

EngenderHealth Project Brief

Mainstreaming Gender in Large-Scale Food Fortification



Background

Gender relations in society and the food supply chain drive nutrition outcomes, especially for the most vulnerable groups.¹ The intricate linkages between gender and nutrition require a multidimensional focus, with the need to contextualize actions to ensure equitable distribution of nutritious foods and to create enabling market conditions.

Large-scale food fortification (LSFF) is a proven, cost-effective strategy to provide essential micronutrients at the population-level using a market-based or a public social safety net program approach.² Gender mainstreaming in LSFF programs can contribute to making the entire food system gender-sensitive and to addressing undernutrition. Evidence indicates that sustained success relies on redefining working strategies to ensure a paradigm shift toward inclusion.³

The interdependency within the dynamics of the LSFF supply chain calls for a common understanding and an alignment of interests between its different actors toward making the supply side gender-intentional for achieving better health outcomes.

Gender Mainstreaming in Supply Chain

Gender mainstreaming is a comprehensive collection of actions that explicitly integrates a gender lens into all activities and implies revitalization of the entire supply chain through:



Strengthening institutional capacity for applying a gender lens to program and planning cycles



Fostering leadership commitments in promoting use of sex-disaggregated data through gender-equality scorecards and gender-responsive assessment scales as criteria for assessing operational policies



Integrating accountability standards and mechanisms in all key functions and at all levels

Gender mainstreaming refers to...

... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

- Adapted from the World Health Organization's *Gender Mainstreaming for Health Managers Guide*

Outcomes of Supply Chain Gender Mainstreaming

Gender issues must be addressed⁴ and a gender lens integrated at all stages of the program cycle, incorporated into quality standards and assimilated into existing policies, guidelines, and practices of the supply chain continuum to:



In 2022, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) partnered with EngenderHealth to implement the Mainstreaming Gender in Large Scale Food Fortification Programs project, which aims to create an overarching strategy for comprehensive gender integration into LSFF. The project period is from March 2022 to November 2024.

The Partnerships

Partnerships are aligned to maximize opportunities for improving quality of and access to fortified staples.

- GAIN is supporting the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's investment in food fortification in India to reach and benefit vulnerable populations, particularly women of reproductive age and children.
- MicroSave Consulting, Nutrition International, PATH, and the World Food Programme are supporting food fortification in 18 states and testing digital supply chain monitoring solutions.

Gender-related assessments, outcomes of actions, and associated risks of gender integration in the supply chain (such as distortions in the labor market and gendered access to credit and business opportunities) must be communicated and addressed collectively.

Project Objectives

- To inform design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of LSFF supply-side interventions through a comprehensive gender analysis and risk assessment with identified stakeholders
- To mainstream a comprehensive gender lens into LSFF supply-side interventions
- To strengthen the capacity of the LSFF selected supply chain actors to integrate gender
- To inform and include gender-relevant indicators for supply-side LSFF interventions



Diagram: Partners Supporting LSFF

Interventions

EngenderHealth will achieve the project objectives through:

- **Gender Analysis**
 - Conducting a gender analysis of LSFF programs to inform supply-side LSFF interventions
 - Enabling greater understanding of key actors and system, and identifying gender gaps
 - Mapping LSFF supply chain actors and stakeholders (levels of gender sensitization, awareness, etc.)
 - Reviewing information, education, and communications materials with a gender lens
- **Gender-Integrated Workplan**
 - Working with GAIN and other LSFF partners to integrate gender within workplans, project indicators, and the common results framework
 - Supporting preparation of a detailed gender integration plan for states
 - Embedding gender-sensitive indicators in the monitoring framework

Capacity Building on Gender

- Discussing the need for gender integration in LSFF in India with key stakeholders
- Sensitizing and strengthening the capacity of LSFF supply chain actors on gender responsiveness

Gender-Related Indicators

- Defining success levels for gender-integrated LSFF interventions in the short-, medium-, and long-terms
- Identifying and finalizing key indicators for regular monitoring of gender-integrated activities in LSFF supply side
- Contextualizing GYSI markers to adapt to specific needs of the supply chain

About EngenderHealth

EngenderHealth is a leading global health organization envisioning a gender-equal world and working toward improving sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls in the world's poorest communities. To achieve this vision, we offer global expertise in gender-transformative programming so that all people can exercise their right to gender-equitable healthcare.

Our global expertise and extensive experience in India make us expertly positioned to support organizations and ministries to systematically integrate a comprehensive GYSI lens into programming. We strengthen the capacity of international, national, and local organizations to design, implement, and monitor gender- and youth-transformative and socially inclusive programs tailored to the local cultural, geographic, and programmatic context.

References

- ¹ Madzorera, I. and Fawzi, W. 2020. "Women Empowerment is Central to Addressing the Double Burden of Malnutrition." *EClinicalMedicine* 20 (February): 100286. doi: 10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100286.
- ² Horton, S. 2006. "The Economics of Food Fortification." *Journal of Nutrition* 136, no. 4 (April): 1068-71. doi: 10.1093/jn/136.4.1068.
- ³ Mkambula, P., Mbuya, M.N.N., Rowe, L.A., Sablah, M., Friesen, V.M., Chadha, M., Osei, A.K., Ringholz, C., Vasta, F.C., and Gorstein, J. 2020. "The Unfinished Agenda for Food Fortification in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Quantifying Progress, Gaps, and Potential Opportunities." *Nutrients* 12, no. 2 (January): 354. doi: 10.3390/nu12020354.
- ⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Food and Agriculture Organization. 2021. *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Supply Chain Due Diligence*. Paris: OECD. <https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/Integrating-a-gender-perspective-into-supply-chain-due-diligence.pdf>.
- ⁵ The GYSI Marker is part of EngenderHealth's *GYSI Framework and Toolkit*, which is a tool designed to apply an intersectional approach to project implementation and analysis. The aim is to deliver programs that are impactful, gender-transformative, youth-friendly, and socially inclusive. The Gender Marker helps assesses programs along a dynamic continuum ranging from "gender harmful" to "gender neutral" to "gender sensitive" to "gender responsive" to "gender transformative." The scoring is based on criteria that systematically examine multiple axes of gender and social inequality through an analysis of project design, activities, participation, negative effects, and monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that a program is responsive, equitable, and inclusive in its process and outcomes.