



Food Security Cluster and Global Nutrition Cluster



Sri Lanka

The Food Security Cluster (FSC) and the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) exist to address issues of food availability, access, and utilization during humanitarian crises, and to safeguard or improve the nutritional status of emergency-affected populations. The FSC is co-led by FAO and WFP, while the GNC has UNICEF as its agency lead.^{13 14}

GENDER EQUALITY IN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

The FSC says that if women have the same access to skills, resources and opportunities as men, they will be powerful drivers in the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. It draws direct lines between food security, nutrition, and rural poverty, and emphasizes the imperative of integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, biodiversity, and women, peace and security initiatives.

The FSC coordinates and advocates for the support of local institutions dealing with longer term needs in sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, and the provision of basic social services. Gender inequalities in food production and land tenure remain, as well as uneven gender power dynamics in household decision making as it relates to nutrition, money, and division of labour.

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FOOD SECURITY AND GLOBAL NUTRITION CLUSTERS

- Gender analysis of access to food distributions and/or food vendors can provide crucial information to do no harm or even advance gender equality. For example, are women able to get to food distribution points by walking? Do girls and boys take part in accessing food distributions? When do food distributions take place? Are the items distributed too heavy for people to carry home? Are women or other vulnerable groups literate and able to understand distribution processes? Are women allowed to handle cash or vouchers in the household?;
- Food security committees work, especially when they strive for gender parity and, even better, include women and girls in leadership positions, supporting their meaningful participation;
- Food preparation is a vital role in displacement camps or communities. This needs to be valued in monetary terms, and when women take on the role they must be compensated;
- The type of cooking instruments communities have access to can impact the lives of women and girls (i.e. having access to fuel versus firewood may save cooking time and allow for women to participate in other activities); and
- Cooking demonstrations/trainings on nutrition that use local foods have been successful when offered to both men and women.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Empower women in agriculture, value chains, and trade through gender market analysis, partnerships with women's coops or savings groups, land tenure advocacy, and promoting women's and men's shared decision making and control over household finances;
- Analyse power dynamics in access and control over food and nutrition. For example, do women and girls get access to enough protein? Are women's and girls' meals or types of food deprioritized when resources are scarce? Do orphans or unaccompanied minors receive adequate food?;
- Avoid spontaneous separations between children and their families by ensuring that all children's nutritional needs are met and that unaccompanied children do not receive substantially better food than children living with their families; and
- Programs must be adapted and appropriate for the context and the community. Diverse members of a community should be consulted on types of food they want (what is traditionally nutritious for them, prohibitions, what they are used to cooking), and asked whether food, cash, or a combination is preferred. These questions can be brought to a community through a diverse and representative food security committee that includes women of varying ages in leadership/decision-making roles.