



TAN Project Gender Equality Assessment Synthesis

NTEAM
NUTRITION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MECHANISM

DECEMBER 2021

Acknowledgements

For their work in developing this gender equality assessment, Nutrition International would like to acknowledge Emmanuel Trépanier, TAN Project Gender Advisor and lead assessor, with contributions from Paulette Beat Songue, TAN Project Gender Advisor and Sarah Pentlow, Nutrition International Senior Program Officer, Gender Mainstreaming.

This gender equality assessment was produced by Nutrition International's Nutrition Technical Assistance Mechanism (NTEAM) under the Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) project, funded with UK aid from the UK government.

About NTEAM

Through NTEAM, Nutrition International shares its expertise globally to support the scale-up of nutrition for the most vulnerable.

NTEAM believes that knowledge, rigorously obtained and generously shared, is key to effective progress for nutrition. We provide timely and coordinated expert technical assistance to support governments, multilateral organizations, development banks and other global nutrition partners overcome gaps in capacity, design and delivery of multi-sectoral national nutrition action plans.

NTEAM encourages broad use of knowledge by translating technical information and research into accessible guidance, tools and capacity strengthening resources. Across all areas in which we work, we provide guidance, oversight and quality assurance—while taking a gender-sensitive approach—to ensure relevant and impactful technical assistance.

About TAN

TAN is a project within Nutrition International's NTEAM funded with UK aid from the UK government.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction	4
2 Background and Context	4
3 Gender Equality Results	6
3.1 FCDO thematic areas	6
3.2 Project logic model	7
3.3 Gender equality impact on nutrition by type of technical assistance	7
3.4 Gender impact at the global level	9
4 Enabling Factors Influencing the Ability to Achieve Gender Equality Results	10
4.1 Gender equality focused objectives or deliverables	10
4.2 Gender equality expertise and support provided during implementation of technical assistance	11
4.3 Political will of stakeholders	11
5 Recommendations	12
5.1 Develop a gender equality results framework	12
5.2 Recruit gender equality advisors	12
5.3 Ensure the inclusion of at least one or more gender equality objectives in terms of reference	12
5.4 Measure gender equality impact	12
5.5 Sustain gender mainstreaming practices and build on lessons learned	12



1 INTRODUCTION

Nutrition International's NTEAM has provided technical assistance (TA) mandates to support nutrition planning and delivery in Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Countries through the Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) project, which is funded by UK aid from the UK government. Aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SUN priorities and FCDO's strategic vision for gender equality, Nutrition International has progressively developed mechanisms to support the integration of gender equality (GE) considerations in these TA.

This document is a synthesis of the gender equality assessment conducted between July 2020 and May 2021, which documented TAN's GE impact. It reviews 34 TA projects delivered in Africa, Asia and to the SUN Movement Secretariat through the duration of the TAN Project between 2016 and 2021.

2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The specific objectives of this exercise were to:

- **Capture** the GE results generated by the project (at the TA level, but also globally) and identify the factors enabling the realization of these results;
- **Document** the GE results of TA assignments as well as TAN's global impact on GE;
- **Share** lessons learned and provide recommendations for future TA interventions

The methodology included:

1. A desk review of a sample of 34 TAs from Africa, Asia and Global
2. Key informant interviews with TA providers, Nutrition International staff and SUN Focal Points
3. A meta-analysis and the report writing

When selecting the TA for this exercise, key criteria included length, period, budget, how recently the TA was completed.



INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

GE and the empowerment of women and girls represent both a strategy towards achieving the SDGs (notably SDG 2 on nutrition and SDG 5 on gender equality) and an end goal. As a global nutrition initiative, TAN ensured that support included country-level multi-sectoral planning processes, and promoted inclusion and the achievement of greater nutrition outcomes for women and girls. FCDO's vision for GE is centered on five core thematic areas:

1. *Women's political empowerment*
2. *Women's economic empowerment*
3. *Ending violence against women and girls*
4. *Girls' education*
5. *Sexual and reproductive health and rights*

Of these thematic areas, the TAN Project touched mainly on the first two, although there was TA provided in all areas.

Within the context of the project, Nutrition International was required to report results to FCDO on a quarterly and annual basis on a series of high-level output indicators. When reporting on GE, Nutrition International described improvements to its gender mainstreaming process and the technical input it provides for TA assignments. Two output-level indicators measured this progress, namely:

1. *Proportion of completed TA that considers impact on GE.*
2. *Extent to which TA delivered considers impact on GE.*

TAN's gender mainstreaming process was launched in 2015, when Nutrition International established a mechanism to promote gender integration in the design and implementation of its TAs and their respective deliverables, with appropriate tools. Since then, TA providers (i.e. consultants) are required to indicate how they will ensure GE considerations in the provision of TA, especially into deliverables. To that effect, Nutrition International has provided guidance documents to assist TA providers who are required to present a gender plan. All deliverables are reviewed by Nutrition International's gender advisors, with quarterly and annual reporting on the two output-level indicators. TA providers may include genders experts on their teams, but this is not a requirement.

3 GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS

While development interventions ultimately seek to address the needs of beneficiaries at the regional, national or multi-country levels, the TAN Project’s primary intended contribution was towards effective multi-sectoral nutrition programming. Results of GE mainstreaming in TA have been captured through four different areas:

1. FCDO thematic areas
2. Level of results within the project logic model
3. Type of TAs
4. Other benefits generated and global achievements

3.1 FCDO thematic areas

The assessment showed that deliverables made the most significant contributions to women’s political and economic empowerment in Africa and Asia.

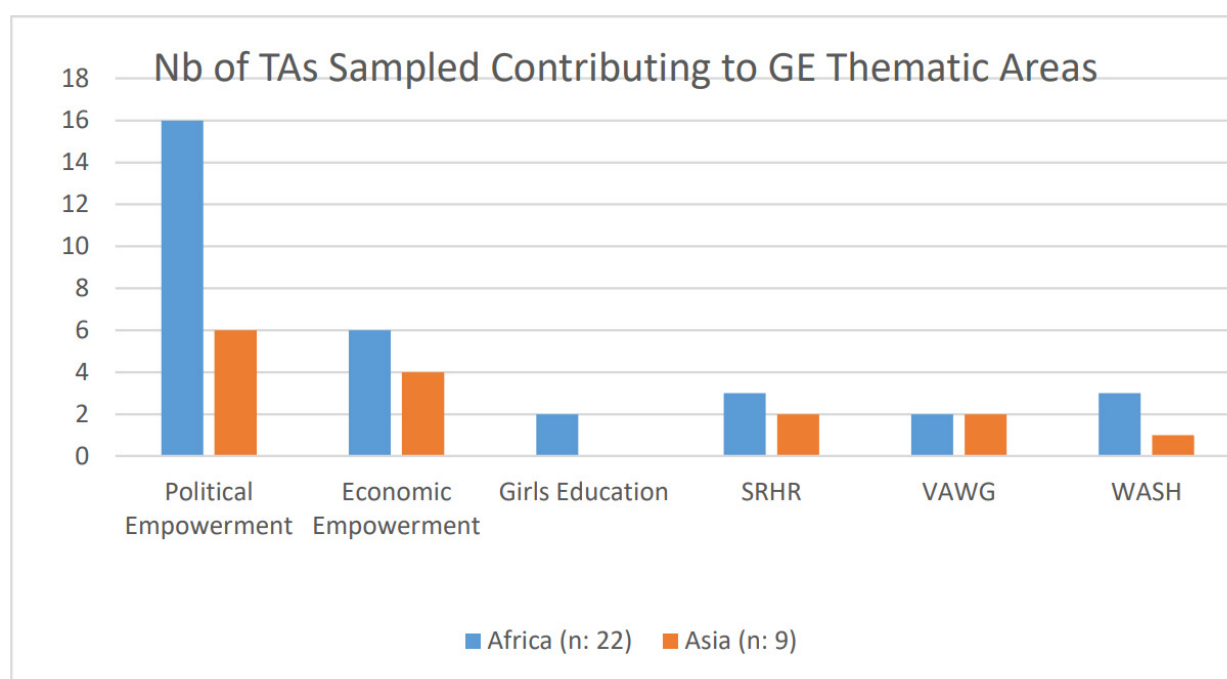


FIGURE 1: Number of TAs sampled contributing to GE thematic areas

In both Africa (n:16 or 73 percent) and Asia (n:4 or 44 percent), contributions to women’s political empowerment was the most frequent result stated or evidenced in TA deliverables. For example, in Niger, mothers’ groups and local women’s associations were included within multi-sectoral accountability mechanisms. As well, mothers and pregnant women are referenced as central stakeholders in the advocacy and communication plans.

The second highest GE result area to which TAs contributed within the sample was women’s economic empowerment or social protection schemes, in Africa (n:6 or 27 percent) and Asia (n:4 or 44 percent). For example, the Bangladesh TAs gender test case conducted a gender analysis of various bottlenecks in nutrition—especially of Social Safety Net Programs (SSNP)—and formulated strategies to address them through a gender inclusive model for improving nutrition programs.

3.2 Project logic model

The sample reviewed reveals that the TAN Project as a whole is able to demonstrate GE results at all levels within the results framework. These include:

- **Ultimate outcomes:** such as a contribution to increasing nutrition coverage of adolescent girls for folic acid supplementation or various other influences to women's/girl's political, economic or social empowerment (sexual and reproductive health and rights [SRHR], gender-based violence [GBV], education), as was achieved in Senegal, among other regions.
- **Intermediate outcomes:** such as increased practices in gender-sensitive nutrition costing, like in Mozambique.
- **Immediate outcomes:** such as increased knowledge, awareness and skills acquired by government stakeholders, notably their ability to identify gender issues and develop strategies to address them as part of nutrition action plans, as was seen in Ethiopia, for example.
- **Outputs:** such as gender mainstreaming guidelines, research products, policy recommendations, etc. For example, in Philippines, the TA provider produced an operations manual for Local Government Unit (LGU) nutrition learning hubs, which promoted gender balance and women's participation.
- **Activities:** such as GE sensitivity training workshops in various countries (Ethiopia, Bangladesh) or validation workshops which promoted a women-friendly discussion space in Pakistan.

3.3 Gender equality impact on nutrition by type of technical assistance

The TAN Project supported five types of TA:

1. *Nutrition data and evidence generation for informed decision-making*
2. *Supporting the nutrition enabling environment through legislation, policies, plans and guidelines*
3. *Nutrition costing, budgeting and financial tracking*
4. *Functional capacity/strengthening of SUN Focal Points, organizational development, and institutional development*
5. *Effective operationalization and delivery of multi-sectoral nutrition plans*

Depending on the type of TA, the GE results and subsequent impact vary by areas. Some examples can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 1: Gender equality results per type of TA provided

GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS PER TYPE OF TA		
Type of TA	GE results	Contribution to FCDO GE Impact Areas
Nutrition data and evidence generation for informed decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased coverage (and data tracking) of nutrition programming in favour of women or girls Identification of data or research gaps on gender dimensions, gender barriers, etc. <p>Example: in Bangladesh the bottleneck analysis explored gender barriers in reduction of malnutrition</p>	Impact or ramifications on girls' education, SRHR, GBV, etc., in addition to reducing gap in nutrition coverage for adolescent girls.
Supporting the nutrition enabling environment through legislation, policies, plans, guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of legal clauses to reduce gender inequities <p>Example: in Pakistan, gender-sensitive COVID-19 response and procedures were adopted to address barriers faced by women-led businesses in licensing regulation</p>	Impact on women's labour force participation and economic empowerment
Nutrition costing, budgeting and financial tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding of GE activities Gender-responsive budgeting <p>Example: in Ethiopia, gender was mainstreamed in the Sub-National Nutrition Tracking Tool of the Seqota Declaration Expansion and Scale-up phase roadmap documents</p>	Impact on equitable resource allocation to the benefit of traditionally marginalized groups; women's economic empowerment
Functional capacity strengthening of SUN Focal Points, organizational development, and institutional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of gender expertise in processes Evidence of gaps in gender expertise identified or addressed <p>Example: in Niger there was a strong level of women's participation in stakeholder meetings</p>	Impact on women's political participation, agency and empowerment
Effective operationalization and delivery of multi-sectoral nutrition plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitization of government stakeholders to gender dimensions Participation of traditionally excluded beneficiaries in the implementation of multi-sectoral nutrition plan <p>Example: in Indonesia, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection helped define a gender mainstreaming indicator in the multi-sectoral nutrition plan</p>	Impact of gender-sensitive nature of future nutrition policies/interventions



In addition to the type of TA, the **budget** available also influenced the extent to which GE results were achieved within each assignment. Of the 34 TA assignments assessed, the eight TAs with the largest budgets (i.e. upward of CAD 400K) generally showed more linkages across various thematic areas related to GE, had more impact on the GE commitments in nutrition planning frameworks and more instances of gender-inclusive processes than the rest. Although the TAs varied in duration ranging from 1–25 months, the duration was less of a predictor for whether or not GE results were achieved.

3.4 Gender impact at the global level

The GE assessment also noted an impact in GE in nutrition at the global level, mainly through support provided to the SUN Movement. Some of the main contributions identified were discussions around data gaps and capacity-building activities with nutrition stakeholders. This impact was achieved through training SUN Focal Points to mainstream GE in their work, national plans and advocacy efforts. Gender data gaps are being noted as illustrated by the comment below:

"I actively monitor discussions on the types of gender indicators available at the global level and look for ways to encourage active monitoring of these at the country level. As part of my review of [monitoring and evaluation] frameworks supported by the TAN Project, I looked at whether countries included indicators tracking women's status and empowerment in their frameworks. Despite the SUN Movement's commitment to 'adopt policies that reduce nutritional inequities, especially among women and girls and eliminate discriminatory laws and practices' and the TAN Project's efforts to explicitly require TA providers to include gender in all deliverables (and this explicitly mentioned in quality assurance feedback), there is a notable absence of these indicators in several of the national nutrition plans reviewed. For example, in Niger, there was no specific mention of indicators to show progress in reducing gender related barriers to improved nutrition, such as high prevalence of early marriage (76% before age 18) and low female secondary school enrollment (21%)."

¹ Source: TAN Project Knowledge Generation Report completed by TA Provider to the SUN Movement Secretariat



4 ENABLING FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ABILITY TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS

Many factors can influence the TA provider's ability to achieve GE results. The most significant factors are:

1. *GE-focused objectives or deliverables*
2. *GE expertise and support provided during TA implementation*
3. *Political will of stakeholders*

4.1 Gender equality focused objectives or deliverables

One general observation is that not enough TA assignments had at least one explicit objective or deliverable focused on GE in the TA's terms of reference (TOR). Furthermore, not enough TA projects explicitly detailed how the activities and deliverables should realize the GE objective.

One exception occurred in a TA project in Bangladesh that was designed to be a gender test case whereby all objectives and deliverables included GE considerations and a national gender expert was hired as part of the team. This TA achieved consistent positive results and made a substantial impact in terms of GE in nutrition. The national gender consultant played a central role in conducting a detailed gender analysis of intervention bottlenecks and ensured that these issues were reflected within the report to impact policy and programmatic changes. Within the bottleneck analysis report, the national gender consultant made recommendations to respond to, and overcome, these challenges to improve coverage. This included recommendations that:

1. *The Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) make mandatory the inclusion of male household members as a target audience in social and behaviour change communication strategies and program design.*
2. *Expand non-formal and mass education programs to incorporate more mothers and caregivers who have limited educational attainment.*
3. *Revisit existing policies and programs to increase coverage for girls' education.*

When a Gender Focal Person was nominated from the BNNC, Nutrition International's national gender consultant supported her orientation and capacity development to ensure gender is integrated in future planning and implementation.

For more information, please refer to Nutrition International's Gender Equality Good Practice Note resource, entitled [Bangladesh's own gender equality expertise helping to improve women and girls' nutrition](#).



4.2 Gender equality expertise and support provided during implementation of technical assistance

As the previous example illustrates, the presence of a gender expert on the TA provider team made a significant difference in the results achieved in gender mainstreaming by the TA. As a result, Bangladeshi government officers really owned the progress made in their national policies and plans and various stakeholders strengthened their capacity to mainstream gender in nutrition.

Kenya also had robust cross-sectoral gender integration, drawing linkages with GBV, economic empowerment, social protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, and used a gender transformative approach (e.g. life-cycle components) to demonstrate the importance of gender dimensions in County Nutrition Action Plans.

In addition to in-country gender expertise, another enabling factor was Nutrition International's team of international gender advisors who offered guidance to TA providers through a variety of means, including:

- Supporting gender onboarding calls
- Analyzing TORs to identify strategic opportunities and gender entry points
- Reviewing gender plans
- Researching and sharing guidance documents on gender integration for various types of TA, sectoral and geographic contexts
- Performing a gender review of key deliverables

4.3 Political will of stakeholders

Most governmental stakeholders expressed overwhelming support for a greater integration of gender considerations into multi-sectoral nutrition programming. However, many of these individuals misunderstood GE as merely a gender balance, women's participation and staffing equity issue. They did not realize that an understanding of gender issues (notably, barriers experienced by women and girls to access nutrition resources) should inform nutrition programming, strategy development, the establishment of activities and be supported by monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and funding. While some of these governments operate within political environments affected by wider societal gender norms (many of which are conservative and restrictive for women and girls), there remains opportunities to capitalize on existing national-level gender expertise to build a better understanding of how GE-focused TA can add value to nutrition policy.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the experience of mainstreaming gender within the TAN Project, a set of recommendations were provided to be considered in future TA projects in order to realize a greater impact on GE.

Those recommendations focus on providing clarity around the intended gender impact (i.e. results areas and strategies); ensuring the suitability of the GE expertise employed; intentionally embedding GE objectives in all TA TORs; sustaining robust gender mainstreaming practices; and monitoring and evaluating the achievement of GE results.

5.1 Develop a gender equality results framework

Identifying clear outcomes and objectives with measurable indicators will make it easy to measure GE impact. Strong GE leadership should support this strategic planning (see next item).

5.2 Recruit gender equality advisors

Gender experts should be included as part of the technical team at the global and national levels, especially with sub-thematic expertise. This will facilitate gender mainstreaming in the TA.

5.3 Ensure the inclusion of at least one or more gender equality objectives in terms of reference

In future TAs, strengthen the relationship between gender integration in deliverables. This will increase the ability of TAs to deliver gender results. Achieving at least one GE result should be a mandatory requirement.

5.4 Measure gender equality impact

The Gender Equality Results Framework should be systematic and intentional with a clear mechanism to track and measure the GE results outlined in the TORs of each TA. Where possible, indicators should go beyond measuring GE activities to capture changes at the outcome level.

5.5 Sustain gender mainstreaming practices and build on lessons learned

This review also demonstrates the importance of guiding non-gender-specialist TA providers in their journey into gender integration. Future nutrition interventions employing TA ought to capitalize on existing mechanisms, processes, tools and lessons learned to continue fine-tuning their respective approaches. In the case of the TAN Project, a **high-frequency low-dose** approach (for example, gender onboarding in the early weeks of TA implementation and follow-up midway through the cycle) has shown evidence to be an effective model.





Nourish Life

NutritionIntl.org

NTEAM
NUTRITION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MECHANISM