

INTER-AGENCY HUMANITARIAN
EVALUATION ON

**GENDER
EQUALITY**

AND THE EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

COMPANION PIECE

REVIEW OF PROGRESS:

MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS INTO THE HUMANITARIAN, DEVELOPMENT, AND PEACE NEXUS AGENDA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Review was commissioned by the Management Group for the [Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation \(IAHE\) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls \(GEEWG\)](#) of 2020, which focused on gender mainstreaming in the humanitarian programme cycle. The Review identifies constraints that need to be addressed to achieve greater inclusion of GEEWG in the triple nexus and suggests practical measures to be undertaken to this end.

A team from KonTerra conducted the Review.

Acknowledgements

The Review Team would like to thank the staff of OCHA in New York, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Management Group, the Advisory Group members, and others - in particular our colleagues in Somalia, the DRC, and Sudan – whose time and participation in the Review, the support they provided, the information and documentation they shared, has formed a key part of the analysis.

The authors would like to thank the Review managers, key informant interviewees, and participants at a validation workshop in January 2021, for their time and excellent support.

Review Team [The KonTerra Group]

Tony Beck

Rutendo Chabikwa

Ofelia Garcia

Review Management

OCHA Review Managers: Kelly David, Anne Danker, Verena Lauer

Review Management Group: Caitlin Shannon (CARE), Hicham Daoudi (UNFPA), Henri van den Idsert (UNHCR), Carlotta Tincati (UNICEF), Mari Honjo (WFP)

KonTerra Management

KonTerra Review Manager: Belén Díaz

Quality Assurance: Terrence Jantzi - The KonTerra Group

The KonTerra Group - 700 12th St NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA

Disclaimer

The contents and conclusions of this Review report reflect the opinion of the authors, and not necessarily those of the United Nations, OCHA, donors, or other stakeholders.

Final: April 2021

Executive Summary

About the Review of Progress on Mainstreaming Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls into the Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus Agenda

Scope

In 2019, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) Steering Group launched an [evaluation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls](#) (GEEWG). Key informants indicated that GEEWG is not yet adequately considered within the new nexus processes. Subsequently, the IAHE Management Group commissioned a light Review to analyse the state of gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus, and entry points for helping humanitarian stakeholders to strengthen programming linkages with development and peace-building actors, in support of longer-term gender transformative initiatives. The Review is thus intended to: 1) make suggestions to Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) partners on possible entry points for gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus, and 2) present for consideration further initiatives required to deepen understanding and action to achieve this end.

Review questions

The Review sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the key policy, governance, resource, or other constraints that need to be overcome to achieve greater inclusion of GEEWG considerations in planning and implementing the nexus agenda?
- What are some of the immediate and medium-term practical measures that IASC governance can undertake to address these constraints?

Use

The main users of the Review are intended to be the: Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, UN Sustainable Development Group, individual UN agencies, NGOs and research bodies working on the triple nexus. The actions presented for consideration to these bodies are in support of enabling operationalization at the country level.

Methodology

The Review's scope is global and covers the 2015 to 2020 period. It was conducted by external independent consultants between October 2020 and February 2021. It included a desk review of some 100 documents, 33 key informant interviews at both HQ and country levels, and light, country level consultations in the DRC, Somalia, and Sudan.

A validation workshop with 25 participants, including most key informant interviewees, was held in January 2021 to discuss the main findings and actions for consideration, and input from its participants was integrated into this report as appropriate.

Review findings, conclusions, and actions for consideration

There is broad consensus that promoting GEEWG is key to achieving each of the individual elements of the triple nexus. Given the recognized importance of GEEWG to the three nexus sectors, it makes intuitive sense that GEEWG should be a central part of also achieving the nexus itself, and for ensuring linkages between the three elements. However, the international system is in new territory when considering promoting gender mainstreaming into the nexus process in its current iteration.

The need for a clearer system-wide understanding of what the triple nexus itself means in practice, and for clarification of what gender mainstreaming in the nexus process means, offers an opportunity. There are important precedents in the UN system of gender providing similar clarification: the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) and the UN-Country Team (UNCT) Performance Indicators were the first effective systematic system-wide accountability frameworks introduced in the UN, and offer an important precedent for gender mainstreaming in the nexus process, because they clarified on a practical level what UN resolutions and the UN system-wide policy on gender mainstreaming meant, as well as what UN accountability to this end looks like.

The opportunity is therefore that focusing on a cross-cutting theme such as GEEWG could help clarify for the system what the nexus means in practice, as well as making clearer what gender mainstreaming means in the nexus process. Additionally, several areas identified as the nexus “glue” linking humanitarian, development and peace initiatives are also of particular importance in relation to gender mainstreaming, including cash transfers, social protection and localization, which adds to the argument for a specific focus on GEEWG. **Further, better understanding what gender mainstreaming in nexus processes looks like could enable a better understanding what transformative change in the context of the triple nexus means.**

Main Finding 1 There is very limited discussion of GEEWG in triple nexus documents and processes. This absence is substantially greater than in other UN processes, where there has been an improvement in gender mainstreaming over the last 10 years. Light country level consultations found that key humanitarian, development and peace planning documents inadequately reflect GEEWG in collective outcomes. And further that there was: a gap between gender analysis and the formulation of collective outcomes; very limited focus on gender as an area that can support transformative change; and consensus on the need for gender-sensitive needs assessments.

Main Finding 2 There is no strategic vision and/or overarching framework for mainstreaming gender into the triple nexus process. Without this, initiatives are less likely to be coherent, coordinated and add up to more than the sum of their parts.

Main Finding 3 UN inter-agency coordination structures at headquarters and the country levels examined do not adequately promote gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process, and without this coordination, progress is likely to be limited.

In relation to these main findings, there were two other findings:

- Reflection of gender in the main guidance documents is often unspecific – guidance is not adequate to give non-gender specialists a solid understanding of what mainstreaming gender in the triple nexus means in practice.
- The literature which includes a focus on GEEWG and the triple nexus concentrates on four areas: localization, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Women Peace and Security (WPS), and joint needs assessments.

Constraints to strengthened gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process are as follows:

- There is a **lack of capacity and resources** towards this end.
- The **lack of a strategic vision and/or overarching strategic plan** as to what gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus means, and how it can be operationalized, hinders progress in this area.
- The way in which the triple nexus/New Way of Working is **conceptualized as a somewhat technical process** led in country tends to exclude cross-cutting themes as gender equality.
- **Coordinating bodies** – including the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration – have not to date paid adequate attention to mainstreaming gender in the triple nexus.
- **Existing inter-agency gender accountability frameworks** at headquarters and country-level do not cover the triple nexus.

Given the findings of this Review, there is considerable work to be done to promote strengthened mainstreaming in the triple nexus process.

ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION 1: Coordination

The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) should establish a resourced two-year Task Force to coordinate work on gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process at headquarters and country levels. UN Women has the coordination mandate for gender mainstreaming across the whole of the UN system, including humanitarian, development and peace pillars. IANWGE, chaired by UN Women, has membership from across the UN, and promotes gender mainstreaming according to decisions made by its membership. There is therefore already a coordinating structure in place to promote gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process.

Resourced in this case means one full-time P4 staff member dedicated to this role with an appropriate budget (e.g., for preparation of guidance and organization of meetings), to complement existing mainstreaming mechanisms. Without this resourcing, the Task Force is highly unlikely to function effectively.

Among the priorities for this Task Force are:

- Considering the development of a strategic vision and overarching strategic plan for gender mainstreaming in the triple nexus process;
- Ensuring consistent coordination and information flows across the various triple nexus stakeholders, including: the IASC Gender Reference Group; UNSDG Task Teams on Transition and Recovery and Gender Equality; regional and country level mechanisms for gender equality, including Gender Theme Groups and issue-based coalitions and other coordination mechanisms at the regional level; and the OECD-DAC network;
- Strengthening and ensuring implementation of existing guidance in strategic planning documents. In particular, there should be guidance on joint gender analysis in Common Country Assessments (CCA) so that these reflect humanitarian and peace dimensions; and
- Determining how accountability for gender mainstreaming should be strengthened, e.g. expanding existing accountability mechanisms, and including additional minimum standards in the UNCT-SWAP Scorecard and/or IASC Gender Accountability Framework. An example of a minimum standard is requiring that at least one collective outcome focuses specifically on GEEWG, and/or all other collective outcomes are gender mainstreamed, as appropriate and dependent on the country context

The work of the Task Force should be reviewed at the end of two years to determine if it needs to be continued.

ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION 2: Pilots at the country level

Undertake resourced two-year pilots in two countries to determine:

- What GEEWG mainstreaming in the triple nexus process actually means, dependent on the country context. This would focus on required levels of gender analysis, tying gender analysis more closely to sex-disaggregation of data, and to formulation and operationalization of collective outcomes;
- The level of capacity and resources required to achieve GEEWG mainstreaming;
- How to operationalize GEEWG mainstreaming in practice within and across humanitarian, development and peace action;
- How this can be scaled up across the system; and
- Ways in which representative women-led organizations and gender equality networks can be fully involved in the triple nexus process, including in a leadership role.

The rationale for a two-year pilot is that putting in place appropriate capacity, analysing what gender mainstreaming in the triple process means, and learning lessons to promote scaling up, will require at least that amount of time. Two countries are recommended for pilots as this was what key informants thought would be feasible and would allow for comparison in different locations.

These pilots should be coordinated by the IANWGE Task Force in collaboration with relevant coordination and accountability mechanisms; be fully resourced including relevant staffing; and build on gender expertise and on-going work at the country level, including that of the Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap), and the IASC Results Group 4 engagement with 40+ countries undertaking a CCA and/or UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in 2021 to ensure that they take a nexus approach.