Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

GENDER WITH AGE MARKER

Q: The GAM is subjective. Won't it generate different answers according to the rigor and the comprehension of the examiners?

A: The GAM is not a test! The main **purpose** of the GAM is to encourage thinking and learning, to help humanitarians decide how to improve their projects.

The GAM provides topics and questions for **project teams** to discuss, reflect on, and decide if there are ways they can improve the project. It can be completed by a single monitoring officer, but users report it is most beneficial when project teams work together to complete the exercise.

Nobody is going to apply the GAM *to* your project (this is very different from the old gender marker.) YOU decide if YOU are happy with how gender and age concerns are reflected in your project. The GAM merely guides a reflective, learning process.

Q: Why are the age groups ambiguous, instead of referring to specific ages, e.g. 0-5?

A: It is for each Agency and/or Cluster to inform its partners about the specific age breakdowns required for their projects. Age categories are different for different organizations, so the GAM uses broad age group descriptions instead. This allows comparison and analysis beyond the agency or cluster level. While the GAM only looks at generalized age groups (younger, older, etc.) the cluster is likely to expect a more detailed breakdown in project documents.

Q: Can the GBV prevention aspect be further developed?

A: GEM E merely reminds that all humanitarian action should try to reduce the risk of gender-based violence. The Code indicates whether your actions to reduce risk of GBV include different gender and age groups. If you feel GBV prevention is not strong enough in your project, discuss with others how this can be improved. The GAM simply draws your attention to this topic and the gender and age groups affected by your intervention.

Q: Won't mainstreaming gender incur additional costs and time?

A: No. Gender mainstreaming is a basic requirement for all humanitarian interventions: UN Agencies and INGOs will not accept programming that does not mainstream attention to gender equality.

Q: Won't correcting unintended effects add to the cost of our projects?

A: It is possible that correcting unintended effects might add to costs, but failure to do so would not only be bad programming but could also do harm to beneficiaries.

Q: Are some GEMs more relevant to some sectors than others?

A: The 12 GEMs reflect the basic requirements for good programming. Some of them may be more difficult to achieve, particularly for some organizations or clusters. This is why project teams are encouraged to apply the GAM together, to discuss what realistic changes or improvements can be made to be more responsive and inclusive of gender and age differences.

Q: What assurance is there that GAM monitoring results are used to improve gender equality programming in the proposed project? Who monitors compliance?

A: Unlike the old gender marker, the GAM is not a "compliance" tool. It does not seek to enforce a certain standard of gender equality programming. It is a **reflective learning tool**. This means that the GAM results are intended to encourage thought and discussion by the people who design and monitor projects and programmes. Clusters and donors may decide to use GAM codes to indicate an acceptable threshold for funding, or they may have expectations for coding improvement between the Design and Monitoring Phases.

Q: Who provides feedback to implementing agency(ies) to improve programming and strategies?

A: The feedback comes from the tool itself. The GEM codes indicate where attention to gender or age can be strengthened, and where programming elements (GEMs) are missing. It is up to project holders to make these changes, using the Action Plan section of the GAM if desired. GenCap Advisors and many gender focal points have been trained to provide support with the GAM.

You can also email GAM questions to IASC-GAM@un.org, and a GenCap advisor will be more than happy to call you and discuss further.