and tools. These efforts must be sustained however to ensure that protection is consistently integrated across all WFP's programmes, and at all stages of the project cycle, from analysis and programme design through to monitoring and impact assessment. New protection risks arising out of the changing environments and programme modalities that WFP engages in must also be analysed and mitigated. This is illustrated in the example from Kenya above, which demonstrates the importance of careful planning and analysis in programme design, and flexible systems for monitoring gender impacts and protection, both positive and negative, throughout the life of WFP programmes.

The links between food insecurity and SGBV¹² remain under-explored, often due to the 'invisible' and unspoken nature of SGBV. However, work has been conducted by WFP to better understand these connections. In 2011, WFP published the results of a study on 'Enhancing prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence in the context of food assistance in displacement settings.'¹³ A number of subsequent protection analyses, including in Kenya and Malawi, have further deepened the understanding of the connection between food insecurity and SGBV. Building on these analyses, the PAL work has also examined these connections, with a focus on the ways in which food insecurity can be compounded by personal insecurity for women and girls in refugee camps – as the example from Malawi below illustrates.

Violence in the hungry season: gender-based violence in Malawi refugee camps

As part of the PAL work in Malawi, Country Office and Regional Bureau staff have gathered evidence from government officials, UN surveys, and WFP beneficiaries and staff that SGBV is directly and causally affected by increased food insecurity. Personal testimonies showed that in the refugee camps in particular, food insecurity often means personal insecurity – including violence and sexual exploitation. These are highly sensitive matters that WFP staff are tackling directly, having had the space and time to make sense of these connections.



Naomi Hossain

In Lesotho the PAL workshop and other learning activities reignited the desire for formulating more effective, comprehensive and gender-sensitive protection responses. The CO used the enhanced learning through the PAL workshops, with support from senior management, to design a gender and protection strategy. The strategy was designed to integrate learning on gender and protection to improve programme design, ownership and accountability.

ABOVE
Women (with infants on their backs) preparing corn-soya blend mix for supplementary feeding programme in Malawi.

3.2 Recognising, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care work

All the available evidence indicates that women and girls undertake the vast majority of unpaid care work – domestic or reproductive work, or the work involved in ensuring families are fed, cleaned and groomed, cared for when ill, very young, elderly or disabled. In the food insecure contexts in which WFP operates, this work often involves carrying water and fuel long distances, gathering wild foods, preparing and cooking food, and travelling long distances to health facilities, as well as the unpaid work on family farms or enterprises which women also perform.¹⁴ Reproductive labour has recently been recognised as a major human rights concern, of particularly great importance for the poorest women. This means addressing unpaid care work is a concern both for gender equality and for protection issues.

There is a clear risk that WFP programmes may harm women by targeting them if by doing so they increase their net burden of unpaid care work. That involvement in WFP programmes may burden women with additional work was raised as a concern by WFP staff in several pilot countries. Alongside this concern was a felt need to develop practical solutions to mitigate potential negative impacts on women and to enhance the positive effects of their engagement. Examples of how women's unpaid care work burdens may be exacerbated by programmes include:

- Requiring women to travel distances to collect rations
- Involving women in cash or food for work schemes, in which they provide labour for public works schemes

- Relying on women's unpaid labour as community volunteers for cooking, committee work, or preparing supplementary feeding

All of these activities have clear benefits for women and their families, but they also involve additional time and labour away from their homes. In their absence, other people, usually girls, will probably substitute by preparing meals or looking after infants, people who are ill or disabled who need to be cared for at home. Programmes often fail to evaluate their impacts in terms of these non-monetary costs, and so may over-estimate the benefits they bring. At the same time, programmes can be designed to better support, reduce or redistribute tough domestic work, so that women doubly benefit from the programme cash or food transfers, and from the release of their time and energy for other activities. For instance, public works schemes can be sensitive to women's care work needs, by prioritising the development of domestic water sources or roads on routes that women and children need most. Incorporating Diane Elson's well-known 'recognise, reduce and redistribute' – 3R – approach¹⁵ across all WFP programming may not only help in doing no harm, but should also ensure that they contribute more directly and more consistently to women's empowerment and gender equality.

3.3 Identifying pathways for engaging men

The conceptual shift from a Women in Development (WID) to a Gender and Development (GAD) approach to gender mainstreaming in the early 1990s was informed by the recognition that a focus on women alone is not sufficient for addressing the unequal gender power relations underpinning poverty. GAD emphasised the socially and culturally constructed relations between women and men,¹⁶ promoting the value of engaging men in gender-aware programming as a means to strengthening approaches and transforming unequal gender relations. This has rarely happened in practice, meaning that vital opportunities are missed for creating alliances between women and men, and for enabling change.¹⁷ For example engaging men and boys in programmes to address GBV can lead them to question and change their own practices and behaviours. Providing spaces for reflection on the unpaid care responsibilities that so often fall to women can also provide a starting point for shifting perceptions about gender roles and norms. This can lead to greater male involvement in the care and nutrition of their children, which contributes to alleviating women's burden and can be

Recognising women's contributions to school meals programmes in Malawi

Learning activities conducted by staff in Malawi revealed that SMPs are highly reliant on the voluntary work of students' mothers, who prepare and serve the meals. This work can involve as much as eight hours of work per day. In some places, it was difficult to sustain this level of volunteer commitment, but when token cash payments were offered for the work, men started to come forward to work. Based on what it would cost to make token payments for the work of preparation and cooking, the value of women's unpaid work on the SMP was calculated at some US\$0.5 million per year for Malawi.

The women volunteer cooks themselves say they are pleased to do the work, because it benefits their children and families, as well as those of the wider community. However staff and senior managers in WFP Malawi recognised the potential for incorporating a '3R' approach and have been exploring strategies for reducing the hazards and drudgery of school meals preparation by procuring long-handled cooking utensils and oven mitts, and for recognising their contributions by distributing certificates in public ceremonies. Once they had realised the importance of recognising women's contributions, the distribution of certificates cost the Country Office almost nothing. The impact on the women was significant:

'I honestly got shocked, speechless and motivated at the same time. It was a mixed feeling. I also got inspired to keep on providing my services to SMP as I now know my efforts were and still are being



Thomas DeBandt

acknowledged and appreciated at the same time. This is evidenced by the certification of my cooking services, as well as your follow-up visit today' (Modester Mazeze, 38, Volunteer cook for SMPs in Mbwadzulu school, Malawi)

'The certificate remains hanging on the walls of the living room of my house, not only as an object of decoration but it [...] communicates] to both my relatives and children that hard work pays and it is indeed a source of inspiration to all people around me...The community, after seeing it, they inquired a lot how I got into participating in this programme and many showed a powerful interest to join in supporting the programme by cooking... Now we are perceived as professional cooks we are invited at different events in the village to assist them in cooking, be it weddings, religious functions, you name it' (Asiyatu James, 33, Mbwadzulu primary school)

ABOVE
WFP Malawi Deputy Country Director, Batón Osmani, hands over a certificate of appreciation to a cook at Mbwazulu primary school, as a first step to recognising women's unpaid work contributions to WFP programmes.

empowering for men.¹⁸ Evidence shows that more transformative approaches are more effective.¹⁹ A focus on men and boys can also help to address the specific vulnerabilities some of them face.

According to the 2009 WFP Gender Policy a ‘more holistic approach to gender is needed that improves the balance in relationships between genders and in families’.²⁰ The report also calls for greater engagement of men, particularly in maternal and child nutrition and health programmes. However, across the pilot countries WFP staff reported

either having limited success in doing so, or lacking sufficient knowledge on how to go about it.

PAL activities in Senegal, Guatemala and Malawi served to provide new insights on men’s perspectives and possible ways to engage with them in the context of nutrition programmes, such as partnering with men who are the ‘exceptions to the rule’.

Going forward, sharing knowledge and successful innovations for engaging with men should be central to WFP’s gender mainstreaming strategy.

Engaging men in Senegal, Lesotho, Guatemala and Malawi

PAL activities in Senegal focused on trying to understand how men are currently involved in care of children and nutrition and how their involvement could be increased. During focus group discussions women noted that men accompany their children to the hospital when they are sick, but are rarely involved in nutrition activities at the clinic. When men were asked about this they said they were afraid of being mocked as engaging in child nutrition is ‘not a man’s role’. They said that in fact they helped their wives with household and caring activities but did not want this fact to be publicly exposed. There were also exceptions, where men shared caring responsibilities with their wives and were the people involved in nutrition activities, without fear of being judged. WFP Senegal has recognised the potential to change attitudes about men’s roles at the local level by engaging them in open discussions and involving the ‘exceptions’ as potential ‘change models’.

In Lesotho a study was conducted to understand the gender dimensions of the Early Care Child and Childhood (ECCD) programme, which takes the form of community-based nurseries or pre-school where children are supplied by WFP with mid-morning snacks and lunch. ECCD care-givers are sourced from within the community and are paid a nominal fee for their work. Even though the posts are open to both women and men, the majority of care-givers are female because many men feel it is not a suitable role for them. When men are involved they do not usually engage in cooking or other ‘female’ tasks, even though all tasks are supposed to be shared among the ECCD care-givers.



Interviewing a man who has been involved in his children's nutrition in Senegal.



Young children enjoying their mid-day snack provided by WFP at Meeling ECCD in Mokhotlong district, Lesotho.

Efforts are being made by community leaders, district authorities, ECCD care-givers and parliamentarians to encourage more men to engage in these paid care work opportunities. This has resulted in an increasing number of men becoming ECCD caregivers. Mofuta, a male caregiver at in one of the ECCD centres argues that these men still face a lot of criticism from other men since caregiving is considered to be women’s responsibility. He said ‘despite the criticisms, I always engage in discussions with young boys in my area to consider taking this career. It may take time but with more advocacy it will soon be uniform.’

In Guatemala, WFP staff have been reflecting on what ‘good practice’ looks like in nutrition programmes. They have realised that only working with women will not be sufficient to guarantee progress towards gender equality – it is also necessary to undertake sensitisation with men (youths, adults, leaders and local authorities) to create the conditions for women’s rights to be recognised. Men should also be involved in training



Women waiting for supplementary feeding rations after a nutrition lecture in Ntchisi, Malawi. Of over 100 parents present, two were fathers.

activities on nutrition and child care, both to strengthen nutrition outcomes and to raise awareness of men’s shared responsibility for unpaid care work.

To action this learning, WFP Guatemala is developing a two-fold strategy. First, they are investigating the possibility of coordination with the ‘Men’s Network for the Social and Political Rights of Indigenous Populations’, which already carries out sensitisation work with men in the area where WFP runs a nutrition programme and could potentially include food and nutrition security and infant and maternal mortality as themes in their work. Second, they are considering how to include men in their community education programmes.

In Malawi, strong commitment was found across the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)²¹ alliance partners, including Government officials from a range of departments and local NGOs for male involvement in child nutrition. There, in collaboration with local SUN partners, the team have scripted a documentary film to reinforce positive images of men participating to improve their children’s nutrition. The belief there is that with more positive role models, men can be more engaged – and it is vital for the success of the project that they are.

Sirandou Fall



ABOVE
Girls carrying food trays for a Senegalese school canteen.

3.4 Challenging gender norms and assumptions

'Gender norms' refer to the social expectations of appropriate roles and behaviour for men (and boys) and women (and girls) – as well as the social reproduction of these norms in institutions and cultural practices. As section 3.3 suggests, these norms are not 'fixed' but can change in ways that benefit both women and men, and create more positive development outcomes. WFP's recognition of women's value and potential through the ECUs is a very significant step, realised through policies to

make women primary entitlement holders and to enhance their participation in food targeting and management committees. However, gender equality researchers have asked how far policies such as these really empower women. They may enable more efficient achievement of food security goals but they often reinforce rather than challenge existing, inequitable gender roles and norms.²²

Gender-sensitive programming should involve assessing the potential implications of programme design and activities for men and women, boys and girls. Ideally programming will challenge and help transform existing gender norms that limit possibilities. This should involve challenging certain assumptions or 'myths' about gender that may not be borne out in reality.²³

Yet, workshops and PAL activities revealed that project designs are rarely informed by the insights of field staff and partner organisations into specific local nuances of gender relations and issues. Rather they often rely on unexamined assumptions and stereotypes about gender and food security. For example there is an untested assumption that women will always use money or vouchers for their families whereas men would use it in irresponsible ways, but, as the examples below illustrate, the realities often differ from these fixed ideas about male and female behaviours and roles.

In several pilot countries it also became apparent that WFP programming sometimes reinforces gender norms and stereotypes, as in the examples below from School Meals Programmes (SMPs) in Senegal and Lesotho. Through PAL activities with beneficiaries of these programmes, WFP staff identified simple adjustments that can be made to programme design to embed a more transformative approach.

Getting out of the kitchen? Gender norms and SMPs in Senegal and Lesotho

Participatory activities were held with boys and girls to understand their roles in the implementation of SMPs and the ways in which this contributed to improved nutrition and gender equality. The activities revealed that the division of labour within the school 'canteens' were inadvertently replicating gender norms. Girls were being assigned the bulk of the work, with an emphasis on domestic tasks such as serving the food, clearing and washing the plates, sweeping floors and cleaning toilets, while the boys were given more supervisory tasks such as collecting fees for the meals. WFP Senegal has realised that the SMPs could provide a useful entry point for discussing gender roles with students and distributing the tasks in ways that challenge accepted practices.

In Lesotho, discussions were held with project beneficiaries including cooks, school principals or feeding managers, members of schools boards, and other community members. The aim was to better understand the gender dynamics within the SMP programmes, understand any biases, assumptions and concerns held by all engaged in this programme and develop appropriate gender-sensitive solutions that address women's and men's specific needs and addresses gender inequalities to advance future implementation of these programmes.

A key observation was that only women were being considered for the role of cook, even though men also apply for these paid posts. To

create more equal opportunities and avoid reinforcing these gender biases and norms, a new approach has been introduced in some areas for appointing cooks, where they are randomly chosen rather than having to undergo a lengthy registering process. This is viewed as a way to begin changing attitudes about men and boys' roles, build their capacity in non-traditional areas and increase their resilience, and also to support women in some of heavier kitchen tasks, giving them more time to attend to their household and farming work. The interviews conducted as part of the PAL process revealed this approach is appreciated as it is more transparent and gives the same opportunities to men and women.

Who holds the purse strings? Examining gender myths and realities in Malawi's cash and food transfers

In Malawi, the gender advocates programme unit (which includes gender and M&E) and the reports unit wanted to understand better who controls cash and food, both when WFP distributes it, and when people earn or grow it themselves. They collaborated on a large in-depth study of how cash and food transfers influenced gender roles and behaviours during the EMOPs in 2013. The study concluded that some assumptions behind programme designs were not borne out in reality: for example, women and men in general reported a great deal more collaboration over the use of household resources than had been assumed; reports of violence over the use of cash and food were minimal; and WFP cash transfers were seen as shared or neutral household resources, rather than under male control, as had been assumed. The study arrived at several practical recommendations for the re-design of relief responses for future hungry seasons.

The process has informed the approach to the upcoming relief response for 2014/15. The Malawi office has committed to conducting another study to build on the research in 2013-14 as a way to continue making their emergency response more gender-sensitive and build on potential opportunities to empower women.



Female focus group discussion in Mangochi district, Malawi. A woman explains to others how she and her husband make a budget with the cash assistance from WFP.

“The realisation of human rights is an important condition for achieving food security. The notion of the right to food – the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger and malnutrition – is foundational to food security.**”**

3.5 Incorporating rights into programming

The realisation of human rights is an important condition for achieving food security. The notion of the right to food – the right of all human beings to live in dignity, and be free from hunger and malnutrition – is foundational to food security and has been promoted through global agreements such as the Committee for Food Security (CFS) Global Guidelines produced in 2013. Women's rights, enshrined in the Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) should be addressed in their own right as well as being integral to broader understandings of human rights. In WFP, respect for the rights of people receiving assistance is a fundamental aspect of the organisation's Protection Policy and part of ensuring that programmes positively contribute to protection outcomes. PAL activities in all the pilot countries enabled staff and beneficiaries to reflect on women's rights, while in Guatemala discussions led to concrete steps to integrate rights into training programmes.

Raising awareness of rights among women in WFP Guatemala

WFP Guatemala has been implementing nutrition projects with indigenous populations in the western highlands since 2011, including a 'mother-to-mother' community-based education programme. WFP staff and community educators reflected on the limitations



ABOVE
Women from Totonicapán, Guatemala, reflecting on their experience of 'mother-to-mother' groups.

of the education component, which to date has focused on practical aspects such as good hygiene and nutritious foods, without tackling other root causes of malnutrition and poor health, including gender inequality and different expressions of violence against women. As an example they gave the tragic case of a woman who died because she was waiting for permission from her husband to seek medical care. They identified a need to incorporate education on rights, including women and girl's right to health and to be free of violence in all its forms, into their education programmes, both for women who are participating in the mother-to-mother networks, and for men in their communities. The CO Gender Specialist has since developed the content and methodology for training community educators, who in turn train community-based leaders of mother-to-mother groups, and this project is now underway.

3.6 Promoting collective action to enable women's empowerment

It is increasingly recognised that individualised approaches to women's empowerment ultimately fail because they assume women's disadvantage starts and ends in the home. Efforts to enable women to tackle the larger power structures that sustain gender inequality can include building their collective

“Individualised approaches to women’s empowerment ultimately fail because they assume women’s disadvantage starts and ends in the home.”

capacities to engage in markets, challenge oppression, or make claims on governments and local authorities. In relation to food security, some of the more impressive recent examples of women's collective empowerment have been through farmer collectives.²⁴

Within several of the COs, discussions about support to farmer organisations through the P4P (Purchase for Progress) programme identified this as an area in which WFP's work was very likely to be contributing to women's empowerment without acknowledging or measuring this impact, or learning from it.

Observations during the PAL work echoed evidence

that women's participation in farmer's collectives (both single and mixed sex) and other types of groups can contribute to their empowerment in multiple ways. Empowerment effects included building their knowledge, skills and self-confidence, developing social networks which they can draw on in times of need, enhancing their influence over decision making in the organisations which they are part of, and enabling them to access services and support from local government bodies. Even participation in relatively informal groups, such as the mother-to-mother groups in Guatemala (see section 3.5), can have significant positive effects on women's confidence and ability to negotiate food and health-related issues with male relatives. But WFP programmes are typically not framed around these objectives, and monitoring and evaluation thus fails to capture how the collective aspects of women's empowerment may directly or indirectly influence food security in the longer term.

“Women’s participation in farmer’s collectives (both single and mixed sex) and other types of groups can contribute to their empowerment in multiple ways.”

BELOW
Women involved in R4 activities in Senegal.



Sirandou Fall

Promoting collective approaches to resilience and women's empowerment in Senegal

The Rural Resilience Initiative (R4), a comprehensive risk management programme, is being piloted in several areas of Senegal. The programme comprises a set of interventions that target women farmers primarily, including the provision of shared land, seeds and local wells for market gardens; the development of safety nets such as micro-insurance; and support for local women's savings groups through a programme called 'Savings for Change' (SFC). SFC is an initiative by WFP implementing partners Oxfam USA and builds on an existing model of 'tontines', where groups of farmers come together and pool money that can then be disbursed when needed through loans that are repaid with interest. Focus group discussions with women from several

communities revealed that R4 has contributed to women's empowerment in a number of practical and strategic ways. In addition to having increased access to land, seeds and water for irrigation and drinking, women have received training in numeracy, literacy and business. There are also significant time gains for the women as the availability of fresh food and the proximity of the wells meant they no longer have to travel far from home to fetch water or search for food. There is also a reduction in stress as women no longer constantly worry about how they will find food for their children, and the small financial gains from selling their surplus crops mean they are now able to send both male and female children to school.

Going beyond the numbers: promoting women's empowerment in farmer organisations in Guatemala

Relatively early in the P4P initiative, the Guatemala CO designed a gender strategy and action plan which would enable them to meet targets for women's participation. After several years of supporting both mixed-sex and single-sex farmer organisations, staff reflected on the critical elements of the strategy and identified various good practices including: incorporation of gender across all programme components, rather than as a stand-alone activity; participatory gender analysis with farmer organisations as the basis for creating consciousness and developing targeted action plans; and ongoing support for field staff from a gender specialist, to provide advice and build capacity in a hands-on way. Also important has been the formation of Gender Commissions within mixed sex organisations, and Empowerment Commissions in women-only organisations, as a means to ensure that gender and women's empowerment are embedded into organisational thinking and practice. These efforts have not necessarily led to a significant increase in the number of women members in farmer organisation, but the quality of women's participation has changed substantially.



Sally Smith

Women have gone from being largely passive members (or absent altogether) to playing a meaningful role in organisational life, and attitudes to women's capabilities have changed beyond recognition. This has stimulated both economic and social empowerment among women, much of which remains unmeasured by current monitoring indicators.

ABOVE
Using the 'river of life' to document a community-based education programme in Totonicapán, Guatemala.

4 Learning and recommendations about gender mainstreaming in WFP

4.1 The big picture of gender mainstreaming in WFP: the Levy analysis

During the first phase of *Innovations from the Field*, key lessons emerged about WFP's organisational approach to both gender mainstreaming and gender-specific programming. It should be noted that these lessons emerged from the relatively close engagement with the five pilot COs, but they have relevance for organisational policy and planning at WFP Headquarters (HQ). This thinking is consistent

with the assumption that gender mainstreaming from the top down typically fails.

During each country workshop the Levy framework for effective institutionalisation of gender in policy and planning (the 'web of

institutionalisation'),²⁵ was used to identify areas of strength and weakness at country and global levels. The framework comprises 13 domains that fall under four interconnected spheres:

- Beneficiary sphere: are the roles, needs and perspectives of women and men taken into account? What is their level of active participation and influence in WFP interventions, and the representative structures in which they participate?
- Policy sphere: is there a strong WFP gender policy, political commitment on gender mainstreaming and available resources?
- Organisational sphere: who is responsible for gender mainstreaming? What procedures for gender mainstreaming and staff development mechanisms are in place?
- Delivery sphere: how is effective delivery of programmes and projects ensured? What are the provisions for research and theory building on gender mainstreaming, and what methodologies are being used?

The premise of the Levy framework is that 13 domains and spheres need to be strong for organisational effectiveness in gender mainstreaming to be

achieved. Figure 1 consolidates findings from the workshops held in the five pilot countries. It reveals where WFP is felt to be strong (marked in green), medium (amber) and weak (red) with regard to the framework.

The conclusions from this exercise are broadly consistent with the perceptions and experiences of the IDS team in conducting this pilot. These are that:

- The strongest area for gender mainstreaming in WFP, relatively speaking, is political commitment and policymaking at HQ and senior management levels. This makes sense given both internal awareness of the mission-critical nature of gender for WFP's mandate, and the strength of donor commitments to tackling gender inequality, including with respect to food security.
- Gender mainstreaming is present, but at medium strength, with respect to the beneficiary and some domains of the delivery sphere. Some efforts are made to ensure women are properly represented and able to participate and give feedback, but these are not always very sensitive to gender relations or women's capacities and constraints. For instance, the corporate indicator counting numbers of women in food assistance committees fails to recognise that without being organised and supported to do so, women may not be able to raise their concerns against more powerful men in committee meetings. Women may be reluctant to participate if they have to travel or sacrifice time or energy they need for unpaid care responsibilities.
- Methodologies and procedures for assessing vulnerabilities and designing and delivering programmes in gender-sensitive ways are only at medium strength on average, although some countries and sectors are more advanced than others.
- Understanding about how gender fits into the overall mandate and operations of WFP, and why gender is so central to WFP's corporate theory of change, is very weak. The weakness starts with the assessment of the problem that WFP is mandated to address. Because vulnerability assessment methodologies are not informed by

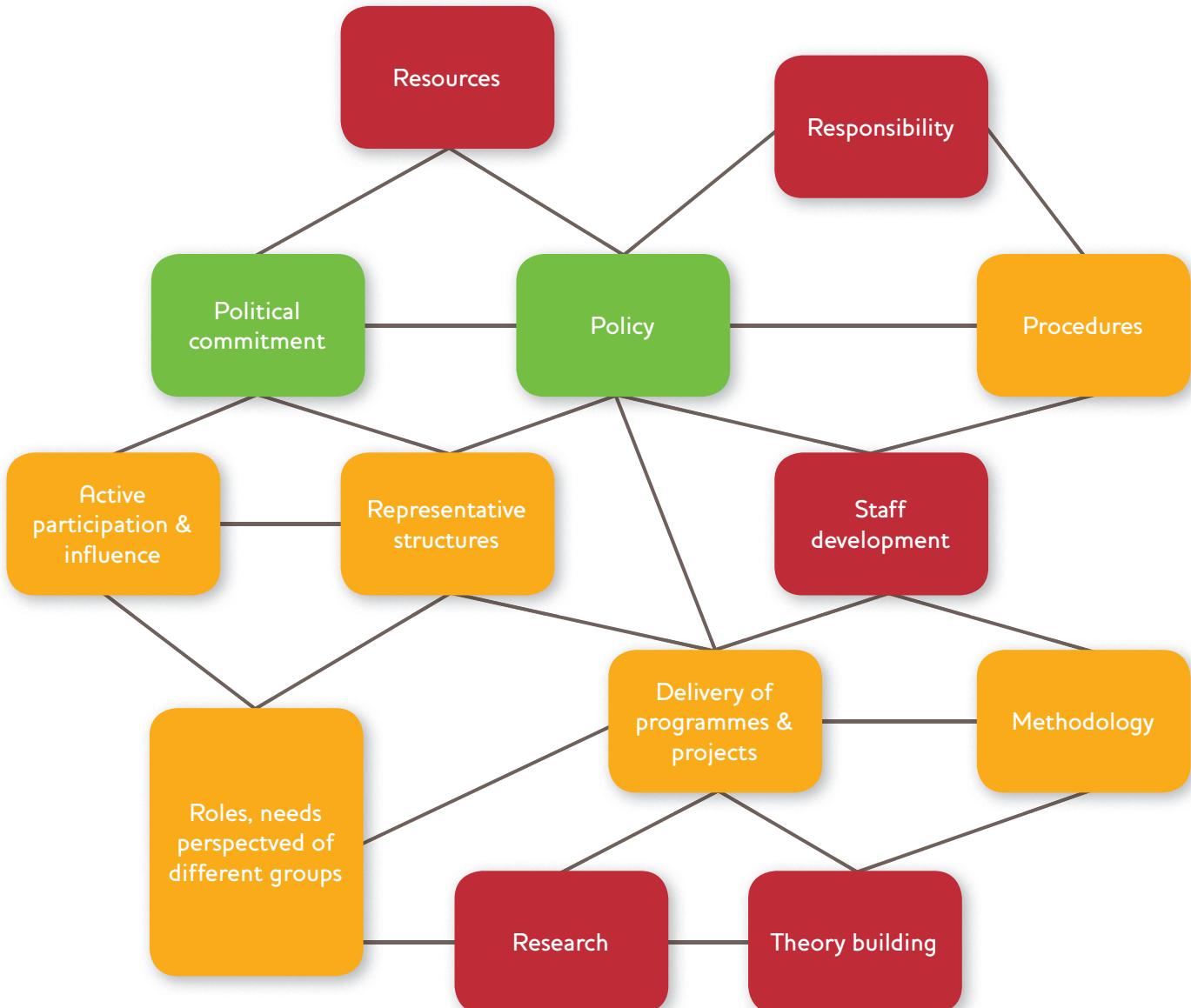
“The strongest area for gender mainstreaming in WFP, relatively speaking, is political commitment and policymaking at HQ and senior management levels.”

an adequate conceptual understanding of why gender matters for programming, they lack a proper empirical evidence base of how unequal gender power relations shape food insecurity in their operational context, why gender equality is so crucial for achieving food security and what gender equality would look like. The failure to operationalise gender mainstreaming effectively starts with the failure of assessment.

- Also very weak is the allocation of resources and responsibilities for gender mainstreaming, and staff development with respect to knowledge and capacities about gender. Improving gender sensitivity in operations typically lacks urgency.

This analysis enabled the CO workshops to identify areas of concern which were then deepened during the PAL activities. These have been developed into the five broad lesson areas below.

Figure 1 Consolidated Levy analysis for Phase One



4.2 Key lessons

There is untapped potential for gender mainstreaming in WFP

The project found large reserves of latent capacity for gender-sensitive programming. In all five countries the IDS team worked with WFP staff members with excellent knowledge and ideas relating to gender-sensitive programming, and the energy and will to integrate this into their work. Country Office staff are often aware of the mission-critical nature of gender mainstreaming and knowledgeable about the gender relations and inequalities in their contexts. Where gender advocates have been appointed they are often experienced and/or motivated to raise programming standards through gender-sensitive action. This knowledge, skill and commitment was reflected in the quality of discussion, insights and ideas generated during the initial PAL workshops.

RIGHT
Focus group discussion on women's empowerment with a group of men in Senegal.



Sirandou Fall

In many cases the ideas for PAL work have been implemented with relatively little time and resources and have enabled staff to explore small but important areas of innovation.

“There is untapped potential for gender mainstreaming in WFP.**”**

In some of the countries there are schemes and programmes with strong potential for developing integrated, gender-sensitive processes. Examples of these are the Innovation Team in Kenya (see box), and P4P's structure of a

central hub coordinating a large number of in-country pilots in order to maximise learning.

However, much of this potential is untapped. There is a lack of consistency in levels of gender expertise between the countries, and typically an over-reliance on the personal initiative of key motivated individuals to champion gender mainstreaming and push gender-focused work forward. When these individuals move on, this often leaves a vacuum of expertise, and a lack of continuity in the innovative processes they have initiated.

The value of providing space to develop and test new ideas in Kenya

Kenya's Innovation Team provides a clear and strong example of a how to create space and time for gender-responsive (or other) programme development. This enables staff to experiment and test new programme approaches, and ensures that there is a systematic approach to learning. To date there has been no major focus on gender, but staff interest has ensured programmes are viewed through a gender lens at all stages of the project cycle. For example the pilot to test a scheme to introduce fresh food vouchers for pregnant and lactating



Sally Smith

Discussing WFP's Cash for Assets programme with a community in Turkana, north-west Kenya. women in Dadaab refugee camp incorporated a Gender and Protection baseline study, which influenced the design of the scheme and the indicators used to monitor results.

“Where gender advocates and field staff are available to work on gender programming, they are often not given the autonomy, time or resources to drive project planning and implementation.**”**

Where gender advocates and field staff are available to work on gender programming, they are often not given the autonomy, time or resources to drive project planning and implementation, and are obliged to work within the rather inflexible existing project boundaries. Nor are there sufficient rewards and incentives to encourage staff to take the initiative and innovate on gender. For example:

- Teams in Malawi and Senegal were exploring ways of making the school meals programmes more effective and gender sensitive by addressing issues of unpaid carework and challenging the gender norms they reproduce, but there are few resources and no mandate to address this in programming
- Staff in Kenya and Guatemala recognise that P4P has generated strong positive impacts for gender relations in households and with respect to community leadership and in markets, but find it difficult to capture or build these into programming with current M&E/programme goals
- Men's involvement in nutrition programmes is recognised as important, but staff lack time and space to address this in a strategic, comprehensive way

In addition, opportunities to learn from and link strategically with partners are being lost. Implementing partners, such as national and international NGOs, often have well-developed expertise and strategies for addressing gender issues. Other partners, including government bodies, may lack capacity but be well placed to ensure WFP impacts are sustained. There is considerable scope for sharing knowledge and developing joint strategies on gender but this apparently does not happen often, particularly with implementing partners, who are often treated more as service providers than strategic partners. There are, however, some notable exceptions, as illustrated by the good practice example from Guatemala in the box above right.

Strong leadership and accountability on gender mainstreaming are critical

The project found leadership to be crucial but uneven, and accountability for gender mainstreaming is discretionary and, at worst, weak. The consolidated Levy framework in Figure 1 shows that WFP is seen to be strong with regard to its gender mainstreaming policy and high-level political commitment to gender-sensitive programming. This

Building alliances and capacity for sustainability in Guatemala

In Guatemala the pilot phase of the P4P programme is coming to an end and staff sought to capitalise on the learning gained as well as ensure that positive gender impacts are sustained. Through the PAL process they identified three steps which need to be taken, with partners at the centre of their plans. First, the development of good practice guidelines and toolkits for strategic partners and participating producer organisations (as well as WFP staff) on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in small producer organisations (based on lessons learned in P4P). Second, building alliances and establishing formal coordination with specific government ministries and local authorities to ensure there is a continuation of support for participating producer organisations beyond the life of P4P. Third, strengthening the Gender/Empowerment Commissions within producer organisations, including enabling them to participate in government-led initiatives for rural development. More generally, the WFP Gender Specialist is working closely with relevant government ministries (particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food) to support their efforts on gender, including assisting with development of strategic frameworks.

included high-level political commitment to tackling gender issues by country governments in partnership with WFP in several instances. However these commitments are not always effectively translated into action at the country level. The *Innovations from the Field* programme found that, although there is a corporate strategy on gender and there has been renewed emphasis on gender in recent years within WFP, this strategy has not been communicated effectively, nor is it widely understood. At the same time, gender mainstreaming is often not being prioritised by COs, despite the existence of the corporate strategy. It is not being seen as mission-critical by all country directors and programme managers. Leadership on gender is uneven and ultimately depends on individual commitment, not institutional imperatives.

There have been some improvements in accountability for gender mainstreaming with the introduction of the UN SWAP/WFP Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework (GMAF, for evaluating institutional performance) and the Gender Marker (for evaluating project proposals). However the importance of these tools is diminished by the reliance on self-reporting against indicators, and there remains no strong internal or external pressure to demonstrate good performance on gender at CO level. Weak accountability on

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Focus group discussion with community members in Turkana, Kenya.



gender mainstreaming is compounded by the following facts:

- There is no strong central mandate to develop coherent programme standards with respect to gender in assessment, programme design or implementation
- There is also a lack of clear guidelines on gender mainstreaming for WFP partners, including governments
- Monitoring and evaluation systems currently track gender outcomes on an almost purely numerical basis, primarily counting numbers of women beneficiaries and committee members – guided by reporting requirements from COs and HQ. However, these figures are only loosely connected to gender-equitable food security goals, whether in terms of outcomes or participation

“There is a general unevenness in the understanding of what gender is and why it matters for WFP’s work.”

- There are no consequences for COs when programmes fail to achieve positive gender outcomes – or when they fail to meet gender and protection standards
- Donors could play a larger role in holding WFP to account on gender, including through resourcing conditionalities, but – with some notable exceptions such as USAID and Gates Foundation – donor priorities on gender do not appear to be influencing CO strategy or performance in any systematic way

Seeing the benefits of strong leadership on gender

Where there is committed and informed leadership in WFP countries alongside support from donors, this has translated into a commitment to gender in programming. For example in Guatemala a senior gender specialist has been given a mandate and resources to improve performance across all WFP programmes and to engage with government departments. According to the Country Director, Mario Touchette, the Canadian government has played a critical role in advancing their work on gender, by both pressing for accountability and providing financial support.

P4P also provides a good example of where leadership, vision and resources have contributed to achieving positive outcomes. After failing to meet objectives on gender in the initial stages, P4P undertook a thorough analysis and devised a gender strategy with core principles that participating countries were expected to adapt to their specific context and translate into gender action plans. Additionally, enough resources were provided to enable pilot countries to ‘try’ new innovations without fear of failure, while ongoing specialist support was provided from Head Offices.

A better general understanding of gender is needed

There is a general unevenness in the understanding of what gender is and why it matters for WFP's work. This is partly about the lack of a shared understanding of what gender means for WFP's overall theory of change and mission. Even when it is considered important, gender mainstreaming is often seen purely as an issue of gender parity in WFP staffing and committees and of making women primary recipients of food entitlements, rather than being a far more comprehensive process of analysis and action involving all processes, people and relationships within the organisation, with beneficiaries and with partners.

The *Innovations from the Field* programme revealed that many staff successfully 'do' gender mainstreaming without labelling it as such; they understand the need to take the local context of gender and other social relations and real-life vulnerabilities into account when they think about how best to design or deliver their programme. Conversely other staff think they are taking a gender-sensitive approach because they are achieving numerical 'targets' by involving women in food assistance committees or as primary entitlement holders, but this is simply one part of what should be a more integrated approach.

Additionally, even though the 2009 Gender Policy stresses that it is mandatory to incorporate gender mainstreaming into all stages of a project cycle, this tends to happen in reactive ways and is dependent on individuals' capacity, commitment and the political will of senior managers in COs. The lack of more comprehensive, systematic gender mainstreaming processes across the project cycle means many chances for smarter programming are missed.

The understanding of what is needed for effective gender-sensitive programming must start with assessments of the problems people face that take into account how their gender shapes their vulnerabilities, their capacities to act, their responses to problems and the opportunities available to them.

Systematic attention to specific gender dimensions and inequalities across the project cycle would mean **all staff and partners at all levels** would require a working knowledge of why and how to take gender into account when:

- Assessing vulnerabilities: some VAM teams displayed excellent knowledge of debates in gender-sensitive indicators in poverty, food security and vulnerability, but this was often not the case. Often gender is being equated with women rather than being framed in terms of gender power relations that also involve men.
- Promoting women's empowerment: women's empowerment is currently being narrowly

equated with women's entitlement to food vouchers or cash, and with their increased financial income from selling surplus crops. Work has been initiated to assess whether putting food and cash in women's hands contributes to their empowerment or increases their access to food. These aspects were among others examined in a joint study between WFP and UNHCR in 2013: 'Examining Protection and Gender in Cash and Voucher Transfers'²⁶ and have also been included in the corporate cash and voucher manual and WFP's Purchase for Progress programmes.

Despite these initiatives, more must be done to ensure that these dimensions are fully integrated across all programmes. Other aspects of women's empowerment likewise need to be systematically and consistently assessed, including their ability to access land and other resources, be free from SGBV, spend less time on unpaid care work if desired and make informed choices. This is important for identifying opportunities to support women's empowerment and ensuring that positive impacts that go beyond what is being counted are not being missed (see section 3.6).

- Designing interventions: no programme design can be gender-sensitive if it does not take into account how it will impact on lives and gender roles. For example, during the PAL work many examples emerged of programmes which have been designed without taking account of the impacts on unpaid care work, which is widely accepted as one of the foundations of gender inequality.



Naomi Hossain

LEFT
Mother and child at the supplementary feeding centre in Malawi.

- Developing delivery mechanisms: gender and protection issues are relatively well grasped within WFP. However, certain gendered assumptions (e.g., that giving cash to women triggers domestic violence, or that all men are financially irresponsible) need to be tested in their operational settings and adjusted as gender relations change in response to programme interventions.
- Staffing programmes: both partners and WFP staff can be trained to be more sensitive to gender in their ways of working. Gender sensitivity does not mean all staff must be women, but that women and men have equal opportunities within programme and organisational structures, and that they are equally equipped to deliver gender-equitable outcomes. Staff should also be sensitive to gender issues, having the capacities to enable and listen to beneficiary feedback in a way that responds to the constraints women may face in complaining or communicating their concerns.
- Monitoring and evaluating: the indicators used to monitor programme performance, as well as for baseline and end of project assessments, rarely do more than count women. Programme evaluations that take gender into account are rare. Very little qualitative assessment of the changes in people's lives is made. The need for more qualitative, gender-responsive indicators is reflected in the case study below.

Identifying the need for more flexible, responsive gender indicators

WFP staff often talk about household decision-making as a key issue for the gendered impact of WFP programmes – but there are no effective indicators with which to monitor or measure this, and understanding of bargaining and cooperative conflict models of households is limited.

In addition the policy of targeting women for cash, vouchers and other interventions is premised on stereotyped assumptions about male behaviour, but this was challenged during focus group discussions. Men interviewed in Senegal insisted they if they were given cash or vouchers they would spend the money only on their families and both men and women said it would be easier if sometimes the men were able to come by themselves to collect food and vouchers because of the time and travel pressures on women. Their husbands were usually obliged to come anyway to carry and transport the goods so they were both out of the house for the whole day and had to find childcare, as well as losing a day's work. It was also noted that there were male as well as female savings groups in Senegal, demonstrating men's capacity for financial planning.



Village elders in Turkana, Kenya, interviewed during PAL study on Cash and Food For Assets.

• As noted in section 3.4, if WFP's programmes are to contribute more effectively to gender equality it is important to avoid replicating gender stereotypes. Assumptions and fixed ideas about gender roles, norms and capacities need to be challenged at the level of project design, and attention should be paid to the way male and female beneficiaries and staff are represented in internal and external information about WFP programmes. In addition to increasing gender awareness among programme staff, communications units need increased capacity and commitment in relation to gender, so they can convey more nuanced messages around gender equality and women's empowerment that go beyond representing women only as victims, mothers and/or entitlement holders.

Creating space for reflecting, listening and learning on gender is crucial

Mainstreaming gender works best when WFP staff have space to reflect, listen, learn – and apply their learning. It was clear from the PAL work that regular, direct contact with beneficiary communities aids understanding of the realities WFP engages with. It helps avoid over-reliance on

unhelpful gender stereotypes and also helps ensure beneficiary feedback enters programme learning cycles. The programme found that Field Monitors and other WFP staff and implementing partners in the field are continually picking up on qualitative gender issues in the course of their work.

The conclusion reached is that there is no need for major new data collection, especially given the already heavy burden of M&E work that Country Offices carry. What is instead needed is space and capacity for M&E and programme staff to make sense of and operationalise the findings from data and from their experiences in the field, and to elevate emerging issues to a more senior level in the organisation if the need arises. In Kenya for example, programme managers discussed introducing an open-ended section into the monthly Sitrep report which is prepared by field staff so they can register gender and protection issues they are concerned about.²⁷ WFP Kenya's Beneficiary Complaints and Feedback Mechanism is another example of space being created for listening and learning (see box on next page). Participating staff appreciated the opportunity for guided reflection and leaning about gender that the *Innovations from the Field* programme offered, and saw the PAL model as a good one to apply elsewhere. They felt the experience had provided much-needed space for reflection and sharing knowledge and experiences. It also enabled them to listen to and learn from people in affected communities.

There is scope for more problem-based learning around gender and food security. In particular space is needed for project staff to reflect on and identify gender aspects of operational challenges. Space is also needed for more direct collaboration with partners beyond a service provider model, including mutual learning about gender (between WFP and partners and between partners). At the same time, greater use should be made of evaluation for improving programme approaches to gender.

Seeking beneficiary feedback to improve programming in Kenya

The Kenya CO has introduced a telephone hotline which beneficiaries can use to access information on WFP programmes they are part of, and to register their comments and concerns. The information generated through the hotline, and actions taken in response are summarised in a brief report and discussed at the monthly management meeting. This relatively simple system has proven highly effective for pinpointing blockages in programme delivery and building accountability to beneficiaries.

Resources are critical for successful gender mainstreaming

If gender mainstreaming is mission-critical, it requires more financial and human resources. Gender advocates and gender advisors with the support of senior management can and do make a big difference in improving understanding of the gender issues and making programming more gender responsive. However, most gender-focused staff currently face severe limitations in terms of their capacity, scope of work, budgets and influence. In the ‘projectised’ culture of WFP, little gets done in the absence of targeted financial resources. Programme budgets rarely take into consideration the true costs of mainstreaming gender and achieving gender-related goals. There is also a lack of resources for the cross-programmatic work needed to build institutional capacity and responsiveness on gender.

It is not only WFP which does not cost gender mainstreaming properly – donors can also be guilty of this. Although many of WFP's donors prioritise gender, they are not always willing to commit the level of resources needed. However, there are exceptions which provide valuable lessons on how to do things differently. The Canadian government has been instrumental in supporting WFP's Guatemala's efforts on gender, most recently with a major new programme under the SUN initiative with gender as one of three headline themes. In this programme around a third of the budget is assigned for gender-related activities, giving the gender specialist substantial scope for expanding her work and influence across the project cycle.

BELOW
UFP staff
participating
in PAL
workshop
activity in
Kenya.



Georgina Aboud



ABOVE
Female focus
group
discussion in
Mangochi
district,
Malawi.

4.3 Recommendations

Optimising latent potential for gender mainstreaming

To make the most of the latent potential for gender mainstreaming in Country Offices, WFP should:

- Optimise existing capacity and enthusiasm around gender among WFP field staff by adequately recognising, utilising and rewarding it. This means including reporting on gender-focused programmes, building on successful initiatives in the Country Strategy and operational innovations, and including gender sensitivity among the indicators of professional staff performance review.
- Ensure Gender Advocates have a clear mandate and adequate time, capacity and resources to fulfil their function effectively. This includes ensuring their work on gender is prioritised over other responsibilities. While there are excellent reasons for the gender advocate role to be in combination with other professional functions (e.g., VAM staff, Programme Officer, DCD), gender advocates should also have a clear portion of their time allocated to gender work. Their annual work programmes should include clear strategies for advocacy at the Country Office level. It is preferable for gender advocates to be recruited at relatively senior levels. Men with gender analytical capacities and expertise should also be encouraged to apply for such roles, so that gender is not seen as exclusively the responsibility of female staff.
- There is also a great deal of scope to engage more strategically with CO partners on gender issues. Many of WFP's implementing partners (such as international and national NGOs) are very experienced and advanced with respect to gender issues. WFP can do more to build on that capacity,

to build common objectives and strategies on gender on an equal partner basis. This can involve both learning from and requiring higher standards of partners with respect to gender-sensitive programme delivery.

Strengthening leadership and accountability for gender

To build on WFP's core strengths in political commitment to and policies on gender it is necessary to:

- Build a robust business case for why gender mainstreaming is mission critical for WFP. In the pressured atmosphere of emergency and humanitarian aid work it is not surprising that some senior managers dismiss gender as a low priority or lack the time or space to engage with it as a core WFP concern. As part of its gender strategy, WFP should build an authoritative, succinct account or business case of why gender matters for WFP. This may mean commissioning cost-benefit analyses of key areas of WFP's operations to convince sceptics of the contribution to the corporate results framework or of the monetary value of taking gender into account. However, WFP is part of the UN system, and gender inequality must be viewed within the human rights framework and not merely as instrumental, contributing to more efficient outcomes. The business case should also review WFP's role in contributing to gender equality globally.
- Allocate resources and authority to communicate this effectively to all senior managers. WFP staff respect clear messages coming from the leadership. If the mission-critical nature of gender for WFP is communicated through a well-resourced strategy, backed by the authority of senior management at HQ, this has an excellent chance of being heard and internalised as the logic of gender-sensitive operations.
- Strengthen existing accountability frameworks and indicators to ensure senior managers are held responsible for meaningful outcomes on gender at the CO level. More can be done to ensure senior management is held and holds itself to account, in particular at CO level. Self-reporting on gender indicators, for instance, can be supplemented by external reviews. Senior managers' performance reviews can include their efforts to advance gender mainstreaming across project cycles.

Strengthening understanding of the gender issues

There are many entry points for improving understanding of the gender issues across WFP, including through initiatives such as the present programme. For example:

- Investment in staff capacities on gender through training; identification of gender focal points within each section (e.g., for M&E and VAM; logistics and procurement; each of the main programmes); and communications units.
- Rethinking of the VAM approach and process, including an expert review of VAM staffing and processes for gender-sensitivity; consideration of alternative vulnerability conceptual frameworks; and development of more gender-sensitive tools (indicators, questionnaire or more participatory methodologies).
- Reviewing quantitative monitoring indicators and experimenting with participatory and qualitative indicators to better capture gender dimensions, impacts and changes (or lack of change) in equality.
- Allocating a percentage of programme budgets for evaluation, mainstreaming gender through the Terms of Reference for evaluations and appointing adequately skilled, experienced and gender-sensitive evaluation teams.
- Building capacity on gender and ensuring core staff are skilled in gender analysis to not only to support VAM and M&E but also to be part of proposal preparation, programme design, reporting and communications. Gender specialists are increasingly being involved in proposal or report writing or communications work because of the growing demand from donors. Gender

Capacity Advisors from the IASC are helping to fill a capacity gap, but the ongoing need for specialist skills is not adequately recognised within WFP. The Gender Policy highlights WFP's commitment to developing staff capacity on gender mainstreaming and gender analysis.

Resourcing gender mainstreaming

- WFP should develop organisational understanding of the true costs of gender mainstreaming, including costs for achieving gender-related goals within specific programmes and costs for cross-programmatic work to build institutional capacity and responsiveness on gender. There should be a standard requirement that all programme budgets include specific lines for gender-related costs under each programme activity (i.e. as a cross-cutting theme).
- Many of WFP's donors treat gender as a priority, but they are inconsistent in the extent to which they require WFP to make meaningful progress, at least at the CO level. Certainly it seems that donors could demand more in terms of gender-sensitive design and results reporting. However, they need also to recognise that gender mainstreaming involves staff time and resources for a range of activities. They should therefore encourage WFP to include a true costing in programme budgets, and be willing to cover these costs in recognition of the important of gender mainstreaming to the achievement of WFP's mission.



Annex one

Key inquiry themes, questions and methodologies for the PAL activities in each country are outlined below:

Guatemala

Theme 1: Building capacity for gender analysis among WFP staff to improve programming

Questions: What are the most appropriate strategies for building capacity for gender analysis among WFP staff responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating projects, in order to advance progress on gender mainstreaming?

Methodologies: Gender Specialist evaluated the capacity of all staff and developed terms of reference (TORs) for an external gender specialist to develop a training package specifically for the needs of WFP Guatemala. An evaluation of the training will be conducted.

Theme 2: Improving project design and M&E in nutrition programmes

Questions: How can a gender focus that goes beyond only working with women be factored into the design, implementation and monitoring of nutrition projects?

Methodologies: Review of logframe and baseline M&E indicators for nutrition project to identify improvements that can be made in future nutrition programming.

Theme 3: Enhancing the participation of women in all WFP projects

Questions: Inclusion of women is a corporate requirement in WFP but the Guatemala CO has struggled to achieve this across all its programmes. What can be learned from good practices developed in P4P, as well as from partner organisations and participants in WFP projects themselves?

Methodologies: Four regional workshops were held to gather together WFP staff, partners, project participants and local authorities, to jointly identify good practices for increasing the participation of women in WFP programmes. The good practices are being documented and shared across WFP and with other relevant stakeholders.

Kenya

Theme 1: Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation: learning from Fresh Food Voucher programme

Questions: What are some key findings from this M&E data and how useful have the innovations been for improved tracking and understanding of gender outcomes?

Methodologies: Review of M&E data based on qualitative follow up study

equality, and how can these be adapted for future programming?

Methodologies: P4P staff have reviewed project reports and M&E data to document gender impacts and reflect on how these were achieved. The 'P4P story' is being told using Prezi, with the aim of testing this engaging visual format as a knowledge sharing device in WFP.

Theme 4: Deepening understanding of gender relations in Food for Assets (FFA) and Cash for Assets (CFA) programmes

Questions: How can CFA and FFA take more gender-aware approaches, ensuring they do not increase the burden on women, and that men are more engaged and supportive of the projects?

Methodologies: Field studies in two parts of Kenya investigated gender dynamics in FFA and CFA communities and provided a nuanced account of gender impacts. The team also explored the use of video as a way to deepen understanding of gender relations in WFP.

Theme 2: Communicating with the field: exploring complaints and feedback mechanisms

Questions: What are the communication needs and preferences of different groups of beneficiaries?

Methodologies: Field studies were carried out with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in two regions of Kenya to explore their information needs and preferred channels for accessing information.

Theme 3: Embedding good practice: from pilots to programmes: the case of P4P

Questions: Which elements of the P4P approach have been most important for promoting gender

Lesotho

Theme 1: Lessons learned from the Positive Deviance programme

Questions: To what extent were men involved in the nutrition awareness raising activities and the impacts of their involvement?

Methodologies: Interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries and WFP partners who were involved in the Positive Deviance programme.

Theme 2: Engaging men in school meal preparation

Questions: What gendered assumptions and stereotypes inform the appointment of cooks for school feeding programmes and how can these practices be more gender equitable?

Methodologies: Interviews with different stakeholders, with analysis informing case studies for sharing within Lesotho and WFP more broadly

Theme 3: Implementing gender-sensitive lessons and recommendations in the new DRR programme

Questions: What is needed to minimise the risks and maximise the benefits of DRR programmes, and ensure they promote gender equality?

Methodologies: Preparation of a gender-sensitive protection strategy for Lesotho

Malawi

Theme 1: Gender case study of WFP Malawi's lean season response.

Questions: How is decision-making and control over resources organised within a household and does WFP food/cash assistance make a difference? How does targeting and sensitisation impact the identified difference, if any?

Methodology: A case study involving learning from the experience of 300 beneficiaries through 42 focus group discussions in two districts.

Theme 2: Addressing the burden on women in school feeding

Questions: What approaches are needed to recognise women's unpaid time and labour on the school meals programme, and how can the hard work and hazards be reduced?

Methodologies: informal discussions, learning and sharing by School Meal programme officers. Raising awareness of the issues with senior managers in WFP Malawi and with government partners. The value of the women's volunteer work and of encouraging men to participate in meal preparation

has been raised in community sensitisations and school trainings.

Theme 3: Identifying opportunities and constraints for involving men in nutrition programmes

Questions: To what extent do assumptions and stereotypes about men's behaviour inform current programming, and how can this be addressed? How can men be involved more effectively in nutrition activities?

Methodologies: Focus group discussions etc

Theme 4: Protection issues in emergency operations

Questions: What risks of violence do women face in refugee camps and how can these be reduced?

Methodologies: Revisiting the Standard Operating Procedures to identify how they can minimise the risk of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation in refugee camps

Senegal

Theme 1: Analysing the gender implications of School Feeding Programmes

Questions: To what extent does the involvement of men, women, boys and girls in the planning and implementation of activities related to school feeding result in improved outcomes and gender equality?

Methodologies: Focus group discussions with separate groups of male and female students, and adult members of school feeding committees in three schools, using participatory methods such as the River of Life.

Theme 2: Mapping benefits and constraints for men's involvement in nutrition activities

Questions: In what situations are men most likely to take a key role in assuring the nutritional health of their children?

Methodologies: Focus group discussions with separate and mixed groups of women and men. Life story analysis.

BELOW
PAL workshop
activities.

Theme 3: Analysing the gender implications of the Rural Resilience Programme (R4)

Questions: What are some of the short-term effects of strategies in terms of addressing inequalities in access to strategic and practical resources ?

Methodologies: Focus group discussions using participatory methods such as drawing 'before' and 'after' pictures of women who were engaged in R4.

Theme 4: Analysing the gender implications of Cash and Voucher Processes

Questions: How far has the representation of diverse social groups (including men and women) in targeting committees contributed to the success of cash and vouchers initiatives ?

Methodologies: Focus group discussions, mapping exercises, questionnaires.



Endnotes

¹ Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2010) *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture, Closing the Gender Gap for Development*, New York: FAO

² Holmes, R. et al (2009) 'Gender vulnerabilities, food price shocks and social protection responses'. ODI *Background Note*. London: Overseas Development Institute; Jiggins, J. (1986) 'Women and Seasonality: Coping with Crisis and Calamity', *IDS Bulletin* 17 (3), Brighton:IDS

³ Smith, L.; Ramakrishnan, U., Ndiaye, A., Haddad, L. and Martorell, R. (2003) *The Importance of Women's Status for Child Nutrition in Developing Countries, Research Report No. 3*, Washington: IFPRI

⁴ R. Meinzen-Dick et al (2011) 'Gender: A Key Dimension Linking Agricultural Programs to Improved Nutrition and Health', *Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health 2020 Conference Brief 9*, Washington: IFPRI; IDS (2012) *Food Security Insights no. 82 'Innovative approaches to gender and food security'*, Brighton:IDS

⁵ Gender refers here to socially constructed roles, behaviours, attributes, aptitudes and relative power associated with being female or male (Esplen, E.(2009) *Gender and Care, BRIDGE Cutting Edge Overview Report*, Brighton: IDS.). According to the WFP, gender equality reflects the equality of men and women under the law, an equal sharing of power, equality of opportunities, including equality in access to human assets (health, education, etc.) and other productive assets (land, information, financial resources), equal rewards for work of equal value, equality of voice including political representation.

⁶ WFP (2002) *Gender Policy (2002 – 2007): Enhanced Commitments to Women, to Ensure Food Security, Executive Board Third Regular Session, 21- 25 October, Rome: WFP*

⁷ In one example, a former Country Office Director described how nutrition training was being given only to women in Bangladesh, on the assumption that women were responsible for purchasing food. In fact, in that particular cultural context, men do the food shopping, because of customary constraints on women's mobility.

⁸ Five background papers were prepared: Engaging men and boys in effective hunger responses; Identifying effective modalities for women farmers' groups; Addressing women's unpaid care-work; Exploring the potential risks and benefits of making women food entitlement holders; Addressing the needs and concerns of young women and men.

⁹ These countries provide a 'window' on the diverse contexts where WFP works, but not the full picture. As such, we would aim to include countries from Asia and the Middle East during a second phase of the programme.

¹⁰ A third country visit was carried out to Senegal, to provide additional hands-on support.

¹¹ WFP (2013), *Protection in Practice: Food Assistance with Safety and Dignity*, Rome: WFP

¹² See for example BRIDGE (forthcoming 2014) *Gender and Food Security, BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack*, Brighton: IDS; FAO (2007), *Gender-based violence and livelihoods interventions: focus on populations of humanitarian concern in the context of HIV*, *Guidance Note*, Rome: FAO

¹³ WFP (2011) *Enhancing prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence in the context of food assistance in displacement settings*, Rome: WFP

¹⁴ There is a vast literature on the extent of unpaid care work, and the gendered divisions of labour in different country contexts. Time use studies – surveys measuring how much time men, women and children spend on different daily tasks – consistently prove that women a) work more hours than men on b) unremunerated work on family businesses and on c) unpaid care work, on which men typically spend a fraction of the hours spent by women. For data from countries around the world, see Budlender, D. (2010) *What do Time Use Surveys Tell us about Unpaid Care Work*, Geneva: UNRISD and Esplen, E. (2009) *Gender and Care, BRIDGE Cutting Edge Report*, Brighton: IDS

¹⁵ The 'recognise, reduce, redistribute' formula for addressing gender inequalities arising from women's unpaid care work was first defined by Diane Elson at a UNDP workshop.

¹⁶ Esplen, E. (2006) *Engaging Men in Gender Equality: Positive Strategies and Approaches, Overview and Annotated Bibliography, BRIDGE Bibliography No. 15*, Brighton: IDS

¹⁷ Cornwall, A. (2000) 'Missing Men? Reflections on Men, Masculinities and Gender in GAD', *IDS Bulletin* 31. 2, Brighton: IDS

¹⁸ Studies have shown that fathers who are positively engaged in the lives of their children are less likely to be depressed, to commit suicide, or to be violent towards their wives. They are more likely to be involved in community work, to be supportive of their partners, and to be involved in school activities (see Morrell, R. (2003) 'Youth, Fathers and

Masculinity in South Africa Today', *Agenda*, Special Focus on Gender, Culture and Rights).
<http://www.xyonline.net/sites/default/files/Morrell,%20Youth,%20Fathers.pdf>

¹⁹ Barker, G., Ricardo, C. and Nascimento, M. (2007) *Engaging Men and Boys in Changing Gender-based Equity in Health*, Geneva: WHO and Promundo

²⁰ WFP Gender Policy, 2009: page 7.

²¹ SUN is a unique Movement founded on the principle that all people have a right to food and good nutrition. It unites people—from governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and researchers—in a collective effort to improve nutrition. Within the SUN Movement, national leaders are prioritising efforts to address malnutrition. Countries are striving to put the right policies in place, collaborating with partners to implement programmes with shared nutrition goals, and mobilising resources to effectively scale up nutrition, with a core focus on empowering women (<http://scalingupnutrition.org/about>).

²² Kabeer, N. (1999) Resources, Agency, Achievement: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment, in *Development and Change*, Vol. 30, UK: Wiley; Batliwala, S. and Dhanraj, D. (2004) Gender Myths that Instrumentalise Women: A View from the Indian Frontline, In *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 34, Issue 4, Brighton: IDS

²³ See Cornwall, A., Harrison, E. and Whitehead, A. Gender Myths and Feminist Fables: the Struggle for Interpretive Power in Gender and Development, In *Development and Change*, Vol. 38, Issue 1, The Hague: International Institute of Social Studies.

²⁴ Baden, S. (2013) Women's Collective Action: Unlocking the Potential of Agricultural Markets, *Oxfam Research Reports*, Oxfam International

²⁵ C. Levy. (1996) 'The Process of Institutionalising Gender in Policy and Planning: the web of institutionalisation', *DPU Working Paper No 74*, London: Development Planning Unit, University College London

²⁶ Berg, M., Mattinen, H. and Pattugalan, G. (2013) *Examining protection and gender in cash and voucher transfers, Case Studies of the WFP and the Office of the United Nations high Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*, Rome: WFP and UNHCR

²⁷ This was an outcome of the Kenya CO's PAL on Cash and Food for Assets projects, as reported in section 3.1.

The findings and recommendations for this report are drawn largely from
Participatory Action Learning activities conducted between September 2013
and September 2014 by WFP country staff, with support from IDS.



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