Gender in Food and Nutrition Security Programming

Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation for FNS

Text-only version

This course is funded by the European Union through the EU-FAO Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme

© FAO, 2014
# In this lesson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS GENDER-SENSITIVE M&amp;E?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING &amp; EVALUATION IN THE PROJECT CYCLE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHY A GENDER-SENSITIVE M&amp;E?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FEATURES OF A GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A GENDERED PARTICIPATORY APPROACH</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT ARE INDICATORS?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPING GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDING THE INFORMATION</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDING THE INFORMATION YOU NEED</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHALLENGES OF INCLUDING GENDER IN M&amp;E</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the importance and usefulness of carrying out monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in a gender-sensitive manner;
- identify the key features of a gender-sensitive M&E;
- know how to define gender-sensitive indicators at programme and organizational levels;
- be aware of the possible challenges in including gender in M&E, and how to address them.

INTRODUCTION

Lina and Paulo are working for a governmental organization in South America. Her project intends to improve food production through organic fertilizers, soil and water management. Lina’s team is about to carry out a mid-term evaluation. Let’s see which conditions emerge from a discussion with Paulo:

Lina 🎤 “I am really looking forward to knowing to what extent we are achieving the objectives of our project.”

Paulo 🎤 “Have you also thought about evaluating how the changes brought about by the project will affect gender equality?”

Lina 🎤 “You mean, should I also evaluate the gender aspects? I didn’t think they were relevant to my project…plus, I have never done it before. I would really need some help.”

One of the major challenges of policy-makers, programme managers and practitioners is to find guidelines, methodologies and tools to measure whether the planned objectives and foreseen impacts are being achieved.

In particular, measuring the achievements in relation to gender entails developing appropriate mechanisms to monitor progress towards gender equality.

In this lesson, we will discuss how to carry out gender-sensitive M&E, both at project and organizational levels.
THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Let’s go back to our colleagues and see what happened:

Lina 🗣 “You see, I don’t think monitoring gender aspects is relevant for our project. We focused on technical issues only, and didn’t mean to interfere with the private lives of families. ”

Paulo 🗣 “In my experience, all interventions affect gender relations. You should still measure if and how your project is promoting gender equality and reducing existing discrimination. ”

A few weeks later, the project team examined the results of the mid-term evaluation. The evaluation showed that only male farmers were targeted (through training, credits, study tours, etc.), while female farmers were left out.

- Male farmers gained knowledge, abilities and skills to manage and improve their farming systems, while women did not even feel confident to communicate with the technicians.

Lina 🗣 “You were right, Paulo. Our project actually increased the differences between men and women, although this was not our intention. Now, we will have to take measures to reduce the gender gap that was involuntarily amplified by our intervention. ”

From this story, one key consideration emerges. Which one?

No intervention is gender neutral. Since all societies are gendered, any kind of intervention, whether gender-sensitive or not, will always affect the existing gender relationships and roles.

WHAT IS GENDER-SENSITIVE M&E?

If no intervention is gender neutral, then it is important that M&E be gender sensitive. In fact:

- Gender-sensitive M&E helps assess whether the project’s planned activities are achieving gender equality goals.
• It provides feedback on how the activities affect the various groups of beneficiaries including women and men, 
disaggregated by age, ethnicity, caste, education, employment and geographical location.
• Gender-sensitive M&E also allows us to measure and evaluate gender-related changes over time, showing how far and in what ways the gender equality objectives are being achieved.

GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING & EVALUATION IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

What is the difference between sex-disaggregated data and gender-disaggregated data?

✓ Sex-disaggregated data simply makes a distinction between men and women.
• For example: 65 people attended the training; 25 women and 40 men.

✓ Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. Therefore, even within the same community, there can be significant differences between women and men: depending on age, education, wealth, health and other significant categories.

Gender-disaggregated data helps us analyse these differences, allowing a more accurate understanding of the situation (e.g. division of tasks and access to resources).
• For example: Of the 25 women who attended the training, 80 percent headed their own households. Of those 80 percent female-headed households, 15 percent have HIV/AIDS, 30 percent are undernourished and 55 percent are healthy women. (The same disaggregation can be done for men).

WHY A GENDER-SENSITIVE M&E?

1. To learn and make adjustments

🗩 The first reason to carry out gender-sensitive M&E is to learn and make adjustments. Through gender-sensitive M&E, we can:

✓ assess the extent to which programmes and projects are meeting (or have met) their gender-equality objectives; and

✓ on the basis of this information, identify the necessary adjustments to the project activities.
2. For institutional reasons

Another important element is the institutional dimension: most national governments and international donors consider gender to be a cross-cutting issue within their development interventions and FNS policies. Specifically, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol ask state parties to monitor progress on gender at the national level, to be able to report back to the relevant international authority or treaty body.

Example: reporting on progress requires gender-sensitive M&E

A gender-sensitive M&E is necessary for states, because they are required to monitor the progress towards gender-equality goals, such as:

- increased awareness of women’s rights and a deeper understanding of CEDAW by state organs and civil society groups;
- strengthened capacity of governments and civil society, including women’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to promote women’s human rights under CEDAW at national and regional levels.

Challenges

Though most organizations working on FNS have incorporated gender in the design of policies and programmes, often gender mainstreaming commitments evaporate even before implementation, remaining only a commitment on paper. This neglect happens, in part, because of the lack of clear and simple guidelines and checklists to monitor gender-related impacts during the project cycle. In fact, often programme staff lack specific skills or commitment to address the differentiated gender constraints and benefits, and to formulate gender-sensitive indicators (disaggregated by class, age, ethnicity or caste) during the project planning.
3. For human right issues and development with social justice

A third important reason is to foster human rights. The right to adequate food is a basic human right; however, a large number of people in the world are still hungry. Women are much more affected by hunger and poverty than men because cultural traditions and social structures prevent them from accessing resources in the same way as men do. Gender-sensitive M&E can help monitor the reduction of the gender gap, which prevents all men and women from enjoying equal rights and improving their well-being.

Example: Early identification of gender-sensitive indicators can improve FSN

In Lesotho, FAO worked with UNICEF and WFP to improve FNS among HIV/AIDS affected households. They did an early formulation of gender-sensitive indicators, using baseline studies (that describe the context before the project) that differentiated data by gender and age. This allowed them to identify some strategic activities to promote gender equality. The project trained both women and men in soil conservation, crop diversification and improved child-feeding practices. It introduced soap making, goat breeding and beekeeping, to improve the income of women farmers.

Three colleagues are discussing the specific benefits of a gender-sensitive M&E. Here the most correct statement:

“it allows us to know to what extent the various activities of our programme affect women and men of different socio-economic groups.”

When is the right time for gender-sensitive M&E?

It must start at the early stage of the project identification, and continue throughout the project cycle. In fact, if we started M&E during or after project implementation, it would be too late!

The following tables show the various stages of the project cycle and gender-related suggestions for each of them. These suggestions are helpful not only to plan and implement M&E, but also to mainstream gender considerations throughout the entire project.
Let’s have a look at these **checklists for the commonly recognized phases** of the project cycle:

### Project identification and preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the current situation of our target beneficiaries?</td>
<td>Carry out <strong>baseline studies</strong>* disaggregated by gender, pertaining to different socio-economic groups (class, ethnicity, age, education, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have all stakeholders been involved in the process of identifying project options? Will any stakeholders be disadvantaged by the proposed project?</td>
<td>Conduct an initial gender-sensitive stakeholder analysis and identify different programme options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the concerns and needs of women and men in relation to food production, availability, access and utilization?</td>
<td>Conduct a participatory identification of the gender-specific concerns and needs, and formulate gender-sensitive indicators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have the necessary resources to carry out a gender-sensitive M&amp;E?</td>
<td>Assess the organizational capacity for carrying out the M&amp;E, and plan capacity development for both staff and stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can I help set up the establishment of the M&amp;E during the project design (next stage)?</td>
<td>Prepare a concept note as part of the feasibility studies, with a preliminary gender analysis and socio-cultural assessment, including relevant gender-sensitive indicators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A gender-sensitive baseline study, which includes data disaggregated by sex, age, socio-economic and ethnic grouping, serves to assess the gender-specific situation in the project area before the intervention.*

### Project design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the project components and expected outcomes reflect the project’s gender-sensitive goals and objectives?</td>
<td>Adopt gender-sensitive programming and actions. You must ensure that the goals, activities and outcomes of the programme or project reflect both women’s and men’s needs and priorities identified in the previous stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has gender been included in the economic, financial, technical, institutional, social, environmental and participatory analyses?</td>
<td>Carry out a gender analysis and socio-cultural assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have adequate resources for capacity development?</td>
<td>Plan and allocate adequate resources for capacity development to address gender-sensitive M&amp;E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What gender-sensitive indicators for M&amp;E should we choose?</td>
<td>Select and formulate both qualitative and quantitative gender-sensitive indicators to assess the outputs, outcomes and impacts in a participatory way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we gather data and analyze it in a gender-sensitive way?</td>
<td>Select the gender-sensitive data collection methods and tools, and design an M&amp;E system that includes a gender-sensitive programme to process the information; this will facilitate the subsequent analysis, feedback and project adjustment process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Appraisal and approval

Include in the project appraisal document (PAD) some gender-responsive actions and development objectives for M&E. The PAD requires both a results framework (or logical framework) and a description of M&E arrangements, as illustrated in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project outcome indicators for the objective: “To increase the access of women and men to food”.</th>
<th>Target values (percent)</th>
<th>Data collection and reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1: percent of women and men producers satisfied with access to and quality of training ‘X’.</td>
<td>M: 15 W: 2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2: percent of women and men with access to land and water</td>
<td>M: 90 W: 10</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project implementation and monitoring:

- ensure that gender-responsive actions are incorporated in the project operational manual;
- implement capacity activities on gender for programme implementers and stakeholders;
- collect sex-disaggregated data and monitor progress against designed output and outcome indicators;
- implement a participatory M&E and feed results back into the M&E system;
- assess the progress made and the lessons learned by the programming and M&E staff, and recommend corrective actions if needed;
- encourage relevant stakeholders to implement a participatory gender audit

Project completion and evaluation:

- Develop a gender-sensitive outcomes and impacts assessment.
- Carry out a stocktaking of lessons learned and see how they can be fed into the overall food and nutrition security goals and objectives, as measured by the outcome indicators.
- Prepare and disseminate a case study of the overall process of gender-sensitive M&E.
What gender-sensitive M&E activities were not carried out by the NGO during the first phase of the project?

- The NGO did not carry out **neither a participatory gender analysis nor an initial gender-sensitive stakeholder analysis**.
- In fact, if both a careful gender analysis and a stakeholder analysis had been done before defining the project activities, it would have been clear that the pastoralists (especially women) would have not benefited from the project. On the other hand, one cannot define successfully gender-sensitive activities without having first completed a gender analysis in the project area.

---

**Example of positive impact of gender equality on the environment**

- In an Andean community in **Ecuador**, an NGO **aimed to support** the FS of **farmers** located in the **agricultural area** of a basin, but it **ignored** the **pastoralists** of the upper part of the area.
- One project was designed to improve the water availability in the agricultural area by lining the irrigation canal with cement. However, the canal lining started to dry up some existing water wells in the upper part of the basin, which was the main source of water supply for the livestock of pastoralists (most of them women).
- Female pastoralists started to protest and asked that the project be stopped unless their needs and concerns were addressed. The NGO organized the first participatory M&E where women were invited. As a result of the women’s inputs during the meeting, the NGO managers decided not only to redesign the project, but also to include the gender-sensitive indicators identified during the community M&E meeting.
- In the next step, the NGO **implemented a rapid participatory diagnosis and evaluation together with the pastoralist women, men and farmers, to identify the affected springs**. The redesigned project included both water provision for the affected springs and the construction of a drinking trough for the livestock, which was also used by women pastoralists for washing.
- After the completion of the four-year project, the NGO published their experience, highlighting the importance of including gender-sensitive M&E to further improve the **positive impact of this project not only on gender equality, but also on the environment**.
THE FEATURES OF A GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

What are the two key features of a gender-sensitive M&E?

- It is based on a gendered participatory approach.
- It uses gender-sensitive indicators.

As an important premise it is essential to know that well-developed approaches and tools do not necessarily translate into successful M&E. It is very important to develop your own reflective learning process: you should continuously monitor your activities, see what is working and what is not, and use your experience to identify what needs to be changed or adjusted. In other words, by adopting a reflective M&E, you can identify the major obstacles that prevent your project from contributing to equitable and socially just development. This process allows you to take appropriate action.

Reflective learning can be also illustrated by the Kolb learning cycle (see below).
A GENDERED PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

What is a gendered participatory approach? And why is it important?

- In a gendered participatory approach, beneficiaries (women, men and community leaders) and different stakeholders actively participate in the M&E; for example, by contributing to the identification of gender-sensitive indicators.

- It is essential to develop ownership and commitment in the actions foreseen by the project. When local people participate in the formulation of gender-sensitive indicators, they can measure their own progress and monitor changes against indicators that they have identified themselves (unlike using predetermined indicators that are imposed upon them).

Let’s consider this case study:
During a mid-term evaluation of a fisheries management project (to improve the nutrition of local people) the technicians considered that implementation had been fully participatory. They said that all community members actively participated in the identification and planning process.
When one member of the evaluation team asked whether women from the community had also been invited to participate, the technician’s answer was: “No, we did not invite women, because they are not registered members of the community.”

- This approach can be defined ‘non-participatory’ and ‘gender-blind’.
WHAT ARE INDICATORS?

Another essential feature of gender-sensitive M&E is to include gender-sensitive indicators. We shall first look at indicators in general, and then consider the specific characteristics of a gender-sensitive indicator. An indicator is a measurement. For example, it could be a number, a fact, an opinion or a perception that points to a specific condition or situation, and measures changes over time. In other words, indicators measure the results of our interventions. For this reason, they are front-line instruments in the M&E of development work.

Considered that gender-sensitive indicators require the production of data that is disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity and other socio-economic variables relevant to the project or programming context, gender-sensitive indicators have the special function of pointing out gender-related changes in society over time. Their usefulness lies in their ability to point to changes in the status and roles of women and men over time, and to measure whether gender equality is being achieved.

An important premise to set up gender-sensitive indicators it is advisable that we first carry out a participatory gender analysis and a participatory stakeholder analysis. Whenever possible, it is important to integrate a gender perspective during the formulation of the programme’s objectives, strategies, outputs, outcomes, impacts and budgeting. These preliminary steps will allow us to establish gender-sensitive indicators that are both quantitative and qualitative.

An important premise

- To set up gender-sensitive indicators it is advisable that we first carry out a participatory gender analysis and a participatory stakeholder analysis.

- Whenever possible, it is important to integrate a gender perspective during the formulation of the programme’s objectives, strategies, outputs, outcomes, impacts and budgeting.

- These preliminary steps will allow us to establish gender-sensitive indicators that are both quantitative and qualitative.
Tips for the selection of indicators

- Indicators must be developed in a participatory way, involving all relevant stakeholders, if possible.
- Indicators must be relevant to the needs of the users and at a level that the users can understand.
- All indicators must be gender-disaggregated.
- Both qualitative and quantitative indicators should be used.
- Indicators should be easy to use and understand.
- Indicators must be clearly defined.
- The number of indicators chosen should be small; a rule of thumb is that up to six indicators can be chosen for each type of indicator (inputs–impacts).
- Indicators should measure trends over time.
- The ultimate focus should be on outcomes/impacts indicators.

It is important to consider a reasonable number of indicators as too many indicators can make the M&E difficult. In FNS, the relevance of an indicator should be linked to the gender-related changes in relation to the four pillars of FNS.

DEVELOPING GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS

Indicators should be directly related to the project’s objectives: we should define indicators so that we can feel the pulse of a project as it moves towards meeting its objectives. To achieve this, we can think of using indicators in a chain, starting from input through to impact indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input indicators</th>
<th>Output indicators</th>
<th>Outcome indicators</th>
<th>Impact indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitor resources for implementing each activity throughout the project.</td>
<td>Measure outputs for each activity, in relation to baseline data (mainly quantitative indicators).</td>
<td>Measure the first effects produced by each output, and if the objectives are being achieved (also qualitative).</td>
<td>Measure the medium- and long-term impacts of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender guidelines and materials for field workers.</td>
<td>Number of participating women and men in workshops and training sessions.</td>
<td>Percentage of women and men who apply the acquired knowledge in diversifying their daily diet.</td>
<td>Qualitative changes in women and men’s lives; e.g. more say in agricultural decisions and greater control over resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other examples of input indicators

Input indicators provide information about the organizational commitment for gender-sensitive M&E, as they indicate the strategies and activities to overcome the immediate limitations related to gender and to disadvantaged groups. For example:

- allocation of human and financial resources to promote gender equality in the project;
- gender guidelines and materials developed to support the field staff;
- action-oriented research agendas to include technology development for women (i.e. time-saving technology);
- number of workshops, study tours or other events on FNS and gender.

Other examples of output indicators

- participation of stakeholders throughout the project cycle (attendance and level of participation/contribution by gender, age and socio-economic background);
- stakeholders are well informed of project activities and investment, and collaborate and assess their participation and involvement (in terms of time, labour, knowledge, etc);
- number of women and men participating in workshops, training, study tours and benefitting from other services of the project;
- number of men and women accessing credit for food production;
- amount of vulnerable and marginalized men and women, boys and girls (HIV/AIDs-affected and poor people) who are informed and aware of the project activities and investment.

Other examples of outcome indicators

- percentage of men and women who apply the acquired knowledge in diversifying their daily diet. For instance, they consume more fresh vegetables or fruits or have a better balanced diet (with beans, cereals, potatoes or cassava, and vegetables);
- the number of men who invest more in buying meat or milk and consume less alcohol;
- level of participation in terms of number of women and men (disaggregated by age and socio-economic background) actively involved in the participatory design, implementation and M&E of the project;
- increase in the number of (x) women or disadvantaged groups on the boards of community-based organizations (e.g. community, water-user association, food and nutrition or agricultural committees, etc.);
- reduction in the gap between food demand and local food production (i.e. sorghum, maize, potatoes, wheat or beans, etc.) per household in ‘x’ years after the intervention;
- access and control over the productive resources of women and disadvantaged groups have improved in ‘x’ years.
Imagine your organization is developing a project to reduce the child mortality in a region with high rates of child mortality caused by malaria and preterm birth. How would you monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of the main objective of this project?

More information

Impact indicators suggest whether the ultimate impact of FNS projects contributes to the health, social and economic well-being and empowerment of women and men. Ultimately, they should measure whether gender equality has been achieved. That is why these indicators tend to be qualitative and SPICED (see minilesson on indicators).

Example: impact of a nutrition programme

A programme evaluation in Viet Nam showed how FAO contributed to reduce vitamin A deficiency in four communities. The programme reduced the malnutrition rate overall by 12 percent (5 percent in men and 7 percent in women) in just two years, in comparison to the baseline data. To achieve this impact the programme promoted home gardens and nutrition education for both men and women. Evaluations confirmed that home gardens have the greatest impact when both men and women understand their nutritional and economic benefits.

Other examples of output indicators

- number or percentage of women, men and children whose nutrition and health status improved consistently in ‘x’ years. For instance, the mortality of children under five years of age diminished in ‘x’ percentage, or the number of men or women who consumed alcohol has reduced;
- percentage of women’s or disadvantaged groups with secure access to land, water, livestock, fisheries and improved nutritional education;
- malnutrition prevalence of children under five years of age has reduced in ‘x’ number or percentage;
- reduction in the percentage of population below the poverty line;
- change in birth weight of baby boys and girls.

Imagine your organization is developing a project to reduce the child mortality in a region with high rates of child mortality caused by malaria and preterm birth.

How would you monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of the main objective of this project?
Assessing the outcome and impact indicators disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic groups. Monitoring and evaluating the progress towards the main objective of a project, should measure the fulfillment of the outcome and impact indicators in both quantitative and quantitative terms.

Let’s meet Anyla, a colleague responsible for a gender-sensitive project which addressed the problem of poor health and nutritional status attributable to inadequate water supplies and sanitation facilities in 78 low-income rural communities.

“The main objective was to reduce the incidence of water-related diseases among the targeted rural population by providing safe water and sanitation facilities for 90 percent of the population within a five-year period. Activities include the provision of potable water systems, latrine construction, community health education and organization.”

“Women are not only the primary users of the facilities but also strongly influence household sanitary habits and the overall use of the facilities. We will define gender-sensitive indicators for M&E, and encourage women to participate in all phases, aspects and activities of the project.”

Let’s help Anyla identify the most appropriate option for each type of indicator.

**Input indicator**

- Number of workshops and/or education materials and facilities.

**Output indicator**

- Percentage of men and women attending training sessions, disaggregated by age.

**Outcome indicator**

- Percentage of beneficiaries who store drinking water in covered containers and built latrines.

**Impact indicator**

- Incidence of water-related diseases among women, men and children has diminished by 80 percent, after five years of intervention.
FINDING THE INFORMATION

Once you have defined your gender-sensitive indicators in a participatory way, you can also look for information to measure the indicators in other sources (which are called means of verification). A lot of the quantitative information can be extracted from more formal surveys, but when these are missing or not sufficient, you can also use field interviews and observation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To assess the:</th>
<th>You can search for...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>input indicators</td>
<td>project implementation plans, financial monitoring reports, disbursement reports, project appraisal documents, etc.;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>output indicators</td>
<td>supervision reports, mid-term reviews, project implementation plans, financial monitoring reports, field staff reports, participatory monitoring reports, field interviews and observations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outcome indicators</td>
<td>baseline data, gender analysis reports, household survey data, medium-term evaluations, case studies, rapid nutrition surveys, child health records, field interviews and observations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impact indicators</td>
<td>baseline data disaggregated by gender in the household surveys, local and national statistical data, project appraisal documents, the impact evaluation reports, field interviews and observations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FINDING THE INFORMATION YOU NEED

When you need information from less formal surveys, you can use a number of techniques to acquire the data and encourage the information sharing, which include both quantitative and qualitative methods. These methods and tools can be used especially during gender-sensitive programme identification and design.

1. Here is a brief overview of two widely used quantitative methods:
   a. Baseline survey
   b. Seasonal labour profile

   a. Baseline survey

   In this survey, you can focus on the household and community levels to learn about livelihoods. For example: average size of the families or community members (disaggregated by gender, age and social class); number of members affected by malnutrition or sickness (HIV/AIDS); malnutrition level; the diversification and level of food production; income and expenditures; ownership of assets, etc.
Tools:
- structured interviews
- focus group interviews
- leaders and community interviews

b. Seasonal labour profile

This method estimates the time (measured as number of hours, days and months) women and men spend on different tasks for providing food for the family during different seasonal periods. This technique can be complemented with the ‘time-use studies’ or ‘the clock study’, which estimates the time spent by women and men in fulfilling their daily tasks (e.g. collecting fuel, water, cooking, taking care of the children, fieldwork and community activities).

Tools:
- agricultural calendar
- clock
- focus group discussions
- household diaries.

2. Qualitative methods\(^1\) for collecting information include:
   a. Gender analysis
   b. Stakeholder analysis
   c. Institutional analysis
   d. Community analysis
   e. Historical trend analysis

a. Gender analysis

Gender analysis examines the different roles and responsibilities of women and men, their access and control to assets and services, and their needs, experiences and capacities.

---

\(^1\) If you want to learn more about these methods and tools:
1. See FAO’s Socio-economic and Gender Analysis Programme (SEAGA) *Intermediate level handbook*
2. *The Methods for monitoring and evaluation* (IFAD)
Gender in Food and Nutrition Security

Tools:
- focus group discussions
- drama and role play
- spatial maps
- wealth ranking
- health ranking

b. Stakeholder analysis

This method identifies the key stakeholders affected by or affecting the project during the project cycle, ensuring that women and disadvantaged groups are adequately represented in decision-making, planning and monitoring.

Tools:
- venn diagrams
- individual semi-structured interviews

c. Institutional analysis

At macro level, institutional analysis considers the local cultural practices and customary norms, the laws and policies that impact women’s and men’s lives.

At field level, it examines the local groups, institutions and service providers including their interaction with each other, and their relationships with rural men and women. Institutional profiles assess who participates in the institutions, who benefits, what are the institution’s strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Tools:
- venn diagrams
- individual interviews
- focus group discussions
- direct observations
d. Community analysis

This method analyses the community’s natural resources (water, agricultural land, forest, etc), the different socio-economic and ethnic groups, female and male organizations, key actors and leaders, power relationships, health infrastructure and services for women.

Tools:
- walking tours
- mapping
- transect walking
- open-ended interviews
- focus group discussions
- drama and role play.

e. Historical trend analysis

Depicts the variation and tendency of priority issues (such as food production or availability, food scarcity, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, migration, employment opportunities, women’s participation and empowerment) in the past, present and future (after the intervention).

Tools:
- Historical trend diagrams
- Histograms
- tales

ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

When planning for M&E, you should also consider potential risks. In fact, sometimes it is difficult to fulfill the planned outputs, outcomes and impacts because of external political, economic and social incidents, as Paulo’s experience shows:

“*Our project’s goal was to improve the level of FNS for women and men in a particular rural area over three years, by increasing agricultural production through organic fertilizer use and by crop diversification.*”
“However, during the implementation, frequent extreme events related to climate change (such as flooding and famine), negatively affected production and prevented us from reaching our objectives. “

“So we learned by experience that for project M&E we need to keep in mind our assumptions and the potential risks if those assumptions do not come true, and we need to see how they may have a gender impact. For our current project, we developed a matrix that can help us. We encouraged stakeholders’ participation, not only to formulate the M&E indicators, but also to identify enabling factors and risks, since beneficiaries have a better sense of potential project risks”

**Example of gender-sensitive M&E matrix with assumptions and risks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives/activities</th>
<th>Kind of Indicators</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Assumptions (and risks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FNS impact:</td>
<td>Impact indicators:</td>
<td>Project appraisal document, local and national statistical data, etc.</td>
<td>Gendered FNS policies; macroeconomic policies are stable; women have control over their earnings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>level of nutrition and health status per subgroups improved persistently in ‘x’ years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project outcomes:</td>
<td>Outcome indicators:</td>
<td>Medium-term evaluation reports, baseline data, rapid nutrition surveys, etc.</td>
<td>Climate change does not have abrupt impacts on food availability and utility; sanitation and hygiene practices improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percentage of women and men with a balanced daily diet (with beans, cereals, potatoes and vegetables).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project components/activities:</td>
<td>Output indicators:</td>
<td>Field staff reports, participatory M&amp;E reports, mid-term reviews, etc.</td>
<td>Productive capacity of land, water and forests are sustainable; crop practices improved; agricultural inputs available to men and women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percentage of male and female farmers who diversified their crop (i.e. beans, cereals, potatoes and vegetables).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational capacity:</td>
<td>Input indicators:</td>
<td>Project implementation plans, financial reports, disbursement reports, etc.</td>
<td>Global and national policies are in place and funds remain available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>amount of funds or number of training sessions to promote the diversification of crops.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL**

If your project is to contribute effectively towards gender equality and socially just development, then there must be an **enabling environment that supports this goal**. Therefore, it is important that an organization working in FNS helps to mainstream gender not only at the programme/project level, but **within the organization itself**.

For this purpose, we should define **gender-sensitive indicators to assess the organizational commitment**, at both organization and staffing levels. Let’s see how.
When should an organization define its indicators

Defining gender-sensitive indicators to measure organizational commitment can be done when an organization is mainstreaming gender in its priority areas of work.

However, it can happen that the organization did not formulate adequate gender-sensitive indicators. In such cases, this exercise can be done during the M&E stage.

Here are some questions you may want to consider:

- What changes are anticipated as part of the organizational commitment towards gender equality?
- What kind of obstacles has the organization confronted to integrate gender at the organizational level?
- What are the intended gender-equality results of the organization?
- Where can we find information and indicators about the process of gender mainstreaming at organizational level?
- What are the criteria for judging the success of the organizational commitment towards gender equality?

Where can you find the answers to these questions?

You can check:

- Policies
- Project documents
- Manuals

You can also:

- assess whether a participatory gender audit has been or will be implemented;
- see whether a gender-sensitive M&E system is in place, including: gender-disaggregated data collection, reporting, feeding in the electronic system, consolidation and feedback (to adjust or improve both the project and the organization’s activities).
At **staff level**, it is important that the gender commitment of the organization’s staff undergo M&E, **periodically**. Consider the following indicators:

- Are there funds for capacity development related to gender analysis?
- How is the gender balance in the staffing of the organization?
- Are there incentives for staff who include, monitor and report progress made towards gender equality?
- Are there special funds tailored to women and disadvantaged groups in case of emergencies?
- Do the terms of references for all staff posts require gender sensitivity and/or gender expertise?

**CHALLENGES OF INCLUDING GENDER IN M&E**

Even when you carry out your gender-sensitive M&E in the most appropriate way, you may **face** a number of **difficulties**. Here are some possible challenges which should be considered when implementing M&E:

1. **At organizational level:**
   
   ✓ Programme managers and staff may be **gender blind**. They may not see gender in M&E as having any relevance in achieving the programme’s outputs.
   
   ✓ There may be **lack of policies, guidelines and incentives** to incorporate gender in M&E, in the terms of references for staff posts, and in M&E missions.
   
   ✓ There may be **lack of funds** or gender budgeting to train the staff to collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data.
   
   ✓ The project staff may **lack commitment** or skills to formulate gender-sensitive indicators, or gender-disaggregated baseline data.
   
   ✓ There may be **insufficient follow-up** and poor understanding by local staff of the usefulness of gender-sensitive M&E.
   
   ✓ M&E may often be regarded as a **task for the donors, external evaluators or the gender consultants**.

2. **At project level:**

   ✓ There may be **lack of participation** by women and men (i.e. the target beneficiaries) in the various phases of the project;
There may be poorly conducted gender analysis during the identification, preparation and design of the project (see Lessons 3.1 and 3.2).

Field staff may view M&E as gender neutral. Day-to-day monitoring usually concentrates on project output areas rather than in cross-cutting issues such as gender.

Some field staff may see the work of M&E as the task of the female staff or of the gender experts and, therefore, may not use a gender-sensitive approach.

Consider the example below.

Other examples of output indicators
After a short-term M&E, an NGO working on income-generating programmes in rural areas was pressured by one of its main international donors to mainstream gender both at organizational and project levels.

The most recent project was implemented by two teams, comprised of five employees each. Eighty percent of the employees were male technicians, and 20 percent were female (one engineer and one sociologist).

To facilitate gender mainstreaming into the project, two international advisors (male and female) were hired by the donor in agreement with the NGO. However, the male employees and the female sociologist offered resistance. They said that the main beneficiaries of the project were the families and not individual men or women.

They refused to accept that women must also be included as direct beneficiaries of the credit and training activities.

What could be possible actions to confront this type of resistance?

Possible actions could be:

- Capacity development on gender
- Advocacy on gender issues

In fact, capacity development will help to address gender blindness, lack of skills and understanding (and sometimes lack of commitment). Advocacy will help to make budgets available, will generate commitment and will show that gender is not only the task of a few women in the programme.
CONCLUSIONS

We have considered how a gender-sensitive M&E of FNS programmes allows us to assess our progress and achievements towards the equitable access of women, men and children to adequate and healthy food. We have also seen how it is essential to adopt a participatory M&E during the project cycle and to formulate appropriate gender-sensitive indicators.

However, please remember that a successful gender-sensitive M&E system lies not only in these important elements, but also on the adoption of a reflective learning process by individuals and the organizations.

SUMMARY

• Gender-sensitive M&E of FNS programmes allows us to assess and evaluate our progress and achievements towards the expected impacts and outcomes in relation to gender equality, both at organizational and programme/project levels.

• Gender-sensitive M&E must provide feedback on how the various activities of our programme affect different socio-economic groups of women and men (disaggregated by age, ethnicity, caste, education, employment and geographical location) and how these promote change towards gender and social equity.

• A successful gender-sensitive M&E lies not only in the development of good approaches, indicators and tools, but mainly in the adoption of a reflective M&E. This approach helps us to develop critical thinking and self-awareness, as we recognize that we are one of the active stakeholders who contribute to reduce poverty and malnutrition, which are the major obstacles to reach equitable and socially just development.

• A comprehensive gender-sensitive M&E requires gender-disaggregated data collection and minimal processing and analysis throughout the project cycle, placing appropriate emphasis on inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact indicators.

• Gender-sensitive participatory M&E is central to develop shared commitment among male and female beneficiaries and all stakeholders.