

GUIDANCE NOTE 7

Gender Marker

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) **Gender Marker is a tool** that is used to code humanitarian Sector Response Plans (SRPs) on a 0-2 scale based on programming design. This will be applied to each of the country operation's SRPs under the 3RP. A sector response that is designed well and intentionally addresses the needs and capacities of women, girls, men and boys, be it a resilience development activity or humanitarian activity, has the best chance of being implemented in a way that assists all of these groups to improve their lives.

The codes tell whether or not a SRP is designed well enough to ensure that women, girls, men and boys will benefit equally from it. If the activity has potential to generate gender equality results, the marker predicts whether the gender results are likely to be limited or significant.

A gender code is assigned based on three critical components: 1) there is gender analysis in the needs assessment that provides relevant sex and age-disaggregated data and gives insight into local gender issues 2) this needs assessment is used to identify sector responses and activities and 3) gender-related outputs or performance indicators. There has been a high level of donor interest in the IASC Gender Marker.

Gender Analysis of Needs Activities Outcomes

| Gender Marker | Description |
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| Gender Code 0 | Gender is not reflected in any component of the Sector Response Plan. There is risk that the activity will unintentionally nurture existing gender inequalities or deepen them. In principle, the Code 0 is used until a project has been properly assessed. |
| Gender Code 1 | The Sector Response Plan is designed to contribute in some limited way to gender equality. Gender dimensions are meaningfully included in only one or two of the three essential components: needs assessment, sector responses and performance indicators. |
| Gender Code 2a Gender Mainstreaming | The Sector Response Plan is designed to contribute significantly to gender equality. The different needs of women, girls, boys and men have been analyzed and integrated well in all three essential components: the needs assessment, sector responses and performance indicators. |
| Gender Code 2b Targeted Actions | The principal purpose of the activity is to advance gender equality. The entire activity either: a) Targets women, girls, boys and men who have special needs or suffer from discrimination b) Focuses all activities on building gender-specific services or more equal relations between women and men. <i>It is unlikely that this code will apply to any Sector Response Plan since each sector aims to respond to the aims of women, girls, boys and men.</i> |

It is the responsibility and accountability of Sector Leads to advance gender equality in their respective areas. All sectors should therefore have a gender marker code for the overall sector plan. Sectors may wish to have a gender marker code at the output level, but these will not be published in the 3RP plan. Very few sectors will be eligible to use Code N/A, and there is NO code “Not Specified”.

Sector process for Gender Marker:

- Prior to the design phase, the Sector Leads would contact and inform Gender Focal Points and GenCap Advisers about the process and support-needs/expectations in terms of project review (re Gender Marker)¹.
- During the planning phase, GenCap Advisers will regularly discuss with sector leads the development of the sector plan.
- After reviewing the first draft of the plan GenCap Advisers will provide a matrix with comments and recommendations for revision of Gender Marker codes for each sector to Sector Leads and Agency Gender Focal Points.
- It is the responsibility of Sector Leads to, where necessary, strengthen gender mainstreaming in their sector plans.
- Sector reviewing teams should consider GenCap comments and whether these have been incorporated. It is therefore crucial for GenCap to participate in initial discussions and planning/review meetings so that members are clear on Gender Markers expectations.
- Revised plans can be sent back to GenCap for a second review. Further comments can be made and Gender Marker codes revised in the matrix.
- The GenCap’s final matrix/comment sheet is shared with ALL Sector Leads so they are aware which projects in which sectors need attention. Sector Leads are asked to review and ensure that only ACCURATE codes have been entered in the system.
- Codes are finalized at the country level after consultations and clearance at country level.

Gender mainstreaming means the distinct needs capacities and contributions of women, girls, men and boys are integrated in a meaningful way in the three critical components of the SRP: the needs assessment, sector responses and performance indicators. These activities code 2a. Examples of gender mainstreamed activities for each sector appear in the sector-specific Gender Marker tip sheets posted on the web portal.

A Sector Response Plan (SRP) designed well enough to warrant a good gender code (2a) must be based on gender analysis which is the engine for ensuring gender is addressed throughout the activity (gender mainstreaming). This means exploring women’s as well as men’s needs and the different risks they face, the various roles and activities they undertake, their coping skills and ideas on solving problems. The most reliable information on the different realities facing males and females will come from the women, girls, boys and men themselves in consultations segregated by sex and age (whether by focus groups or individual interviews) and facilitated by a same-sex facilitator. A well-designed activity will be grounded in activity teams listening to the diversity of male and female voices, both young and old.

Women, girls, boys and men have immediate **“practical”** survival needs particularly in humanitarian crises. Most practical needs arise from inadequate living conditions. They include access to safe water, food, adequate housing and personal safety. Women, girls, boys

¹ Ideally, the Protection Sector should appoint a Gender/Protection Focal Point to each Sector in order to support the process.

and men also have longer-term “**strategic**” needs and interests. These often focus on having choices, mobility and power to shape their own lives. Men and women, girls and boys, share some, but not all, practical and strategic needs. It is especially important to understand and respond to their *different* needs that arise from the division of labour and responsibilities between males and females as well as from women’s subordinate position in society.

Both practical and strategic needs can, and wherever possible should be, addressed in gender mainstreamed activities (code 2a).

The gender marker is a sector tool. The following steps can improve the capacity of your sector to incorporate gender equality measures:

1. Sector leads/coordinators ensure that gender equality is a priority in the SRP and is visible in all plan elements. It is important to ensure gender issues are identified and addressed in the SRP. The SRP provides a foundation for the design of activities and also demonstrates thorough integration of gender issues.
2. Build capacity of sector members and activity partners to design gender-responsive activities that feed into the SRP through using the Gender Marker. Use the sector-specific tip sheets and the how-to-code tip sheet so that partners can practice coding their own activities. Field experience already shows that this practice helps teams see how to strengthen the gender dimensions of their activity design.
3. Explore and facilitate links for sector partners with a gender specialist who is familiar with the gender marker and can answer questions.
4. Train the Peer Review Panel on how to assign gender codes in advance. Coding must be quick, easy and accurate during the time-pressed vetting process. Use the how-to-code tip sheet as a guide and practice coding.
5. Provide the Review Panel with contact details of the Gender Marker Focal Point who will be available to help resolve any coding confusion during the vetting.
6. Advise the Sector Chairs on the assigned gender code for the SRP and provide suggestions on how to improve (if applicable).
7. A GenCap Advisor, UNDP Gender Regional Advisor or Focal Point will review the codings for Sector Response Plans and provide feedback to the sector coordinators about to meaningfully incorporate gender equality measures (see above).
8. **The Gender Marker codes will be recorded in the 3RP documents.**

The responsibility for accurate gender coding rests with the Peer Review Panel. The gender code will be inserted into a dedicated ‘Gender Marker’ field in the 3RP Template.

It is essential that the gender code be accurate. The Inter-Agency Task Force or equivalent Refugee Heads of Agency Meeting will ensure that each Peer Review Panel has verified the gender code for each Sector Response Plan. The GenCap Activity will verify coding and offer support where needed to consider how to incorporate gender equality measures into the SRPs.

Country operations are encouraged to review the performance indicators at the Mid-Year Review for indications of equitability of access to resources across sex and age.

Tip sheets for sectors on how to code using the Gender Marker are available on the Syria Refugee Response web portal and are featured on <http://humanitarianresponse.info>, including <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/philippines/document/gender-marker-tip-sheets>