Gender and Gender-Based Violence: Associations and Non-Associations with Malnutrition

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Abstract

Action Against Hunger is an international non-governmental organization with six headquarters located around the world that focus on ending hunger in low and middle-income countries. The Canadian office uniquely provides evidenced-based technical support and evaluation for headquarters focused on implementing interventions and programming to mitigate hunger. For my practicum I worked in the International Gender Unit to support ongoing policy development and updating of the organization's cross-network gender policy. Gender inequalities have direct causal links with malnutrition; yet, in March 2020 the Global Nutrition Report showed that global efforts to mitigate hunger by addressing gender inequalities are behind on most targets. To better capture and learn how to address underlying inequalities and drivers of malnutrition, my practicum research focused on the associations and non-associations between gender, gender-based violence, and malnutrition. This practicum placement had three objectives: 1) to provide a literature review 2) to provide a database comprised of peer-reviewed and grey literature; and, 3) to support new policy development during cross-headquarters discussions, research, and reporting. During this placement I had the opportunity to work online with individuals across five continents and twenty-one countries. This included facilitating break-out policy discussions during policy meetings, as well as semi-structured interviews that were conducted prior to providing a literature review and socio-ecological discussion on gender, gender-based violence and malnutrition. The opportunity to engage in international and cross-cultural collaborative work has been the highlight of my practicum. It has provided the opportunity to not only sharpen my reflexive praxis as a student of public health, but to sharpen my understanding of the policy process at the organizational level. It has additionally illuminated the importance of structural and social contexts in public health research and programming, especially within efforts to address gender inequalities and gender-based violence associated with malnutrition.