

Gender Strategy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The European Union Nexus Response Mechanism (NRM) in Myanmar has an overall objective of contributing to lasting peace, security, stability, and sustainable development, achieved through three mutually reinforcing Specific Objectives (SOs) centered on 1) reducing vulnerabilities, 2) increasing resilience, and 3) protecting the rights of crisis-affected communities. Paramount to achieving these objectives is the integration of approaches and interventions that explicitly aim to improve gender equality, whether through mainstreaming of gender throughout the project cycle, targeted interventions that transform harmful gender norms and stereotypes, or research and evidence building that fills gaps in data and knowledge required to effectively and sustainably transform those norms. As the NRM aims to strengthen linkages between humanitarian, development, and peace programming, it simultaneously seeks to address structural challenges through transformative modalities. With this, gender equality is among the core tenets of the nexus approach, and as such requires strong commitment by the NRM articulated through a gender strategy.

The NRM's Gender Strategy is aligned with the EU's [Gender Action Plan III](#) (GAP III) in its transformative and intersectional approach, and specifically addresses key areas identified in the GAP III, including acting against gender-based violence, promoting the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls, and pushing for equal participation and leadership. Adding to the above, the NRM is directly contributing to the implementation of the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. This strategy will ensure that the NRM and all its supported initiatives fulfill the criteria for OECD-DAC gender mark.¹

1.2 Purpose of the NRM Gender Strategy

The NRM Gender Strategy guides the NRM Secretariat, implementing partners (IPs), and other key stakeholders in ensuring gender considerations are thoroughly and appropriately integrated across NRM concepts, analyses, programming, advocacy, and research. With this, the NRM uses gender as a lens for better understanding various contextual dynamics of relevance to the mechanism. The strategy requires a systematic look at gender disparities and opportunities and the role gender plays in normalizing or exacerbating conflict, with an emphasis on transformative approaches and the incorporation of research and analysis to address gaps in data and evidence.

Improving gender equality through interventions supported by the NRM is centered on the integration of gender transformative approaches. Gender transformative programming goes beyond gender sensitivity with interventions – whether targeted or mainstreamed – that challenge

¹ OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality, *Minimum Recommended Criteria for DAC Gender Marker*, OECD-DAC, December 2016: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Minimum-recommended-criteria-for-DAC-gender-marker.pdf>

gender norms; promote positions of equal social and political influence for women and girls; combat stigma and increases acceptance for LGBTQ individuals and other non-gender conforming people; promote healthier masculinities; and remove barriers to equal protection of rights, safety, access to services, and access to opportunity for education and economic development. This requires an in-depth understanding of power dynamics and inequities at different levels between persons of different genders and how those dynamics influence access, roles in decision-making, and control over resources. Without transformations of gender inequalities, programming across the nexus cannot be truly effective or achieve sustainable change.

Gender is at the core of the NRM, articulated both as a distinct yet interlinked systemic change, and as a cross-cutting component in achieving all anticipated systemic changes. NRM commitments with regards to gender include:

- > Use of gender analysis as integral to program design, continual context analysis, and programmatic MEAL
- > Presence of at least one explicit gender equality objective backed by at least one gender-specific indicator in the programme and its actions
- > Systematic integration of gender perspectives and considerations in joint assessments, collective outcomes, and context monitoring
- > Commitment to monitor and report on the gender equality results achieved by the programme and its actions in the evaluation phase
- > Promotion of and support for gender transformative for gender transformative, intersectional and human rights based programming approaches and policy changes.
- > Use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive data collection methodologies in MEAL and programmatic research and exploring new ways of capturing LGBTQ-sensitive data.
- > Contributions to the learning and evidence base on gender in the nexus

NRM capacities and resources available to meet these commitments include:

- > Gender specialists and advisors within the NRM, the NRM Due Diligence and Conflict Analysis Facility (DDCAF), and UNOPS
- > A fund-level MEAL framework and system that explicitly incorporates and holds the Secretariat and IPs accountable for gender equality outcomes
- > Frameworks within DDCAF for joint assessment and context monitoring that integrate gender considerations
- > Resources, training, and capacity development on gender for IPs provided by the Secretariat
- > A communication and advocacy strategy with a strong gender lens

1.3 Learning from nexus and gender approaches globally

Understanding gender is critical to forming a comprehensive understanding of a crisis and to effectively integrating gender within, and across transitions between, life-saving interventions, recovery and resilience building, and social cohesion and peacebuilding, i.e. in pre-crisis, crisis

response, and post-crisis work. Examples of some of the different approaches that actors have taken to integrate gender into nexus programming² include but are not limited to:

- > Working with religious leaders to promote the role of women in conflict mediation in Afghanistan.
- > Supporting local peacebuilding actors in Yemen on women, peace, and security (WPS) issues and peace processes at grassroots level, while simultaneously promoting local voices at national and international levels.
- > Integrating gender considerations across preparedness, emergency response, livelihoods recovery and diversification, and advocacy in Chad.
- > Promoting inclusive market systems and strengthening participation of women in emergency response and resilience building assessments in Iraq.
- > Testing what models (type and level) of investment by humanitarian programs in Bangladesh and Uganda work best for local actors, including women's groups, to be able to collectively identify ways to strengthen the local humanitarian system and develop and deliver quality crisis response independently.
- > Investing specifically in women's preparedness and women's role in mobilizing and training other first responders in Haiti.
- > Establishing, training, and mentoring leadership councils comprised of refugee women to implement community outreach and assess program quality in Jordan.

Although nexus programs have been launched in a number of contexts globally, there is little available currently in terms of robust operational learning and evidence focused on gender in the nexus. Nonetheless, experience and research from nexus programs such as those noted above do include some findings relevant to the development of the NRM and its gender strategy:

- > **Integration alone is not enough.** To improve gender equality across the nexus, it must be explicit in and fundamental to program goals, and there must be stringent adherence to and accountability for gender markers.³
- > **Investment in preparedness capacities.** Gender-transformative programming tends to get more focus in recovery and development initiatives than in times of crisis, whether in the preparedness or response stage.⁴ With this, more holistic, needs-based approaches to capacity development for women-focused CSOs is needed, given they are among the first to respond in the face of an emergency. International actors have not tended to invest sufficient resources to mapping CSOs and assessing their capacities pre-crisis, i.e. in preparedness activities, therefore impacting the ways in which they engage (or not) with such partners in the emergency response phase, and how effective coordination is in the transition from emergency to development.⁵

² Oxfam, "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations." 2019; ActionAid and CARE International, "Not what she bargained for? Gender and the Grand Bargain." 2018.

³ Oxfam, "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations." 2019.

⁴ Women Deliver, "Feminist Humanitarian System Building Block I: Advancing Gender Transformative Localization": https://womendeliver.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/WD_Humanitarian-Paper-WEB.pdf

⁵ Ibid

- > **Civil society strengthening and network building.** Strengthening resilience requires investment not only in local capacities, but also in building local leadership and ownership. Dedicated investment has led to increased capacities for effective programming, participation in coordination mechanisms, and new partnerships and funding opportunities for women-focused CSOs and those led by other gender minorities.⁶ Important to the success of such models are not only funding mechanisms themselves, but also efforts to mobilize and connect women-focused CSOs, i.e. enhancing the voice, participation, and leadership of groups previously excluded.⁷ Research has pointed to the value of network building, as well as to the importance of ensuring opportunity both politically and financially for women's rights organizations to address protection concerns and root causes, of long-term policy and advocacy work, and of systems thinking.⁸
- > **Strategic, longer-term planning and systems approaches.** Where response plans have incorporated resilience, humanitarian actors have found it helpful in enabling them to address gender-based violence (GBV) through longer term system strengthening approaches. However, reports point to comparatively less work among humanitarian and development actors on strengthening partnerships and common approaches in the transition from the emergency to post-crisis phase. Additionally, there are concerns around sustainability given continued dependence on humanitarian funding; limited capacity of co-financing by the government; work occurring in parallel; and constraints related to trust in and access to public services.⁹ Key factors critical to advancing longer term approaches to preventing and responding to GBV, include capacity of the government and CSOs; availability and nature (including duration) of funding for a response and, within that, level of investment for GBV; and level of progress with localization within a given context.¹⁰
- > **Understanding and addressing masculinities.** Development programs have increasingly committed to addressing gender as an important factor in analyzing contexts and working towards peace, largely focusing on women's meaningful participation in political or peacebuilding processes, particularly those which are typically male dominated. The same research points to gaps in understanding the social expectations of men and boys, i.e. masculinities, as another important piece of more holistically addressing root causes of violence and conflict.¹¹ It is particularly important to identify and transform negative gender norms among men and boys that reinforce patriarchal notions of men and women's roles and drive harmful behaviours including GBV. Of equal importance is recognizing that patriarchal gender norms that increase the vulnerability of men and boys to violence and conflict.

⁶ Women Deliver, "Feminist Humanitarian System Building Block I: Advancing Gender Transformative Localization": https://womendeliver.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/WD_Humanitarian-Paper-WEB.pdf

⁷ Development Initiatives, "Gender-based violence and the nexus: Global lessons from the Syria crisis response for financing, policy and practice." 2020.

⁸ Oxfam, "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations." 2019.

⁹ Development Initiatives, "Gender-based violence and the nexus: Global lessons from the Syria crisis response for financing, policy and practice." 2020.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ International Alert, "Pulling the Strings: Masculinities, Gender, and Social Conflict in Myanmar." 2018.

> **Recognizing the importance of intersectionality between gender and other forms of identity.**

Individuals and communities can hold myriad forms of identity. In Myanmar's conflict and ethnic areas, ethnic, religious and linguistic identities intersect with gender to shape the experiences of men, women, boys and girls, as well as those of other non-binary gender identities. Any gender strategy must consider the importance of all forms of identity in order to be relevant and impactful.

2. Gender in the Overall NRM Strategy

2.2 Gender in the NRM's Overall Objective and Specific Objectives

The NRM's overall objective is to contribute to lasting peace and national reconciliation, security, stability and sustainable development in Myanmar. The **aim of the gender strategy** at this level is to promote gender equality by challenging inequitable gender norms and practices.

Aims with regards to gender equality across the NRM's overarching specific objectives follow:

NRM Specific Objective 1

Communities' vulnerabilities are reduced through interventions that address immediate needs.

Gender Strategy Aims: Remove barriers to equal access to services; promote and support the provision of inclusive basic services and infrastructure, as well as policies and procedures for emergency response; and support holistic violence prevention activities and client-centered response services for survivors of GBV.

NRM Specific Objective 2

Communities' resilience is increased by building their capacity to prepare for, and reduce the risk of, future shocks.

Gender Strategy Aims: Ensure equal access to training and capacity development for female members of civil society; support the capacities and promote meaningful participation of national and ethnic women-led/focused organizations in planning, decision-making, and implementation of resilience building initiatives; advance the position and influence of female leaders and women-led CSOs; and strengthen the localization of gender and protection.

NRM Specific Objective 3

The rights of communities, including IDPs and refugees, are protected by addressing structural rights challenges and mitigating their impact on communities.

Gender Strategy Aims: Transform toxic masculinities; challenge prescribed gender roles at household and community levels; address the power imbalances that keep women and girls from enjoying rights equally; and influence policies and institutions to be more gender sensitive.

2.2 Gender in the NRM's Approach

Gender is both cross-cutting to and explicit in the NRM's planned results. The set of eight systemic changes comprising the NRM's planned results, as articulated in the overarching MEAL Framework, include "transformation of gender norms and practices." Realizing these changes entails a multi-faceted approach including gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions, with an emphasis on programming being holistic and gender transformative in order to achieve gender

equality across the nexus. With the increasingly protracted nature of crises, a holistic approach to gender equality aligns with nexus objectives which focus on transitions across the stages of a crisis.

Approaches to nexus programming supported by the NRM aim to improve gender equality across outcomes, as well as ensure stronger integration of a gender lens in program analysis, planning, MEAL, and advocacy, and overall NRM policies and guidelines. With this, approaches to achieve transformative change for gender equality are foundational across the NRM's three approach pillars:

Integration: Implementing more holistic programs by breaking down silos and integrating human rights includes promoting gender equality as the responsibility of all actors (not a single sector), adhering to human rights principles including equal access and non-discrimination, and ensuring that gender considerations are integrated throughout joint assessments and the development of collective outcomes. Gender is not strictly concerned with rights, but also integral to building resilience and reducing vulnerability, while acknowledging the importance of choice and avoiding underlying assumptions that may undermine efforts to empower women and girls.

Transformation: The NRM's transformation pillar focuses on recognizing and mitigating existing power imbalances that exist within the aid sector and in broader society and protecting the rights of marginalized groups and communities. This includes addressing root causes of crisis includes addressing gender norms which keep women and girls from enjoying equal access to services and opportunities and enable violence against women and other gender minorities. The sustainability of gains made in improving gender equality requires not just stronger knowledge and capacities, but also attitude and behavior change, structural change, and responsive and effective (more inclusive) policies. Transforming gender inequalities requires strong commitment at institutional and local levels, therefore it is important to promote and ensure technical support where needed for gender responsive localization.

Accountability: Efforts to ensure accountability in the NRM include strict use of gender markers, use of gender analysis, and a strong gender lens in NRM communications and advocacy work. Client feedback and complaint mechanisms must be safe and equally accessible for women and girls. NRM MEAL systems will measure gender impact through the inclusion of gender indicators and targets at implementation and evaluation stages. Program monitoring will also support accountability through use of the DDCAF, responsible for joint assessment and context monitoring. An emphasis on independent analysis and learning includes efforts to fill gaps in analysis and learning related to gender and the nexus.

While the NRM Nexus Guidelines include gender transformation itself as a key principle and programmatic component, gender is also a key consideration across other components, e.g. localization, civil society strengthening, advocacy, policy dialogue, and learning. From a Do No Harm (DNH) and conflict sensitivity standpoint, the NRM will use robust context analysis and monitoring (including gender, conflict, and risk analyses) to ensure that it considers and mitigates

risks of creating or exacerbating gender inequalities, and that its gender mainstreaming and more targeted activities do no harm.

3. NRM Gender Strategy Goals and Delivery

3.1 Gender Equality Goals

To deliver on the aims outlined above, the NRM has identified three goals towards achieving gender equality in the NRM and its programs.

1. Promote gender equality within NRM structures and processes
2. Fund and implement effective gender transformative programming
3. Ensure all grants effectively mainstream gender transformation considerations in program design and implementation.

The NRM's approach to these goals is intersectional in nature; that is, they recognize and consider that gender is one of various identities (including religion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, ability, age, etc.) that affects the perspectives and actions of individuals. Gender cannot be viewed in isolation, and projects and activities that address gendered issues must also integrate a broader intersectional lens into their design and implementation.

3.2 Actions Needed to Achieve NRM Gender Equality Goals

Goal 1: Promote gender equality within NRM structures and processes

The NRM should reflect the values it requires of its partners. To this end, it is necessary that the NRM as an entity should ensure that its own structure and processes are gender equitable and inclusive. Key actions needed to achieve this goal include:

- > Encouraging female and LGBTQ applicants for all NRM positions, particularly at senior levels.
- > Ensure an enabling environment for all NRM team members, consultants and partners
- > Appointing a gender focal point responsible for ensuring the implementation of the gender strategy.
- > Maintaining a gender advisor responsible for providing support to NRM staff and IPs including on call for proposal design, proposal appraisals, and project implementation.
- > Building the capacity of the NRM Secretariat on gender and inclusion issues.

Goal 2: Fund and implement effective gender transformative programming

In line with the NRM's focus on transforming gender norms and practices as one of its key results, the NRM will ensure each of its projects incorporates gender transformative components or elements. Applying a gender lens to reducing vulnerabilities, increasing resilience, and protecting rights of conflict- and disaster-affected communities requires an understanding of the unique vulnerabilities and needs of women, girls, men, and boys in a crisis; preparedness planning that considers the gendered impacts of different types of crisis/disaster; rights-based programming that gives adequate attention to the equal rights of women and girls including non-discrimination based on gender; and targeted efforts to change attitudes and behaviors rooted in harmful social norms and gender stereotypes. While the NRM's project design will always be primarily driven by

the findings of its joint assessments, allowing for a wide range of gender programming, there are several **gender actions** the NRM will prioritize through its programming:

- > Strengthen the role of women in preparedness and resilience-building by directly investing in the capacities, leadership, and networking of formal and informal women-led/women-focused civil society groups.
- > Create space for LGBTQ individuals to participate in community service
- > Enhance protection and empowerment for women and girls by strengthening systems, transforming masculinities, and addressing power imbalances at household, community, and institutional levels.
- > Increase economic opportunity for women through targeted support for viable and sustainable livelihoods opportunity and pathways to employment.
- > Advance the women, peace, and security agenda in Myanmar through interventions that promote active, meaningful participation of women in dialogue, decision-making, and social cohesion.
- > Contribute to the Myanmar and global evidence base on gender and the nexus through gender-focused research and learning.

Potential interventions supported by the NRM to address gender disparities and improve gender equality may include but are not limited to those which:

- > Facilitate increased access to education, leadership, and livelihoods opportunities for women and girls.
- > Incorporate household and community level social and behavior change communication activities, including addressing gender division of labor and unequal burden.
- > Incorporate mentorship among women and girls and/or contribute to network and movement building.
- > Promote the empowerment of women and girls at community and institutional levels and develop pathways for their inclusion and leadership in dialogue and decision-making.
- > Increase women's and girls' voices and meaningful participation in social cohesion and local-level peacebuilding processes.
- > Ensure participation of rural women in gender dialogues taking into consideration urban/rural divides.
- > Give specific attention to women's access to land and property in integrated work to improve land rights and economic well-being.
- > Promote gender-sensitive nutrition, livelihoods, and food security programs and policies.
- > Include water, sanitation, and hygiene activities designed based on women's and girls' needs, risks, and concerns.
- > Provide targeted support to women-led/women's rights CSOs, NGOs, community groups, networks, etc. to build capacities and enhance leadership in preparedness, response, advocacy, and/or policy making.

- > Support the provision of responsive GBV prevention and response, including behavior change activities and engaging men and boys to challenge harmful gender stereotypes and power dynamics.
- > Increase understanding of and transform masculinities, ensuring participation of men, women, and gender non-conforming persons while challenging gender discriminatory practices.
- > Provide training and technical assistance for CSOs, NGOs, local authorities, and/or other service providers on e.g. gender equality, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory service delivery, etc.
- > Fill gaps in data and the overall evidence base through research and learning activities focused on gender, including women- and girl-led research activities.

Goal 3: Ensure all grants effectively mainstream gender sensitive and transformation considerations in program design and implementation.

The NRM seeks to support gender transformative programming at all levels – household, community, systems, and policy – whether through area- or thematic-based interventions. Regardless of the specific activities, any programming supported by the NRM must demonstrate and will be held accountable for several **key considerations**:

- > Gender analysis is used to inform project design, monitoring, and program management decisions.
- > Design and development of interventions use an intersectional lens, i.e. are based on underlying causes and other intersecting inequalities (e.g. ethnicity, disability, urban/rural, IDP/non-IDP).
- > Assessment and analysis effectively integrate gender considerations and perspectives on gender dynamics.
- > Women and girls are involved in program design, included in community engagement activities throughout the project cycle, and actively involved in project level decision-making bodies, demonstrating a commitment to ensuring sustainability.
- > Program design, informed by context and gender analysis, demonstrates considerations for holistic approaches and long-term solutions.
- > MEAL plans and capacities ensure data disaggregation by gender and age.
- > Measures are in place to ensure accountability for gender responsive programming, including client and partner feedback mechanisms.
- > Feedback mechanisms are designed and implemented with consideration for women's and girl's access and safety as well as for LGBTQ and male survivors of GBV.
- > Advocacy and communication plans and deliverables incorporate gender issues.

3.3 Operational implications and requirements

The above framework for gender equality, priority actions, and key considerations translate into several operational implications and requirements for effective delivery of the NRM Gender Strategy

Joint assessments

The NRM DDCAF will mainstream gender considerations throughout joint assessments, as well as develop and maintain a dedicated gender component to the overarching framework. Additionally, in its area-based assessments the NRM will work with partners to understand underlying power dynamics among persons of different genders and identify and work on issues pertaining to masculinities.

- > The NRM DDCAF will conduct one thematic joint assessment on gender programming across Myanmar and mainstream gender considerations throughout all other joint assessments.

Collective outcomes and community engagement

In developing collective outcomes informed by joint assessments, and engaging communities more generally throughout the project cycle, the NRM strives to unpack and ensure programming avoids assumptions related to gender. Where data, evidence, and analysis are lacking, the NRM will work to address those gaps to ensure programming is localized, i.e. informed by the experiences of persons of different genders in the sub-national contexts targeted. With this, the NRM recognizes that language is important, and for key concepts to be accessible to all local stakeholders, they must also be localized.

Women's organizations and networks are critical to advancing gender transformative nexus programming and should be engaged not only as implementing partners but as strategic partners in advancing key outcomes. When working to ensure the voices of women and girls are elevated in the development of collective outcomes, decision-making, advocacy, and various platforms to be supported, the NRM and its partners will ensure balance between women from urban vs rural areas. It is also important to ensure that when the NRM and its partners talk about 'women, girls, men, and boys' due attention is given to the intersection of other identities which can affect inclusion, including age, disability, and sexuality. Of particular importance is looking at age and gender, and the specific needs, vulnerabilities, capacities, etc. of youth and adolescents, particularly girls, are not ignored.

- > To the greatest extent possible, NRM programs should include at least one women-led or women's rights organization.
- > All projects must be able to demonstrate at reporting stages that women and girls have participated in project design, implementation, feedback, and decision-making.

Flexible and adaptive models

To effectively test nexus approaches toward achieving collective outcomes, the NRM strives to be flexible and adaptive. Operating with a broad definition of 'women's organizations', to include e.g. networks, informal, community-based groups, etc., the NRM supports exploring ways to work with groups that typically face challenges getting partnership/financial support for different reasons, e.g. not being registered. Recognizing that women and women's groups face different risks and power struggles at different levels, NRM context and risk analysis behind the development of

adaptive models will take such complexities into account. The NRM will maintain flexibility through its programming and fund management approach to facilitate context-appropriate, risk-informed, adaptive models of nexus interventions.

- > NRM context analysis and monitoring will ensure that the complexities and power struggles women and women's groups face at different levels in different sub-contexts are taken into account in efforts to explore and support creative, flexible ways of working with groups typically excluded.
- > All NRM-funded projects must be based on a thorough risk analysis including gender and ensure that scenario and contingency planning is conducted from a gender perspective.

Project level minimum criteria

The NRM seeks to support partners who meet certain minimum criteria and who can effectively contribute to the data and evidence base to further inform program and advocacy efforts. At the IP/project level the NRM will prioritize actions that meet a gender score of least 1,¹² including key criteria such as conducting a gender analysis; ensuring findings inform project design and management decisions using a DNH approach; disaggregating data by sex and age; incorporating at least one explicit gender equality objective and one gender-specific indicator; and monitoring and reporting on gender equality results achieved by the project in the evaluation phase. IP gender analyses should contribute to an understanding of how gender influences NRM programs in a given area (geographic and/or thematic) and the potential positive and negative impacts of NRM programs on male and female, and to the extent possible gender non-conforming, clients' safety and access to services.

- > Project proposals must be built on or include explicit plans to conduct a gender analysis, as well as meet all other gender marker score criteria.
- > The NRM will provide training on gender for all project partners to ensure standards and expectations related to minimum criteria are understood, and that partners' capacities to meet those standards are strengthened.

Measurement and accountability

Gender is a key factor in measuring the extent to which the NRM achieves its overall objective of contributing to lasting peace, stability, and sustainable development. At the specific objective level, the NRM's indicators are tied to its Vulnerability and Resilience Index (VRI) carried out by the DDCAF; the VRI includes specific gender dimensions for measuring vulnerability, resilience and rights issues. At the results level, the NRM has set indicators for transformation of gender norms which focus on the number of women-led/women's rights organizations supported and the number and type of institutions adopting transformative policies, norms, and practices. At the same time, project level

¹² A gender marker score of 0 indicates that a project has been screened against the marker, but does not target gender equality; a score of 1 indicates that gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principle reason for developing and implementing the project; a score of 2 indicates that gender equality is the project's main objective, fundamental in the design and expected results. Categories 1 and 2 have a corresponding set of minimum criteria to be met in full. All projects/programs must conduct a gender analysis.

outcomes and indicators are expected to incorporate gender across all results and intervention areas; NRM-supported projects are expected, and will be held accountable, to collect age and sex disaggregated data and report on gender impact. Using a gender scorecard approach, the NRM will assess at key points in the program cycle (e.g. joint assessments, design of calls for proposals, proposal appraisals, and project reporting stages) the extent to which the right questions are being asked and the best criteria are in place with regards to gender.

The NRM's mid-term review, with a focus on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, potential impact, and sustainability, will integrate cross-cutting dimensions with a focus on gender. The review will evaluate impacts of the NRM on women, girls, men, and boys, identify potential negative impacts, and offer recommendations to further pursue gender equality through gender responsive and transformative approaches. A final evaluation will also include a specific analysis on the gender impact of the NRM.

- > All baseline studies and project monitoring and reporting systems must be gender sensitive and should identify ways of measuring participation/inclusion of LGBTQ beneficiaries.
- > The NRM will develop and use a gender scorecard for project appraisal and tracking progress throughout the project cycle.

Learning Agendas

The Secretariat will work with partners to support project-level learning agendas and contributions to broader learning objectives. The NRM strives to generate evidence that can effectively inform policy governing humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding work in Myanmar, promoting gender-sensitive policy making across key sectors at national and sub-national levels. With this, NRM Secretariat, Board, and IP advocacy and policy work must be gender sensitive. The NRM will continue to track progress and learning from other programs and other countries, while also seeking to contribute to the global body of evidence and learning. The NRM will also engage other UNOPS-managed funds (e.g. the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT), Joint Peace Fund (JPF) on their approaches to gender transformative programming and achievements toward improving gender equality across the nexus.

- > The NRM will produce at least two thematic papers on gender and ensure that briefings and discussion forums are inclusive and facilitated using a gender lens.
- > The Secretariat will work with the NRM DDCAF and IPs to develop, incorporate, and deliver on a set of recurring research and learning questions on gender in the nexus applied across all programs.

See [Annex A: Gender Equality Action Plan](#) summarizing key actions and tasks for the delivery of the NRM Gender Strategy.

Annex A: Gender Equality Action Plan

Gender Equality Goals	Key Actions/Tasks	Timeline
G1. Promote gender equality within NRM structures and processes	Actively encourage female and LGBTQ applicants for all NRM positions, particularly at senior levels.	
	Appoint a gender focal point responsible for ensuring the implementation of the gender strategy.	
	Maintain a gender advisor responsible for providing support to NRM staff and IPs including on e.g. call for proposal design, proposal appraisals, and project implementation.	
G2. Fund and implement effective gender transformative programming	Develop concepts and calls for proposals, and fund projects, that align with the NRM's <u>priority gender actions</u> ¹³ as defined in the NRM Gender Strategy.	
G3. Ensure all grants effectively mainstream gender sensitive and transformation considerations in program design and implementation	Assess and verify that projects funded by the NRM have adhered to <u>key considerations</u> ¹⁴ outlined in the NRM Gender Strategy.	

Operational Implications	Key Actions/Tasks	Timeline
Joint assessments	Conduct one thematic joint assessment on gender programming across Myanmar.	
	Verify that gender considerations are mainstreamed throughout all other joint assessments.	
Collective outcomes and community engagement	Ensure that all calls for proposals emphasize that, to the greatest extent possible, programs are to include at least one women-led or women's rights organization.	
	Verify at project reporting stages that women and girls have participated in project design, implementation, feedback, and decision-making	

¹³ See section 3.2 of the NRM Gender Strategy for priority gender actions related to Goal 2.

¹⁴ See section 3.2 of the NRM Gender Strategy for key considerations related to Goal 3.

Flexible and adaptive models	Maintain flexibility through programming and fund management approaches in order to facilitate context-appropriate, risk-informed, adaptive models.	
	Ensure that NRM context analysis and monitoring take into account the complexities and power struggles women and women's groups face at different levels in different sub-contexts.	
	Support efforts, informed by context analysis and monitoring, to explore and test creative, flexible ways of working with women's groups that are typically excluded.	
	Ensure that NRM-funded projects are based on thorough risk analysis including gender and that scenario and contingency planning is conducted from a gender perspective.	
Project level minimum criteria	Prioritize actions that meet a gender score of at least 1, i.e. project proposals that are built on or include explicit plans to conduct a gender analysis and meet all other gender marker score criteria.	
	Provide training on gender for all project partners to ensure standards and expectations related to minimum criteria are understood, and that partners' capacities to meet those standards are strengthened.	
Measurement and accountability	Verify that all IP baseline studies and project monitoring and reporting systems are gender sensitive.	
	Ensure the NRM mid-term review 1. Integrates cross-cutting dimensions with a focus on gender, 2. evaluates impacts of the NRM on women, girls, men, and boys, 3. identifies potential negative impacts, and 4. offers recommendations to further pursue gender equality.	
	Include a specific analysis on the gender impact of the NRM in the program's final evaluation.	
	Develop and use a gender scorecard for appraisal and tracking progress throughout the project cycle.	

Learning agendas	Produce at least two thematic papers on gender.	
	Ensure that NRM briefings and discussion forums are inclusive and facilitated using a gender lens.	
	In collaboration with the NRM DDCAF and IPs, develop, incorporate, and deliver on a set of recurring research and learning questions on gender in the nexus applied across all programs.	
	Engage other UNOPS-managed funds (e.g. LIFT, JPF) on their approaches to, and for shared learning on, gender transformative programming and achievements toward improving gender equality across the nexus.	

Annex B: Gender Equality Criteria in Proposal Appraisal and Project Implementation

The following document will be attached to all NRM Calls for Proposals and the criteria described used to evaluate proposals.

NRM Gender Strategy Goals and Priorities

The NRM has three main goals towards achieving gender equality:

1. Promote gender equality within NRM structures and processes
2. Fund and implement effective gender transformative programming
3. Ensure all grants effectively mainstream gender sensitive and transformation considerations in program design and implementation.

Specific to project proposals and the implementation and monitoring of awarded projects, programming priorities and key considerations associated with Goals 2 and 3 follow. *(Please see the full NRM Gender strategy for more detailed information on gender equality commitments, approaches, and implications within the NRM):*

Goal 2 priority gender actions:

- > Strengthen the role of women in preparedness and resilience-building by directly investing in the capacities, leadership, and networking of formal and informal women-led/women-focused civil society groups.
- > Enhance protection and empowerment for women and girls by strengthening systems, transforming masculinities, and addressing power imbalances at household, community, and institutional levels.
- > Increase economic opportunity for women through targeted support for viable and sustainable livelihoods opportunity and pathways to employment.
- > Advance the women, peace, and security agenda in Myanmar through interventions that promote active, meaningful participation of women in dialogue, decision-making, and social cohesion.
- > Contribute to the Myanmar and global evidence base on gender and the nexus through gender-focused research and learning.

Goal 3 priorities and key considerations:

- > Use gender analysis to inform project design, monitoring, and program management decisions.
- > Base the design and development of interventions on underlying causes and other intersecting inequalities, i.e. using an intersectional lens.
- > Effectively integrate gender considerations and perspectives on gender dynamics in assessment and analysis.
- > Ensure women and girls are involved in program design, included in community engagement activities, and actively involved in project level decision-making bodies.
- > Consider holistic approaches and long-term solutions in project design.
- > Ensure MEAL plans and capacities allow for data disaggregation by gender and age.
- > Put measures in place to ensure accountability for gender responsive programming, including client and partner feedback mechanisms that consider women’s and girl’s access and safety.
- > Advocacy and communication plans and deliverables incorporate gender issues.

Evaluation criteria for proposal appraisals

All proposals for NRM funding must achieve a [DAC gender equality marker](#) score of 1 or 2. In addition, the NRM will score all proposals using the criteria outlined in the table below.

Key questions the concept note/proposal evaluation committee will be seeking to answer during proposal review include:

- > Does the proposal align with the NRM Gender Strategy?
- > Has the applicant already conducted and/or does the project plan to conduct a gender analysis at the beginning of the project?
- > To what extent does the proposal strive to include women and girls equally and meaningfully as project participants and beneficiaries?
- > What concrete measures are proposed to address gender issues through gender transformative approaches?
- > To what extent are gender-responsive and/or gender-specific criteria integrated in monitoring and reporting systems?

The following is the gender criteria scorecard that appraisal committees will use in their review of all project proposals:

Category	Criteria and Scoring		
	0 – Proposal does not meet minimum criteria	1 – Proposal meets minimum criteria	2 – Proposal exceeds minimum criteria
Context Analysis	<i>The proposal lacks a gender analysis and/or it is not clear from the proposal context description that the project partners understand and have</i>	<i>A gender analysis has been conducted and findings have informed the design of the project/program adopting a ‘do no harm’ approach.</i>	<i>The proposal context description includes an explicit power analysis that accurately describes gender and related identity issues, dynamics, and</i>

	<i>considered gender-related/ specific issues in the project context.</i>		<i>challenges in the project context; and risk analysis and scenario/contingency planning have been conducted from a gender perspective.</i>
Theory of Change / Project Objectives	<i>There are no specific objectives or activities that aim specifically to address gender-specific issues.</i>	<i>There is at least one explicit gender equality objective backed by at least one gender-specific indicator; women's and girl's empowerment is explicitly reflected in the proposed project's TOC.</i>	<i>The project's results framework tracks gender-specific outcomes and impact; and the ToC includes an explicit component specifically aimed at addressing prevalent power imbalances (which may include, but is not limited to, gender or identity issues).</i>
MEAL	<i>There is little or no integration of gender considerations/ gender equality in the proposed MEAL framework.</i>	<i>The proposed MEAL framework is gender/age disaggregated and partners demonstrate a commitment to monitor and report on the gender equality results achieved by the project.</i>	<i>The proposed MEAL framework is gender/age disaggregated and explicitly captures diverse/distinct experiences of different groups. The proposal learning agenda includes specific components relating to gender.</i>
Team Structure	<i>The proposal does not include any specific mention of strategies or plans to ensure gender equality in the project team.</i>	<i>The proposed team structure reflects concerted efforts to ensure gender balance, and/or the partner(s) has organizational gender/gender mainstreaming policies and plans in place to mainstream gender in recruitment/ deployment of project teams.</i>	<i>The proposed team structure includes women at senior levels of project leadership or indicates concrete plans for the recruitment of female leadership.</i>

Expectations during project implementation

NRM-funded projects will be held accountable for delivering on commitments, objectives, and approaches articulated in their approved project proposals and aligned with the NRM Gender Strategy. Throughout project implementation and at reporting stages, the NRM will look at progress on meeting gender marker criteria and incorporating key considerations into program development, including the extent to which:

- > Gender analysis has been used to inform project development, monitoring, and program management decisions.

- > Baseline studies and any other assessments and analyses have effectively integrated gender considerations and perspectives on gender dynamics.
- > The project can demonstrate at the reporting period that women and girls have been included in community engagement activities and actively involved in project level implementation, feedback, and decision-making bodies.
- > The project includes women-led or women's rights organizations.
- > Gender-sensitive client and partner feedback mechanisms are in place and have been designed and implemented with consideration for women's and girls' access and safety.
- > The project is following the defined set of research and learning questions on gender in the nexus.
- > Advocacy and communications plans and deliverables for a given reporting period have incorporated gender issues.
- > The project has created and/or seized opportunities for gender equality and women's rights research and/or advocacy.
- > Previous feedback and recommendations toward improving gender equality in the implementation and management of the project are in progress or have been fully addressed.

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