3.1 Criteria for gender-responsive programme strategy selection

INEE Minimum Standards	Domain 1: Foundational standards – Analysis **Standard 1: Assessment** Timely education assessments of the emergency situation are conducted in a holistic, transparent and participatory manner. **Standard 2: Response strategies** Inclusive education response strategies include a clear description of the context, barriers to the right to education and strategies to overcome those barriers.
Primary users	Programme/project managers, M&E specialists.
Purpose of tool	To provide a set of criteria to guide users on the selection of gender-responsive programme strategies.

Introduction

The process of designing individual strategies is guided by key issues identified during the needs assessment phase.

⊕ **2: Needs assessment and analysis**

Shorter-term strategies should aim to address urgent needs related to safety and security. These are commonly linked to gender-related barriers resulting **directly** from crisis. For example, strategies to address SGBV and psychosocial issues affecting children and education personnel, the damage and destruction of learning spaces and learning materials and changes in girls' and boys' enrolment and attendance due to displacement and migration. At the same time, the corresponding strategies must be designed to lay the foundation for longer-term education sector and gender equality development goals.

Over the medium to longer-term, strategies should be based on analysis of underlying causes of inequalities. These causes are primarily linked to discriminatory social and gender norms within the existing education system that are exacerbated as an **indirect** result of crisis. For example, the elimination of violence from schools as learning and working environments, reform of curriculum, teacher training, text book and learning materials review geared towards gender equality and inclusion and female teacher recruitment, development and retention. Table 1.1 outlines key gender-related barriers to education resulting **directly** and **indirectly** from crisis.

⊕ **1: Introduction**

Key information

The process of selecting strategies also requires additional information to choose between them, particularly in acute crisis situations given the competing urgent needs, limited time and capacity. This tool provides a set of criteria to guide the selection of gender-responsive strategies.

A range of common EiE interventions are described in Section 5: Implementation. These should be reviewed before starting programme design.

⊕ **5: Implementation**

How to select interventions as part of strategic planning and programme design?

Table 3.1.1 outlines key criteria to help select and prioritize strategies to ensure gender-responsive and inclusive approaches.[1] Subsequent sections (3.2 and 3.3) should be used by programme planners to establish a demonstrable link between programme activities and results and to ensure adequate resources are allocated to achieve the stated results.

---

1   Adapted from the UNESCO IIEP (2012) Educational Planning for Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction

Table 3.1.1: Criteria to guide strategy selection and priorities

Criteria 1: Context-sensitive

Questions

- Did the target group/community (including girls, boys, women, and men of different ages, different roles within, outside, and across layers of the education system) participate in programme formulation?

- Do approaches reflect the cultural context and consider conflict factors?

- Do programme interventions contribute to policy priorities, targets and indicators outlined in the TEP/ multi-year ESP?

Note: Being sensitive to context and reflecting local demand may not always reconcile with affordability. Building gender-responsive infrastructure and facilities may not necessarily be assessed as cost-effective in the short-term. However, the components ('ingredients') of gender-related interventions should be documented over time, allowing for longer-term analysis of cost-effectiveness.

Example

Analysis may show high demand for girls' education. In contexts such as Afghanistan, responding to this demand is dependent on the availability of gender-responsive infrastructure and facilities such as separate schools for girls, female teachers, boundary walls, and safe transport. These may not be cost-effective approaches, but in the short-term they may be prioritized if they are assessed to be effective infrastructure-focused interventions, able to increase girls' safe access to quality education over time.

Relevant EiE-GenKit sections

→ **7: Accountability to affected populations**

→ **3.3: Gender-responsive EiE costing, cost tracking, and cost analysis**

Criteria 2: Evidence-based

Questions

- What gender-related barriers to access and participation in education do needs assessments highlight?

- Have gender-related barriers been analyzed together with other marginalization factors?

- How does the proposed programme intervention respond to this? Is this based on existing/ emerging good practice?

- If there is no evidence supporting the effectiveness of a specific gender strategy in a particular location, can a similar context be identified with supporting information on effectiveness of a similar programme strategy?

- What context-specific gender issues need to be considered when making adaptations, ensuring particular attention to risk mitigation and conflict sensitivity? Are there any studies, evaluations, and/or rapid assessments planned in the next 3-12 months – across government and development partners – through which primary data could be collected and/or secondary data reviewed, analyzed and reported, to improve understanding of the gender-related barriers to access and participation in education?

- Should the programme approach be piloted first? How will results contribute to the national evidence base?

Example

Data may suggest that parents/caregivers are unwilling to send girls of all ages and education levels to school due to fear caused by recent gender-based attacks on education. This information could stimulate further discussion groups with caregivers to understand: (i) how girls could more safely be engaged in education, and (ii) the gender differentiated costs of alternative education for girls across ages and education levels. This data would inform EiE institutional or joint proposals, theories of change, M&E frameworks, strategies, activities, and corresponding budgets.

In Chad, the availability of disaggregated data on attendance rates, coupled with participatory assessments, showed low school attendance for young mothers and high absenteeism for female teachers with infants in camp schools. This informed the introduction of child care facilities in camp schools, with positive results.

(Source: UNHCR (2016) UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations, p.15)

Relevant EiE-GenKit sections

→ **2: Needs assessment and analysis**

Criteria 3: Affordability

Questions

- What ingredients for implementing the programme's interventions must be considered to determine the effectiveness of the programme's gender-related contributions, and what are the costs? The following categories of gender-related ingredients should be considered for each intervention: facilities, services, personnel, supplies, equipment, and parent/community contributions.

- Do affordability criteria consider scenarios where unit costs and/or ingredient costs increase significantly? Do they consider the need for alternative intervention options if interventions become unfeasible due to economic, political, or security shifts in the crisis context?

Example

As part of a gender strategy to address low attendance of girls in school due to insecurity, an appropriate intervention may be to provide transport to and from school. Key ingredients would include: buses, fuel (supplies), maintenance, repairs (services), driver salaries (personnel), and voluntary community security (parent/community contribution).

Affordability criteria should also consider scenarios where unit costs could increase or decrease based on the security situation escalating or improving, and consider the need for alternative options if the strategy is no longer feasible due to economic, political, or security shifts. For example, when projecting costs in relation to girls' enrolment targets, different projections may be made in relation to:

resolution of conflict in one area and expected return of internally displaced persons (IDPs)/refugees;

escalation of conflict in another area and related displacement;

costs of ensuring interventions are gender-responsive (i.e. 'building back better' – sex-segregated, disaster-resistant latrines may cost more than the original infrastructure).

Relevant EiE-GenKit sections

→ **3.3: Gender-responsive EiE costing, cost tracking, and cost analysis**

Criteria 4: Sustainability

Questions

- What sustainability prospects do the programme approaches offer? In the case of acute crisis, can the intervention be considered a stepping stone to longer-term goals?

- Is there likely to be long-term support for the programme at the political and community levels, such as organizations or champions for girls' education?

- Is the programme aligned with national policies and priorities on crisis response and preparedness, education and gender equality, Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and contribution to TEP/ESP?

Example

Will the government be able to absorb female teachers hired during crisis and continue to pay their salaries post-crisis?

Will it be possible to maintain temporary learning spaces for young girls and boys (pre-primary education and stimulation) – where, how, and with what support?

Relevant EiE-GenKit sections

→ **7: Accountability to affected populations**