

GBV AoR HELPDESK

Gender Based Violence in Emergencies

GBV Risks, Food Insecurity, and the Integrated Food Security Classification – What Are Basics that Food Security and GBV Actors Need to Know?



Jeanne Ward | Aug 2022

Introduction

Current events globally such as the escalating effects of climate change, the war in Ukraine, and the COVID-19 pandemic are creating an exceptional risk of food insecurity across many parts of the world, prompting the UN Secretary General to issue a dire warning in March 2022 about an impending possibility of “a hurricane of hunger and a meltdown of the global food system.”¹ Evidence shows that this cataclysm of food insecurity will impact the lives of women and girls disproportionately. According to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), women around the world are more likely than men to experience moderate or severe food insecurity, an issue that appears in recent years to be on the rise.^{2, 3} As food insecurity continues to increase, so may this food-related gender gap.

The foundation of this gender gap is gender inequities between males and females that give women less power over and access to food production, supplies, and other food-related resources than men. Some of the specific constraints to equal food access for women and girls include:

Defining Food Insecurity: FAO describes that food insecurity in an individual occurs “when they lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life.” This can be due to unavailability of food and/or lack of resources to obtain food. Food insecurity is categorized at different levels of severity: **mild food insecurity; moderate food insecurity; and severe food insecurity.** Severe food insecurity is described as when someone has run out of food and gone a day without eating. Hunger and food insecurity is closely related, as someone who is severely food insecure is likely to also have experienced hunger.

See: FAO (2021) “Hunger and Food Insecurity”
<https://www.fao.org/hunger/en/>

¹ Cited in GBV Working Group, West and Central Africa, April 2022. No Conflict is a Vacuum: GBV, Food Insecurity and the consequences of the Ukraine crisis on GBV in West and Central Africa. Advocacy brief - 1

² FAO et al, 2020, cited in Carter, B., & Kelly, L. (2021). Social inequalities and famine and food insecurity risk. K4D Helpdesk Report. Institute of Development Studies.
https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/16735/954_Social_inequalities_and_famine_and_severe_food_insecurity_risk%20.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

³ Ahlenback (2022) cites interagency findings: Whereas the prevalence of moderate to severe food insecurity was 6% higher in women than men in 2019, it was 10% higher in women than men in 2020. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2021) “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all”,
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/cb4474en.pdf>

- 1) unequal access to and ownership of assets, including land rights and productive resources;
- 2) disproportionate representation in lower-paying, insecure jobs, with less autonomy over household decisions, or no income; and
- 3) discriminatory gender norms that restrict women's freedom of movement and burden them with unpaid caring responsibilities.⁴

Just as these constraints frame food insecurity for women and girls, they also frame the risk of gender-based violence (GBV).⁵ As is discussed further below, evidence suggests that conditions of inequitable gender norms not only contribute to both food insecurity and GBV, they also *link* the problems of GBV and food insecurity. Where females have less power and resources, GBV can serve as a driver of food insecurity for women and girls (for example, when women eat less because of fear of retaliation from their male partners or are deprived of food by male partners or family members). Food insecurity can also increase the risk of exposure to violence for women and girls (for example, sexual exploitation linked to efforts to access food).

According to a recent report from CARE, “the more gender inequality there is in a country, the hungrier people are.”⁶ On the other hand, women's empowerment results in improved food outcomes for women, and can increase overall household resilience to food insecurity.⁷ Women's empowerment also reduces the risk of their exposure to GBV linked to food insecurity.

At minimum, this evidence suggest that women and girls must be specifically targeted in food security efforts given their heightened risk of food insecurity, and because engaging women and girls can more effectively reduce overall food insecurity. To be most effective, interventions must address the links between gender inequities, GBV and food insecurity. Surprisingly, within the food security sector, attention to these links has not been fully embedded. In a significant example, one of the most important new tools related to food security does little to promote specific knowledge about the pathways connecting gender, GBV and food insecurity. This tool is the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, commonly referred to as the “IPC.”

This learning brief is aimed at both food security and GBV actors, to encourage each group to consider how the IPC may be improved to support attention to GBV as both a driver and an outcome of food insecurity, and also how data collected as part of the IPC can lay the foundation for empowerment work within the food security sector that can reduce both food insecurity and GBV. The learning brief begins with brief summary of the IPC, and then provides a review of some of the key links between gender inequality, food insecurity and GBV, particularly within the household. It goes on to discuss in brief the importance of ensuring a gender analysis is included in the IPC and identifies several tools for supplementing the IPC to consider women's heightened risk of food insecurity. The learning brief concludes with recommendations for the food security community and the GBV community to take coordinated action to address the two global crises of food insecurity and GBV.

What is the IPC?

The Integrated Food Security Classification, or IPC, is sometimes referred to as the ‘IPC scale.’ The tool was initially developed by FAO for use in Somalia, with the first official version released to an external audience in 2006. By 2012, a global partnership had formed, contributing to the release of a second version; this version was notable for

⁴ Njuki et al., 2021; Brody et al., 2014: 21; Botreau & Cohen, 2018, cited in Carter and Kelly, 2021. Social inequalities and famine and food insecurity risk. K4D Helpdesk Report. Institute of Development Studies.

⁵ For a summary of these links, see Fraser, E, 2020. “Food Security, VAWG and Nutrition:”, <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/query-309-food-security-nutrition-and-violence-against-women-and-girls>

⁶ CARE, 2022. Food Security and Gender Equality: A synergistic understudied symphony, p 1. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/food-security-and-gender-equality-synergistic-understudied-symphony-0>

⁷ See, for example, Bapolisi, W. A., Ferrari, G., Bisimwa, G., & Merten, S., 2021. Gendered determinants of food insecurity in ongoing regional conflicts, North and South Kivu, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Agriculture & Food Security, 10(1), 1-9. <https://agricultureandfoodsecurity.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40066-021-00285-x>.

transitioning the IPC from a country-specific tool to a global classification scale. Since then, additional partners have joined in the IPC Partnership, which is currently comprised of 15 organizations and government institutions working globally to address food insecurity.⁸ In 2019, these partners, through an IPC Global Support Unit, undertook a comprehensive revision to the IPC manual and tools that resulted in Version 3.0 of the IPC. In 2021, following an evaluation conducted in 2020, Version 3.1 was introduced. This version is the most up to date and wide-ranging, insofar as it focuses on both food insecurity and malnutrition.⁹

The broad purpose of the IPC classification is to support food security and nutrition analysts (and other relevant stakeholders) to identify and collect information about the degree of food insecurity and/or malnutrition in a given setting. In version 3.1 of the IPC, there are three scales that can be measured: Acute Food Insecurity, Chronic Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition. Each of these three scales has different possible levels of severity:

Acute Food Insecurity: (1) None/Minimal; (2) Stressed; (3) Crisis; (4) Emergency; and (5) Catastrophe/Famine

Chronic Food Insecurity: (1) No/Minimal; (2) Mild; (3) Moderate; and (4) Severe

Acute Malnutrition Classification: (1) Acceptable; (2) Alert; (3) Serious; (4) Critical; and (5) Extremely Critical

For each scale, the level of severity that is determined to exist in the setting will have distinct implications for priority interventions, and as such the classification is important in guiding policies and responses to food insecurity and malnutrition. These scales are also designed to be interlinked to form an overarching picture of food-insecure situations.

To collect information for each scale, the IPC Manual recommends globally accepted indicators and standards organized around investigation of how vulnerability, resources and control interact with acute events or hazards to impact food availability, access, and utilization, creating changes in food consumption, livelihoods, nutritional status and mortality. These key areas for investigation are laid out in the IPC conceptual framework in Figure 1 below.¹⁰

Also in support of the classification process, the IPC Manual includes recommended approaches, protocols, tools and templates for data collection and data analysis. These are organized according to four key 'IPC Functions': (1) Build Technical Consensus; (2) Classify Severity and Identify Key Drivers; (3) Communicate for Action; and (4) Quality Assurance. Reference tables help analysts to classify current and projected levels of severity for each of the three scales. The Manual even includes guidance on communication protocols for data collection and data sharing. All of this is meant to ensure high-quality research that, among other aims, will allow for global comparability.¹¹ And because the IPC has striven to develop analytical consistency across all the scales, when an analyst becomes familiar with one scale, s/he can relatively easily understand and use the other scales.

The **IPC Manual Version 3.1** is divided into two parts:

► **Part I** provides the general user, including donors, implementing partners and governments, with adequate information to understand and critically utilize IPC products.

► **Part II** provides the analyst with the protocols, including tools and procedures, to conduct the classification.

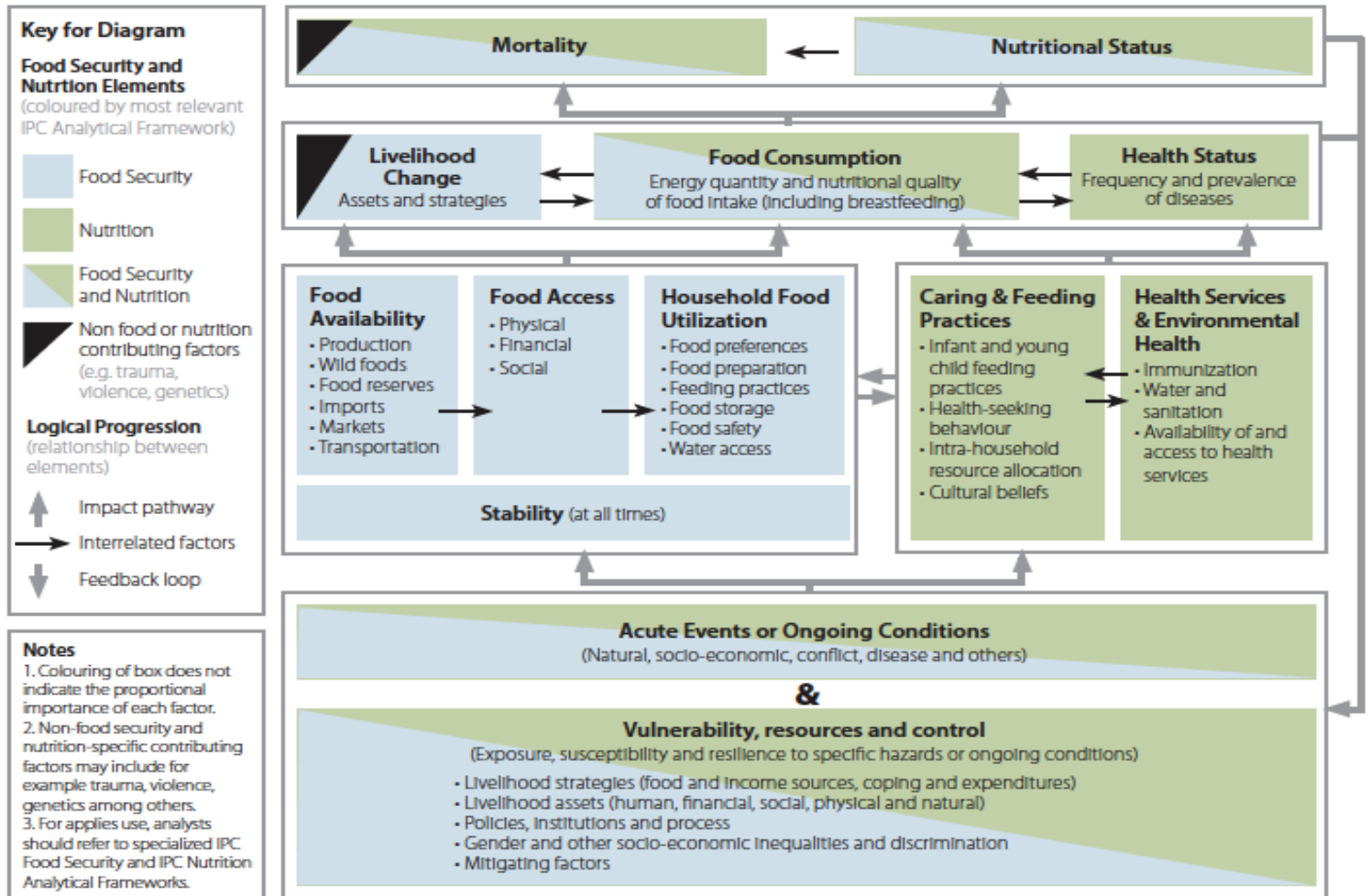
⁸ Members of the IPC Partnership are Action Against Hunger, CARE International, Comité Permanent Inter-États de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), the Global Food Security Cluster, the Global Nutrition Cluster, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission, Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Save the Children, Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA), World Food Programme (WFP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

⁹ Authors of Version 3.1 note that "Pending the future publication of any further revisions, Version 3.1 should be applied to all analyses going forward; previous versions of the manual should be considered obsolete." (IPC Global Partners, 2021, *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Technical Manual Version 3.1. Evidence and Standards for Better Food Security and Nutrition Decisions*. Rome. p iii).

¹⁰ The framework is excerpted from IPC Global Partners. 2021. p 11.

¹¹ It may be of interest that the classification for famine, or the most severe crisis context, involves technically rigorous analysis that must meet specific thresholds or criteria. Given this data can be difficult to collect in humanitarian emergencies, the IPC Manual provides additional recommendations on how to maintain IPC's standards.

Figure 7: The IPC Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Conceptual Framework (Tool 1)



How does the IPC address GBV issues?

The brief description above of the IPC may not fully illustrate how detailed it is in terms of helping analysts to understand how to best collect, analyze and share standardized, comparable data related to food security and nutrition. And yet, despite this commitment to detail to understanding and reporting on the drivers and effects of food insecurity and malnutrition, there is no specific reference to GBV anywhere in the manual, and only two references to violence more broadly -- both of which are in the IPC conceptual framework (presented in Figure 1 above), within the key explaining how to read the framework. The references note how violence might be a ‘non-food’ contributing factor for livelihood change and/or mortality. In this formulation, violence is recognized in the framework as an issue outside of its direct link to food insecurity.

There are, however, repeated references to ‘women’ (N=36) and to ‘gender’ (N=31) in the IPC manual. For women, references show up most frequently in association with two indicators for the acute malnutrition classification that address “pregnant and lactating *women* acutely malnourished and in need of treatment” and “minimum dietary diversity for *women*” (italics added).¹² In the acute food security classification, there is an indicator on body mass index (BMI) that while not specific to women, is typically measured on females between 15-49 years of age. For the chronic

¹² For more information about this second indicator, see: FAO and FHI 360. 2016. Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women: A Guide for Measurement. Rome: FAO. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5486e.pdf>

food insecurity classification, there is a specific indicator related to quality of food consumption that looks at the minimum dietary diversity of women.

In terms of references to gender, the first reference is in the conceptual framework, and recognizes that “gender and other socio-economic inequalities and discrimination” may determine vulnerability to food insecurity and/or malnutrition, as well as resilience to these conditions. According to the IPC

the interaction between hazards and vulnerabilities drives food insecurity. Thus, analysis of these interactions identifies the key drivers of food insecurity. Vulnerability is defined as a household’s exposure, susceptibility and resilience to specific hazards [...] Vulnerability analysis is mainly driven by an understanding of: the livelihood strategies of households (how they obtain food and income, their common coping strategies, and expenditure patterns); the livelihood assets that households can rely on including financial, physical, human, social, and natural assets; and how policies, institutions and processes, **gender**, and mitigating factors positively or negatively affect or could affect their ability to successfully respond to shocks and ongoing conditions (emphasis added).¹³

The IPC goes on to recommend that analysis of current or projected food insecurity and malnutrition trends must include reference to historical context, including reference to gender inequalities. For the chronic food classification, the manual broadly recommends analysing gender disparities of those who are most food insecure. For acute malnutrition, there is a similarly broad recommendation to investigate gender dynamics, women’s education levels, and their social status. The manual further recommends a gender specialist be included in the IPC Analysis team for all three areas of classification (acute food insecurity, chronic food insecurity, and acute malnutrition). However, even with the important contributions of a gender specialist, the manual itself does not identify specific indicators or specific data to be collected, and in general does not recommend that gender-disaggregated data be collected for most indicators it does list. This is reportedly due, in part, to the fact that countries themselves typically do not have gender-disaggregated data available on food insecurity from which the IPC analysis can draw.¹⁴

Moreover, even for the indicators the IPC does include that reference females, the classification scales investigate and describe *household and area-level* situations (area referring to the geographic area being investigated). This means that the data that is produced in line with the IPC guidance will not look at intra-household dynamics—or how food insecurity and malnutrition is different for women and girls in some households when compared to men and boys. In a summary review of several IPC country-level reports and the extent to which they incorporate attention to social inequality and discrimination, it was found that some reports indicated whether the household was male or female; one report included analysis of who accesses food distribution and who controls decision-making about rations. However, none of the reports reviewed included analysis of the differential impact of food insecurity on males and females.¹⁵ A recent analysis by CARE of 73 global reports proposing solutions to the current hunger pandemic showed that:

- Nearly half of the reports—46%—do not refer to women and girls at all.
- None of the reports consistently analyze or reflect the gendered effects of the pandemic and hunger crises.
- Only 5 reports—less than 7%—proposed concrete actions to resolve the gender inequalities crippling food systems. The rest overlook or ignore women and girls.¹⁶

¹³ IPC Manual (2021), p 30.

¹⁴ Lieberman, A. (2021). Where are the women in food insecurity analysis? Devex. <https://www.devex.com/news/where-are-the-women-in-food-insecurity-analysis-98804>.

¹⁵ Carter, B., & Kelly, L. (2021). Social inequalities and famine and food insecurity risk. K4D Helpdesk Report. Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/K4D.2021.097. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/16735/954_Social_inequalities_and_famine_and_severe_food_insecurity_risk%20.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.

¹⁶ Excerpted from CARE International. (2020). Left out and left behind: Ignoring women will prevent us from solving the hunger crisis. Policy Report, p 3. <https://www.care-international.org/files/files/LeftOutandLeftBehind.pdf>.

The IPC does encourage investigation into specific household groups—what is referred to as ‘household analysis groups’, or HAGs. One type of household, or HAG, might be those headed by females. While a HAG approach is important in terms of generating information about particularly vulnerable households, it still does not contribute to the overall analysis or understanding of how women and girls may be disproportionately affected by food insecurity (as both an outcome and an indicator of GBV) within individual households. And yet, these individual level dynamics are critical in any understanding of the risks for and impacts on food insecurity for women and girls, and how these risks reflect and are exacerbated by GBV. As the next section illustrates, it is within the household *in particular* that the relationship between gender inequality, GBV and food insecurity often plays out.

The “Hidden” Risks for Women and Girls for Food Insecurity in the Household

Before turning in this section to examine the available evidence on the links between gender inequality, GBV and food insecurity within the household, it is important to recognize that there are many other sites of risk for women and girls beyond the household that are connected to food insecurity. In an analysis of food insecurity in conflict-affected settings, Ahlenback identified three “conditions,” or drivers, that can heighten GBV risk in relation to food insecurity and two of them are outside of the household: the search for food, and access to food aid.¹⁷ These conditions, according to data reported by Ahlenback, can lead to sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual exploitation, among other types of GBV.

And yet, one of the biggest pathways linking food insecurity and GBV is in the household, in terms of intimate partner violence (IPV). Examples from disparate parts of the world seem to suggest global prevalence of this pathway. In Uganda, for example, after adjusting for a number of variables such as age group, religion, number of lifetime sexual partners, etc., researchers found a persistent correlation between food insecurity and male perpetration of both physical and sexual violence.¹⁸ In CAR, trends observed in reported GBV incidents showed an increase in reports of IPV in the lean season, during drought periods and in areas where food insecurity is higher.¹⁹ Research on the perpetration of IPV among men from Johannesburg townships in South Africa found that food insecurity doubled the odds of IPV.²⁰

The correlation is bi-directional, in that food insecurity not only accelerates IPV risk, the existence of IPV risk can accelerate food insecurity. In Bangladesh and India, women reported that they ate less (and often last) to avoid IPV.²¹ And the impact is not only on adult women. According to new research by UNICEF, poor nutritional outcomes for children are closely linked to the interaction of food security and GBV.²² The Women’s Refugee Commission and Plan International found that in the Philippines, food insecurity was a contributor to early marriage.²³ Early marriage in turn puts young brides at higher risk of IPV.

¹⁷ The third condition is lack of food, which is highlighted in the paper as a contributor to violence between intimate partners, and also child marriage. See Ahlenback, 2022. Brief Overview of Research, Evidence and Learning on the Links between Food Insecurity and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict-Affected Settings, GBV AoR. <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/gbv-aor-hd-food-insecurity-famine-and-gbv-19112021.pdf>

¹⁸ Awungafac G, M. S. (2021, March 31). Household food insecurity and its association with self-reported male perpetration of intimate partner violence: a survey of two districts in central and western Uganda. *BMJ Open*, 1-13. <http://bmjopen.bmj.com>

¹⁹ GBV Working Group, West and Central Africa, April 2022. No Conflict is a Vacuum: GBV, Food Insecurity and the consequences of the Ukraine crisis on GBV in West and Central Africa. Advocacy brief - 1

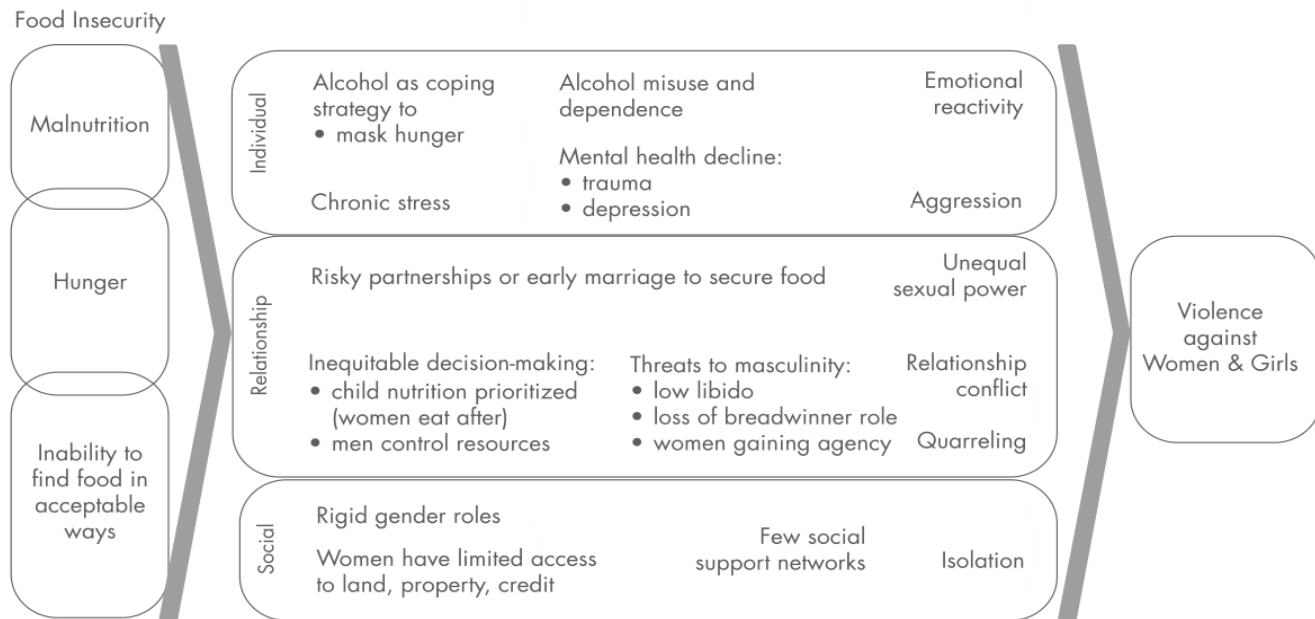
²⁰ Hatcher, A. M., Page, S., van Eck, L. A., Pearson, I., Fielding-Miller, R., Mazars, C., & Stöckl, H. (2022). Systematic review of food insecurity and violence against women and girls: mixed methods findings from low-and middle-income settings. *medRxiv*.

²¹ Lentz, E. C., Narayanan, S., & De, A. (2019). Last and least: Findings on intrahousehold undernutrition from participatory research in South Asia. *Social science & medicine (1982)*, 232, 316–323. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.05.024>.

²² Key informant interview, August 2022. Research outcomes to be published in 2022/2023.

²³ See Women’s Refugee Commission and Plan International, 2022. Our Voice, Our Future: Understanding Risks and Adaptive Capacities to Prevent and Respond to Child Marriage in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/our-voices-our-future-understanding-risks-and-adaptive-capacities-to-prevent-and-respond-to-child-marriage-in-the-bangsamoro-autonomous-region-in-muslim-mindanao-barmm/>

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Pathways Between Food Insecurity and GBV



In a recent meta-analysis of 21 cross-sectional studies, reviewers found that food insecurity *doubled* the odds of reported GBV. Many of the links had to do with partner dynamics, particularly increased stress in partnerships as a result of food insecurity. Other specific links are increased alcohol consumption, poor mental health, gender inequalities in decision making between partners, lack of resources for females in the household, etc. (see Figure 2 above). The authors of the meta-analysis concluded that

Strong evidence exists for a relationship between food security and IPV. [...] Strategies to ensure households have access to sufficient food and safe relationships are urgently needed to prevent [violence against women and girls].²⁴ (Emphasis added.)

How Can the Food Security and GBV Sectors Better Understand and Address the Links Between Gender Inequality, GBV and Food Insecurity?

The evidence above clearly indicates that to adequately respond to the problems of food insecurity and malnutrition, it is important to develop a better understanding of the conditions and needs of women and girls in affected communities. Many in the food security sector seem to concur. Notably, a 2019 evaluation of the IPC reported that

a number of IPC users interviewed for this evaluation raised concerns about the lack of disaggregation in the IPC [Acute Food Insecurity] AFI analysis. The greatest demand is for disaggregation to smaller geographical units, followed by disaggregation by different population groups. Addressing the latter is planned in the next phase of the [Global Support Partnership] GSP.²⁵

“If we had a better understanding of exactly who was in need and in which type of need, we’d be able to tailor responses in a way that would address critical gaps earlier.”

— Sarah Fuhrman, a humanitarian policy specialist, CARE International, quoted in Devex <https://www.devex.com/news/where-are-the-women-in-food-insecurity-analysis-98804>

²⁴ Hatcher, A. M., Page, S., van Eck, L. A., Pearson, I., Fielding-Miller, R., Mazars, C., & Stöckl, H. (2022). Systematic review of food insecurity and violence against women and girls: mixed methods findings from low-and middle-income settings. *medRxiv*. <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.04.20.22274085v1.full.pdf>.

²⁵ Final Evaluation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Global Strategic Programme (GSP) – Executive Summary p. 5.

“In reality, not everyone in the same household consumes the same amount or quality of food, has the same coping strategies, or is empowered equally to make decisions. If we can let go of these patriarchal, archaic notions about the household, we will go a long way in having better data.”

--Jaqueline Paul, Senior Gender Advisor, WFP, quoted in Devex

<https://www.devex.com/news/q-a-how-data-can-stop-women-from-going-hungry-97674>

A key recommendation to the IPC Global Support Partnership was to “continue to develop the IPC for better disaggregation” (including gender).²⁶ In response, the IPC is currently piloting a gender initiative in select countries that is aimed at including more sex-and age-disaggregated data within the IPC methodology, including gender and GBV-focused indicators. The Global Strategic Advisory Group of the IPC is also planning a study in 2023 to understand what food security actors require in terms of data and indicators to better inform their response to women and girls.

In the meantime, analysts can use specific indicators within the existing IPC as potential markers for gender inequality and

heightened risk of GBV and develop policies and programming accordingly. These indicators would at minimum be those noted above looking at women and malnutrition, dietary diversity, and BMI. Where malnutrition is high, and dietary diversity and BMI are low (and taking into account the socio-cultural context), it will be critically important to further assess issues of GBV and how they link to food security.

For more detailed research, and even as the IPC itself evolves to support better identification and reporting on the specific risks and needs of women and girls within households, there are other tools to support a gendered analysis of food insecurity that can feed into IPC reporting and, most importantly, to the development of food security policies and programming that better serve women and girls and promote long-term resilience to food insecurity. (See Annex 2 for a sample of these tools.)

In one example that has global applicability, the GE4FS measure combines the eight Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) questions—which are already included in the IPC—with a gender equality component. Launched by the World Food Programme (WFP, in collaboration with Gallup and FAO) in 2018, this component is made up of 18 mostly yes/no questions that investigate five areas related to women’s empowerment: decision-making ability, financial self-sufficiency, freedom from violence, reproductive freedom and unpaid labour. As of 2019, the GE4FS has been administered in 17 countries. However, lack of funding has reportedly stalled the rollout of GE4FS to other countries, although the tool is publicly available for analysts to utilize.²⁷

Another tool is the *Guide to Formulating Gendered Social Norms Indicators in the context of Food Security and Nutrition*. Published in 2022, this Guide represents a collaboration between WFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and is meant to assist food security actors with formulating indicators to measure changes in gendered social norms in the context of food security and nutrition programming. The ongoing collection of these types of indicators can provide a more detailed analysis of the relationship between gender inequality, GBV and food insecurity.

In releasing the Guide, these agencies have recognized and are advocating for the criticality of gender-transformative approaches to address both acute and chronic food insecurity, emphasizing their agency commitments to embed “gender transformative approaches in their institutional culture, programmes, working modalities and policy dialogue with the ultimate objective to help increase their

“Gender transformative approaches (GTAs) seek to actively examine, challenge and transform the underlying causes of gender inequalities rooted in discriminatory social structures and institutions. They aim at addressing unequal gendered power relations and discriminatory norms, attitudes, behaviors and practices, as well as gender-blind or discriminatory laws and policies that create and perpetuate gender inequalities. By doing so, GTAs seek to eradicate systemic forms of gender-based discrimination and create or strengthen gender relations and social structures that support gender equality.”

-Excerpted from FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2022.

<https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0673en>

²⁶ Final Evaluation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Global Strategic Programme (GSP) – Executive Summary p. 7.

²⁷ As of 2019, the GE4FS has been administered in 17 countries. For more information about the GE4FS, see

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/power-gender-equality-food-security-closing-another-gender-data-gap-new-quantitative>

effectiveness in contributing towards improved food security and nutrition.”²⁸ The Guide is based on a theory of change that specifically identifies reduction of GBV as an outcome of gender transformative food and nutrition programming (see Annex 1).

In addition to using these tools, food security actors can link to existing data on gender and GBV through the GBV coordination mechanism in country (often referred to as the GBV Subcluster, or GBV Working Group), not only for information about household-level IPV, but to understand other forms of GBV that link to or may be exacerbated by food insecurity (e.g., child marriage, sexual exploitation, etc.). In an increasing number of countries, GBV coordination partners are spearheading secondary data reviews that summarize available GBV information in the setting. These may be of use to food security analysts. However, the point of gathering this data is not to justify the need for integrating GBV risk mitigation interventions in the food security sector, but rather to refine policies and programmes to better meet identified needs. Even without specific evidence or data in a given country, and in line with the IASC *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action* (GBV Guidelines), food security actors should “assume GBV is taking place [...] and treat it as a serious and life threatening problem” that impacts food security in humanitarian settings.²⁹ The GBV Guidelines themselves have indicators that may be helpful for food security actors in monitoring GBV risk mitigation efforts across the programme cycle, and as such are an important additional reference tool for food security analysts.³⁰

Further recommendations for food security actors and other stakeholders are captured below.

Recommendations Moving Forward

For the IPC Partnership:

- As per the recommendation in the IPC evaluation, in the next version of the IPC support sex- and age-disaggregated data, including intra-household, that examine gender inequality, GBV and food insecurity and malnutrition.
- In the interim, develop a guidance note (similar to existing notes on the impact of the war in Ukraine and acute food insecurity in urban areas in the context of COVID-19) on including types of GBV as a first-level outcome of acute and chronic food insecurity, with information on how to collect and report data safely, maintaining confidentiality, and outline how the data can be used to design policies and programming. Support uptake of data tools examining gender inequality and GBV, such as the GE4FS, as part of the IPC process.

For the food security sector:

- In line with the recommendations in the IPC, ensure the inclusion of gender and GBV specialists in the IPC classification review teams, including specialists from local women-led organizations (and as necessary, resource their inclusion to decrease the financial burden on these specialists, particularly local partners).
- Support standardized uptake of data tools examining gender inequality and GBV, such as the GE4FS, including through development of an accompanying training package as well as advocacy to relevant government partners for incorporation of these data tools in national systems.

²⁸ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2022. Guide to formulating gendered social norms indicators in the context of food security and nutrition. Rome, p 1. See <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0673en>

²⁹ IASC, 2015. *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action*, <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>

³⁰ There is specific thematic area guide for food security and agriculture actors that is published separately from the larger combined GBV Guidelines, available at https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/TAG-FSA-08_26_2015.pdf

- Ensure the IPC teams draw data on the scope of GBV from the GBVIMS aggregated data (where it exists) and other sources (such as secondary data reviews) that have been produced by the GBV Subcluster.³¹ Link this data to specific food insecurity protection risks, such as IPV, child marriage and sexual exploitation and design policies and programmes accordingly.
- Use information collected on the relevant existing indicators on women (e.g. malnutrition, dietary diversity and BMI) within the IPC to advocate for the need for greater attention to the links between gender inequality, GBV, and food insecurity and malnutrition.

For the GBV sector:

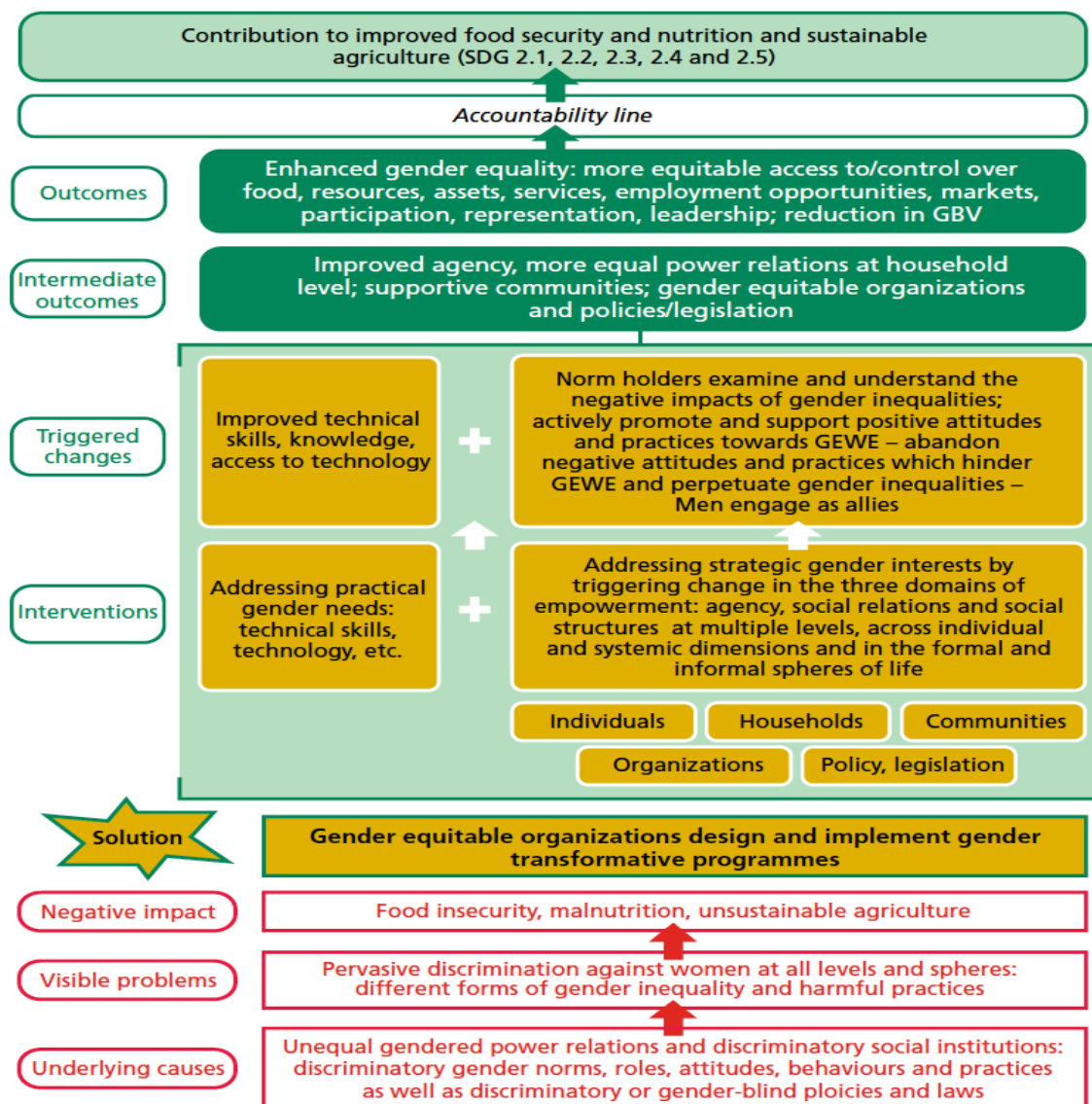
- Coordinate with the food security sector to ensure that key information and reports on GBV are shared with IPC teams to support timely decision-making and planning to mitigate GBV risks linked to escalating food insecurity conditions.
- Promote the uptake of the *IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action*.
- Advocate for a presence on IPC classification teams.

³¹ To note, it is important that food security actors work with the GBV coordination mechanism to access data, rather than through specific or individual agencies. The GBV coordination mechanism typically compiles and releases data in a way that supports confidentiality and safety.

Annex 1

From FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2022. *Guide to formulating gendered social norms indicators in the context of food security and nutrition*. Rome, p 28. See <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0673en>

JP GTA theory of change for gender transformative programming



Source: FAO, IFAD, WFP. (forthcoming). Theory of change for gender transformative programming. EU-RBA Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Change for Food Security and Nutrition. Rome.

Annex 2

Sample Food Security, Gender Inequity and GBV Data Collection Tools and Indicators

The **Gender Equality for Food Security (GE4FS)** is intended to incorporate the FIES and the gender equality component through *item response theory* to measure the association between gender equality and food security. For more information on the GE4FS, visit <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/power-gender-equality-food-security-closing-another-gender-data-gap-new-quantitative>. There is also a useful summary video of the GE4S available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pu90ff_eH7M

WFP's **Gender and Food Security Analysis: Guidance Document (May 2016)**, outlines standards for all WFP food security assessments to ensure gender analysis in food security and nutrition needs. The guidance provides examples of gender indicators to examine food access, food availability and food utilization. For more information, see <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000019670/download/>

The **Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)**, launched by IFPRI, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), and USAID's Feed the Future in February 2012, was the first comprehensive and standardized measure to directly measure women's empowerment and inclusion in the agricultural sector. The WEAI is an innovative tool composed of two sub-indices: one measures women's empowerment across five domains in agriculture, and the other measures gender parity in empowerment within the household. The tool also measures women's empowerment relative to men within their households. To access all WEAI-related materials – research instruments, protocols, publications, and more – visit the [WEAI Resource Center website](#).

The **Global Food 50/50** project plans to reduce the knowledge gap by gathering key data on the different food systems' gender dimensions in order to provide data that will help secure a commitment to gender equality among food systems, as well as accountability from different food security donors, actors, and stakeholders. For more information, visit <https://ebrary.ifpri.org/utills/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/134480/filename/134691.pdf>

The **IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action** include indicators for monitoring and evaluating food security across the humanitarian programme cycle. For more information, visit <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>. Also see a specific 'thematic area guide' for food security and agriculture actors that is published separately from the larger combined GBV Guidelines, available at https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/TAG-FSA-08_26_2015.pdf

References

- Ahlenback, 2022. Brief Overview of Research, Evidence and Learning on the Links between Food Insecurity and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict-Affected Settings, GBV AoR.
<https://www.sddirect.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/gbv-aor-hd-food-insecurity-famine-and-gbv-19112021.pdf>
- Awungafac G, M. S., 2021, March 31. Household food insecurity and its association with self-reported male perpetration of intimate partner violence: a survey of two districts in central and western Uganda. *BMJ Open*, 1-13. Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <http://bmjopen.bmj.com>
- CARE, 2022. Food Security and Gender Equality: A synergistic understudied symphony
<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/food-security-and-gender-equality-synergistic-understudied-symphony-0>
- Bapolisi, W. A., Ferrari, G., Bisimwa, G., & Merten, S., 2021. Gendered determinants of food insecurity in ongoing regional conflicts, North and South Kivu, the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Agriculture & Food Security*, 10(1), 1-9.
<https://agricultureandfoodsecurity.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40066-021-00285-x>.
- CARE International, 2020. Left out and left behind: Ignoring women will prevent us from solving the hunger crisis. Policy Report. <https://www.care-international.org/files/files/LeftOutandLeftBehind.pdf>.
- CARE, 2019. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition: A scoping paper. https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1920/Gender/GEWE_Scoping_Paper-FINAL040ct.pdf
- Carter, B., & Kelly, L., 2021. Social inequalities and famine and food insecurity risk. K4D Helpdesk Report. Institute of Development Studies.
https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/16735/954_Social_inequalities_and_famine_and_severe_food_insecurity_risk%20.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.
- FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2021. "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all",
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/cb4474en.pdf>
- FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2022. Guide to formulating gendered social norms indicators in the context of food security and nutrition. Rome, p 1. See <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0673en>
- Fraser, E, 2020. "Food Security, VAWG and Nutrition: VAWG Helpdesk Research Report."
<https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/query-309-food-security-nutrition-and-violence-against-women-and-girls>
- GBV Working Group, West and Central Africa, April 2022. No Conflict is a Vacuum: GBV, Food Insecurity and the consequences of the Ukraine crisis on GBV in West and Central Africa. Advocacy brief - 1
<https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2022-04/No%20Conflict%20in%20a%20Vacuum-GBV-Food%20Insecurity-Ukraine%20and%20WCAR-FINAL-4.4.2022.pdf>
- Hatcher, A. M., Page, S., van Eck, L. A., Pearson, I., Fielding-Miller, R., Mazars, C., & Stöckl, H., 2022. Systematic review of food insecurity and violence against women and girls: mixed methods findings from low-and middle-income settings. *medRxiv*. <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.04.20.22274085v1.full.pdf>.
- IASC, 2015. *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action*,
<https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>

IPC Global Partners, 2021. *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Technical Manual Version 3.1. Evidence and Standards for Better Food Security and Nutrition Decisions*. Rome.

https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/manual/IPC_Technical_Manual_3_Final.pdf

Lentz, E. C., Narayanan, S., & De, A., 2019. Last and least: Findings on intrahousehold undernutrition from participatory research in South Asia. *Social science & medicine (1982)*, 232, 316–323.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.05.024>.

Lieberman, A., 2021. Where are the women in food insecurity analysis? Devex.

<https://www.devex.com/news/where-are-the-women-in-food-insecurity-analysis-98804>.

Shaw, K., 2021. COVID-19 and child marriage: How COVID-19's impact on hunger and education is forcing children into marriage. World Vision International.

https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/COVID-19%20and%20child%20marriage_v3.pdf.

Selva, M and Janoch, E., 2022. Food Security and Gender Equality: A synergistic understudied symphony. CARE.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/food-security-and-gender-equality-synergistic-understudied-symphony-0>

Women's Refugee Commission and Plan International, 2022. Our Voice, Our Future: Understanding Risks and Adaptive Capacities to Prevent and Respond to Child Marriage in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

<https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/our-voices-our-future-understanding-risks-and-adaptive-capacities-to-prevent-and-respond-to-child-marriage-in-the-bangsamoro-autonomous-region-in-muslim-mindanao-barmm/>

Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge the East and Southern Africa Regional GBV Working Group whose engagement with the Regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group and the IPC Technical Team through its Preparedness and Risk Mitigation Pillar influenced the development of this learning brief. Additionally, the author would like to thank GBV AoR and UNICEF experts for providing relevant insights to this briefing, based on their forthcoming research.

The GBV AoR Help Desk

The GBVAoR Helpdesk is a unique research and technical advice service which aims to inspire and support humanitarian actors to help prevent, mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in emergencies. Managed by Social Development Direct, the GBV AoR Helpdesk is staffed by a global roster of senior Gender and GBV Experts who are on standby to help guide frontline humanitarian actors on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response measures in line with international standards, guidelines and best practice. Views or opinions expressed in GBV AoR Helpdesk Products do not necessarily reflect those of all members of the GBV AoR, nor of all the experts of SDDirect's Helpdesk roster.

The GBV AoR Helpdesk

You can contact the GBV AoR Helpdesk
by emailing us at:
enquiries@gbviehelpdesk.org.uk

The Helpdesk is available 09.00 to
17.30 GMT Monday to Friday.

Our services are free and confidential.