

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

GUIDE TO ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY (2018)

Please read alongside: [Guide to addressing Gender Equality – ANNEXES](#)



Acknowledgements

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Foreword

Globally, gender equality is being placed high on the agendas of governments and donors. There is compelling evidence that more gender equitable societies are more inclusive, secure, prosperous and sustainable. In response to this, the UK Government is increasingly placing gender equality at the heart of everything it does internationally and consequently there is a growing demand for us to respond to this through our work.

Gender equality is an important part of what we do as an organisation and we have worked on women's and girls' empowerment for several decades, developing a strong track record in programme delivery, research, policy and partnerships. Findings from our recent report, *Women and Girls Making a Lasting Difference* indicated that our work across a range of portfolios and regions is making a positive contribution to gender equality but the recommendations also suggested that strengthening our impact in this area would require 'staff capacity for critical thinking on what it means to do gender mainstreaming in terms of design, content and measurement of outcomes.' Conversations with our Gender Community of Practice suggested that to do this successfully, British Council staff would need 'more expertise', 'clear guidance' 'prompt questions' and 'standard approaches.'

In response to this and working with experts within the British Council and externally, we have produced this guidance and accompanying annexes which provide practical solutions for building gender equality into every stage of our projects and programmes. It includes detailed explanations about gender concepts and approaches to enhance your learning, case studies which demonstrate how gender equality has been integrated effectively through some of our programmes and templates and checklists to help you and your teams to apply the guidance to your own portfolios. To make this process more interactive and meaningful, we have developed a training package which brings the guidance to life and enables colleagues to work together in a spirit of knowledge sharing, mutual learning and co-creation. We hope that this will enhance colleagues' understanding of gender, what this means for our programmes and to help them embed gender equality within their work.

It is important to note that this is a 'living' document which will continue to adapt to global, UK and organisational priorities around gender as well as our growing expertise in this area, and we welcome your contributions and feedback on this.

I hope that you enjoy using this resource.

Professor Jo Beall,
Director Education and Society and Executive Board,
British Council

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1. Introduction

Welcome! We hope that you enjoy using this resource guide which has been designed as a resource for you to make use of to help embed gender equality into your work.

This guide was created by the British Council's Gender and Inclusion Team which resides within the global Society Team. The Team provides technical input in specific areas related to gender equality and empowering women and girls and supports a broad range of activity, including business development, programme design, programme delivery, research, and capacity building.

1.1 What is the guide to advancing gender equality?

The guide is a collection of information, resources and activities which aim to support British Council staff to think through how they can advance women's rights gender inequality through their work.

We would like to encourage all colleagues to access this resource guide, but it will be especially useful for colleagues who are working on **programmes or projects across different areas of work** (Arts, Education and Society and English and Exams).

1.2 What does this guide mean for you and why should you use it?

Gender equality is an important part of what we do as a cultural relations organisation that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion as a core value. The British Council has made a commitment to improving the life chances of women and girls in its 2018 - 2020 Corporate Plan,¹ recognising that gender inequality limits opportunities and choices. Increasing women and girls' participation in society through improving their skills, confidence and life chances through education, providing opportunities for self-expression and greater participation in society through supporting institutions to address inequalities and reduce discrimination is one of the 8 result areas in the Corporate Plan. We all have a responsibility and role to play to ensure that this is adhered to throughout our work.

However, recommendations from our recent report 'Women and Girls: making a lasting difference, a critical reflection on the impact of the British Council's work with women and girls from 2010 to 2015'², indicated that strengthening our contribution to this area would require 'staff capacity for critical thinking on what it means to do gender mainstreaming in terms of design, content, implementation and measurement of outcomes.' In practical terms 'mainstreaming' means integrating gender equality into every stage of our activities, projects and programmes.

Gathering and strengthening our knowledge and expertise

Conversations with our Gender Community of Practice³ suggested that to do this successfully, British Council staff would need 'more expertise', 'clear guidance' 'prompt questions' and 'standard approaches.' This toolkit is therefore designed to provide practical solutions for embedding gender into our projects and programmes.

It will **provide you with information, explanations and practical resources** which you can use to both integrate gender equality considerations when designing new programmes but may also be useful for existing programmes.

¹ British Council Corporate Plan, 2018 – 2020. See https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/2018-20_corporate_plan.pdf (pg. 16)

² Women and Girls: making a lasting difference. A critical reflection on the impact of the British Council's work with women and girls from 2010 – 2015. See https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british_council_impact_report_web.pdf (pg. 76)

³ The Gender Community of Practice is a virtual forum which provides colleagues with opportunities to share ideas and find solutions to address gender equality through our work. All staff can join and should email genderequality@britishcouncil.org

It aims to:

- demystify and clarify the concepts and terminology associated with gender and gender mainstreaming
- encourage you to think about the kind of questions you need to be asking and to identify the opportunities for making a positive impact on gender relations and inequalities through your work
- explore how you can engage with colleagues, consultants and partners about gender issues
- unpack what integrating gender equality means in practice, within a project cycle (included below)
- provide you with tools, templates and examples of good practice to help integrate gender equality in programming and projects.

Organisational alignment

Closely aligned to the Practitioner Expert resourcing model⁴, part of the Building Education and Society Sustainability strategy, we hope that this toolkit will successfully embed gender equality within our work by:



1.3 How to use this guide

Aim of the guide

To introduce British Council staff to women's rights and gender equality and to help you build your skills and knowledge to apply this to your programme and policy work. You can use the guide for:

- background reading on gender equality issues
- reference material for concepts, terms, and definitions and practical examples of how British Council is already trying to integrate gender equality into its work
- training materials which can be adapted as necessary for training courses of different lengths.

⁴ The Practitioner Expert resourcing model focuses on providing a flexible pool of people, balancing appropriate skills, knowledge and experience, client need, availability and individual career development. See <http://intranet.britishcouncil.org/uk/sites/BESS/default.aspx>

Target audience

For staff working either in the UK or in country offices. This resource can be used by staff who are considering how to integrate gender equality issues for the first time, or for those who may have more experience but want more guidance in particular areas.

Structure and contents

This guide is designed to provide information in a logical order, organised in a way that will enable you to learn about:

- **Section 2:** Important background information about the British Council's approach to gender equality
- **Section 3:** Information on conceptual terms and definitions related to women's rights and empowerment and gender equality
- **Sections 4 to 8** provide guidance on how to easily integrate women's rights and gender equality within programme and project life cycles:
 - **Section 4** on undertaking a gender analysis
 - **Section 5** on planning gender sensitive and transformative projects and programmes
 - **Section 6** on integrating gender equality actions during project and programme implementation
 - **Section 7** on ensuring gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes
 - **Section 8** on learning from your work.

Please refer to the Guide to Advancing Gender Equality – ANNEXES for all the annexes. For each section, there are a number of accompanying activities provided which staff can use to explore themes in more detail. Further resources and guidance can also be found in this section.

1.4 Guidance for facilitators for using this resource guide

Individuals intending to undertake a training course based on this toolkit or the training pack would need previous experience of training and facilitation. They would also need to have a sound understanding of the concept of gender equality as well as of the different issues to be addressed during the training. As part of their training, facilitators must also go through a process of self-reflection about their own experiences and concerns with regard to gender equality to allow them to discuss these issues in a calm and open manner, particularly given the fact there may be conflict that arises during participant discussions.

Facilitators have a responsibility to create an open and respectful environment: an environment where participants can feel comfortable enough to share and learn from their own experiences and challenge long-held beliefs about gender roles and gender equality. Participants may require referral to professional services and guidance counselling if discussions have a triggering effect on them.

The case studies and practical exercises provided can be adapted to suit local contexts. It is therefore recommended that trainers and facilitators using this toolkit, substitute alternative examples and stories to fit their particular audience and context.

Specific activities for the facilitator can be found in the annexes. These can be adapted to local contexts and enriched with local examples.

1.5 Gender Equality training pack

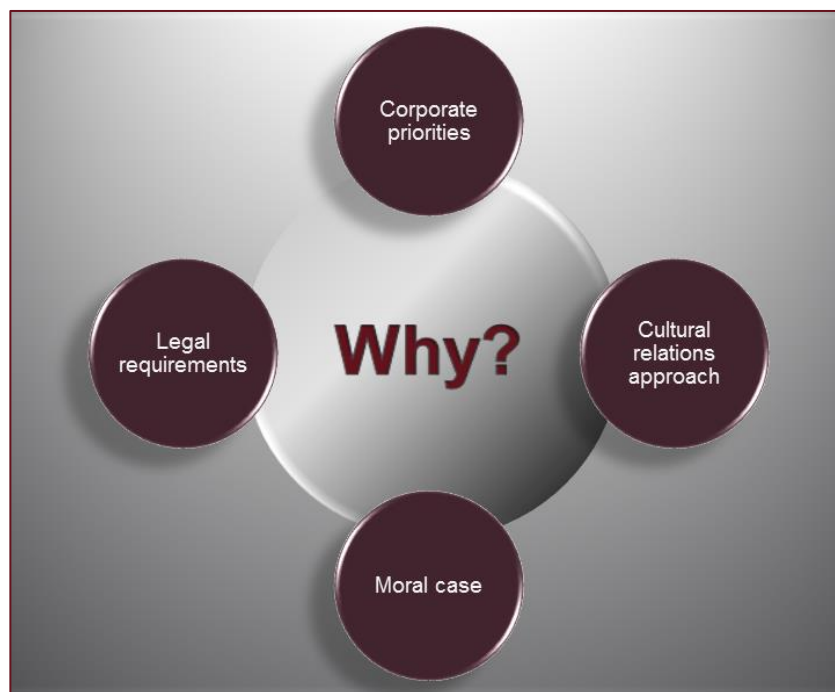
Note that we are rolling out gender equality training to the regions and there is a separate gender equality training pack which accompanies this training. The pack contains slides, handouts and facilitator notes and can be used by staff with some experience of gender equality to support discussions amongst their teams. We would recommend doing this prior to or during the inception stage of a project to ensure that all staff are on board with progressing gender equality in their work.

2. The British Council and gender equality

2.1 Why should gender equality matter to you and your work?

There are a number of reasons why we have placed gender equality at the heart of what we do:

1. **It makes sense...** Driven by country priorities and UK expertise, the British Council has worked in this area for over 20 years and now has a platform of programmes dedicated to *Empowering Women and Girls*. *Developing the skills, confidence and life chances of women and girls*. It is also one of our **corporate priorities** and one of the dedicated thematic areas of the new Results Evaluation Framework, building on evidence that working towards gender equality leads to more inclusive, secure, prosperous and sustainable societies.

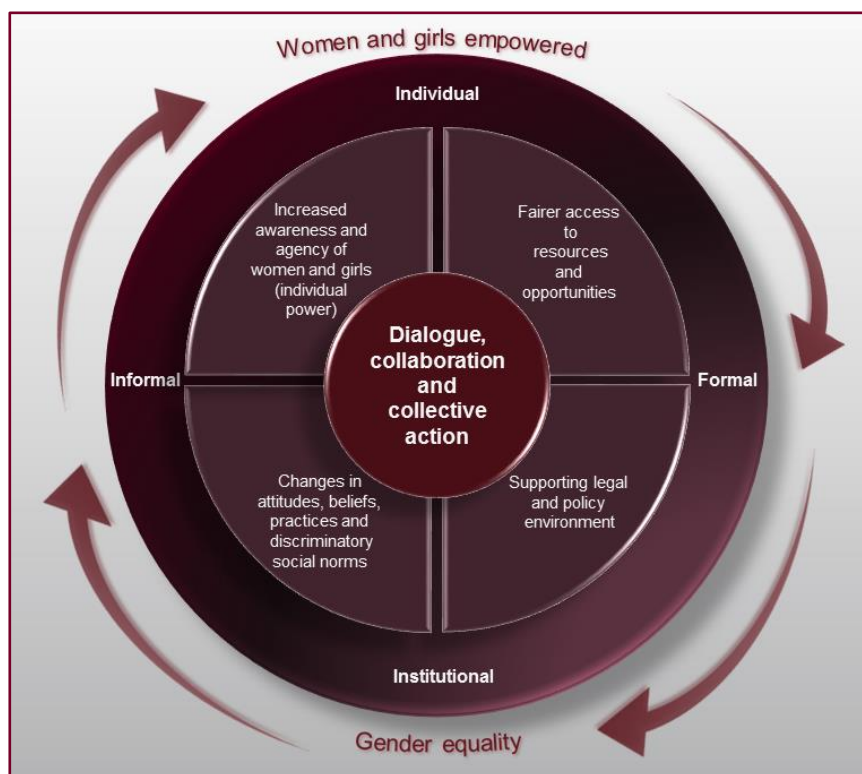


Integrating women’s empowerment and gender equality considerations in our projects and programmes leads to better programming and more impact for both women and men as well as ensures that we do no harm in terms of exacerbating existing gender inequalities.

2. **It’s linked to our values...** Our commitment to *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* and our role as a **cultural relations** agency means that we need to be aware of the on-going gender inequalities which persist in the range of contexts in which we work. To address gender equality meaningfully, gender and EDI more broadly should not be seen as an add-on to what we do but something which is core to our approach and adds value to the work we deliver on the ground.
3. **We are contributing to the global agenda...** The growing importance placed upon gender equality globally, highlighted with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), means that there is a **moral imperative** to ensure that *‘no one is left behind.’* This is demonstrated by *SDG 5*, which aims to ‘achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’ as well as by the fact that gender equality is integrated throughout the other 16 Goals. The British Council’s *research about gender equality in the UK and work on the SDGs* explores some of the key principles of the Goals and their relevance to what we do as an organisation; the importance of long-term partnerships, international collaboration and widening the participation of diverse groups to bring about positive change.
4. **We must...** For any activity linked to UK Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) spend, we have a **legal requirement** under the UK government’s *International Development (Gender Equality) Act* to consider and demonstrate that our programmes seek to reduce gender inequalities. This makes it illegal for any work to fall short of being gender sensitive. This will become increasingly important as we continue to bid for and deliver DFID funded projects, Cross Whitehall funds including the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund as well programmes funded by the British Council’s grant.

2.2 The British Council position and approach to gender equality

Before exploring some of the tools to help you embed gender into your work, it is important to share our own approach to achieving gender equality through the work we do. All of the guidance within this resource is closely aligned to our Theory of Change which has been developed with external gender equality experts and British Council global colleagues to help design programmes which support the empowerment of women and girls and work towards gender equality.



Our theory of change takes a **holistic approach to tackling gender inequalities** from a number of perspectives and demands action from a range of stakeholders. It recognises that change is needed to support women and girls' awareness, capacities and abilities, as well as creating opportunities and an enabling environment for empowerment. Find out more [here](#).

Although our programmes and projects differ in themes across the world, when seeking to address gender inequalities we seek the following broad **outcomes**:

- **Increased awareness and agency of women and girls:** In order to be able to make transformational changes in their lives and achieve their capabilities, women and girls need to increase their knowledge, individual capabilities, sense of entitlement, self-esteem and self-belief.
- **Fairer access to resources and opportunities:** Many women and girls worldwide are disadvantaged because of the structural inequalities in the way institutions and societies work. Equipping women with the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge the injustice they face and better access to resources and opportunities is crucial to gender equality. This also requires commitments from government agencies and institutions to create opportunities and access to resources for women and girls.
- **A supportive legal and policy environment:** Legislation is important for achieving gender equality, and is crucial in enabling access to resources, services and opportunities. Interventions, therefore, need to take account of the legislative environment and seek to influence legislative and policy change that reduces gender inequality.

- **Changes in attitudes, beliefs and practices and discriminatory social norms:** Social and cultural norms shape the opportunities and limits in terms of what women and girls are able to do. Greater gender equality will require that the attitudes of men and women towards gender roles change to accommodate more flexibility for both sexes. This also requires challenging discrimination and promoting new behaviours and norms.
- **Dialogue, collaboration and collective action:** Supporting women's awareness, confidence and ability to change and improve their own lives is an important element of empowerment. This includes both working with women and women's organisations and influencing and building alliances with other stakeholders from government, the private sector, civil society, religious authorities, as well as men. Gender equality is fundamentally about the relationships between men and women in a society and therefore requires negotiation and building women's collective power and collective action.

A twin-track approach

Approaching gender inequality through programmes primarily targeted at empowering women and girls as well as integrating gender equality into programmes where it is not the main objective is known as a twin track approach to achieving gender equality. This approach is widely promoted and supported by donors and specialist organisations working on gender equality.

i Empowerment of women and girls:

In all of the global and cultural contexts we operate in (including the UK), evidence shows that men frequently hold positions of leadership and power with women having access to fewer opportunities, resources and influence over decision-making. This means that women and girls are often disadvantaged, marginalised and discriminated against because of their sex. In order to redress some of these imbalances and inequalities, the British Council delivers a range of *programmes* to meet some of the specific needs of women and girls by providing them with opportunities to increase their skills, confidence and ability to bring about positive changes in their lives. Some other programmes also include 'gender specific actions' (see [Section 6.1: Gender Specific Actions](#)) which can be targeted at men or women to redress imbalances.

ii Integrating gender equality throughout all programmes:

Alongside these targeted interventions to address existing gender inequalities, it is crucial that we seek to embed gender equality through everything we do, by ensuring that the concerns of both men and women are an integral part of the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the work that we do and that we aim to reduce inequalities between men and women through our work. There are a number of ways in which we can do this:

- At the very least we should seek to take a **'do no harm' approach** by considering the potential unintended consequences of reinforcing existing inequalities and gender stereotypes between women, girls and men and boys as well as proactively assessing the potential for putting women and girls or men and boys at risk through our work by not considering gender issues.
- We should identify ways in which we can take action to **challenge and reduce existing gender inequalities**.
- We should ensure that we **avoid excluding** any groups, including women and girls and ensuring that their participation is meaningful.
- We should try to be as **inclusive** as possible to ensure that we are engaging with both men and women through our activity. This could mean targeting specific activities within a programme, e.g. for single-sex groups, in order to facilitate their engagement and meet specific outcomes.

These approaches are gender sensitive or gender transformative – we would want to see gender sensitive as a minimum standard across all British Council's project and programmes (see Section 5 for further guidance).

3. Theoretical background

3.1 Concepts and definitions

Before taking you through some of the stages to follow to integrate gender equality through your work it is important to get a sense of some of the (often complicated) language you may come across. The following terms provide an overview of some of the key terminology.

Sex – describes the biological differences between men and women.

Example: Men and women have different sex organs and women can bear children.

Gender – Refers to the socially constructed expectations, beliefs, and norms attributed to girls, women, boys and men who are learnt from families and friends in the home, school, the community, workplace as well as the media, religion and the government. They vary from place to place and change over time.

Example: In some societies, men are expected to be the main provider for their households financially and women are expected to undertake domestic responsibilities and look after children.

Gender norms – These are the standards and expectations to which women and men generally conform, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time. They are ideas about how women and men should be and act. Internalised early in life, they can establish a life cycle of gender socialisation and stereotyping. Failure to comply with can trigger strong social sanctions, such as ridiculing, ostracising or even violence, or less visible punishments such as exclusion from employment opportunities or marriage. People also self-regulate their own behaviour in order to conform to what they think is expected of them by others.

Gender discrimination – This describes a situation where people are treated differently simply because they are male or female, rather than on the basis of their individual skills or capabilities. Often, women and girls are disproportionately disadvantaged in all spheres of life. For example, social exclusion, inability to participate in decision making processes, and restricted access to and control of services and resources are common results of this.

Example: Assuming that a woman will give up her job to look after her children.

Empowerment – This is about the expansion of women and girls' abilities to make and influence choices that affect their lives. It is a process of transformative changes that are dynamic, iterative, and non-linear. It is about redistributing power between women and girls, and boys and men. It is context specific and driven by women and girls themselves.

Please see Annex 1: Glossary of Definitions on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality for further terms.

In addition, a number of activities have also been provided in the annexes, which will help you, your team and/or stakeholders to explore these concepts in more detail; see *Annex 2: Activities 2.1 to 2.4*. These activities can be used to support design and planning as well as during the implementation.

3.2 Gender, power and empowerment

As the definitions above indicate, gender inequalities are closely linked to power imbalances. This section will help to explore some of the connections between gender equality, power and empowerment.

For ideas on how to explore gender, power and empowerment with your team or stakeholders see ***Annex 2: Concepts and definitions – Activities 2.5 to 2.10***.

What is power?

Power can be defined as the ability to make free and informed choices about our lives. Where to live, how to live, who to live with, things as basic as what to eat and when to sleep; when we are able to make our own choices about these things, we are on our way to becoming empowered human beings. Power is not static and can shift over time. It is exercised in the social, political and economic relations between individuals and groups.

One way of thinking about power is looking at it in four ways⁵


The four types of power

- **Power over:** the power of the strong over the weak, including the power to exclude others

- **Power to:** the capability to decide actions and carry them out

- **Power with:** collective power, through organisation, solidarity and joint action

- **Power within:** personal self-confidence, often linked to culture, religion or other aspects of identity, which influences the thoughts and actions that appear legitimate or acceptable.

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Gender and power

Social systems construct power, and usually, this power is distributed unequally. All societies practice gender inequality to varying degrees and power is distributed unequally between women and men, boys and girls. Usually, men have power over women, but there are a multitude of ways in which we are all alike and also unlike, and not all differences are created equal; power may be sustained or perpetuated through other social divisions such as age, caste and class, not only sex: for example, a wealthy woman may have a greater chance to access higher education than a poor man; or a middle class woman may be more likely to work outside the home than a middle class man with disabilities.

What is empowerment?

Power is at the core of the concept of empowerment. Empowerment is a much-debated topic. Despite the term's popularity, it has multiple and sometimes misleading meanings. The term has its roots in feminist theory, which stressed the personal and inner dimensions of power for women, but also questioned the underlying reasons for women's subordination and disempowerment. However, as more and more actors have used the term, including those promoting a conservative agenda, the term has become depoliticised and stripped of its focus on inequalities and structural power imbalances. For further reading on this, see *'What do Buzzwords do for Development Policy? A critical look at 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'poverty reduction.'*

⁵ Oxfam (2015) <https://www.slideshare.net/RichardEnglish/calp-5-webinar-on-power-final>. See also Expressions of Power from the Powercube - <https://www.powercube.net/other-forms-of-power/expressions-of-power/>

Empowerment requires that power changes or shifts. Women's empowerment is closely related to but goes beyond gender equality to cover not just women's condition relative to men's, but their power to make choices and their ability to control their own destiny. It must go hand in hand with efforts to address gender inequality. Women and girls should be enabled to drive their own empowerment in order to make choices and decisions and to use their rights, resources and opportunities.

Women's and girls' empowerment has been conceptualised primarily along two lines: (1) as a goal, with aims and targets – mostly by the development industry; or (2) as a continuous process of change in which women empower themselves and challenge patriarchal structures and institutions – mostly by social movements and scholars⁶. Another debate relates to the purpose of women's empowerment – with one view seeing it as individualised and instrumental and the other seeing it as *liberating* empowerment which is more collective in nature and the 'process by which women attain autonomy and self-determination.'⁷

Supporting empowerment

No-one can 'empower' someone else, but individuals and institutions can support women's empowerment processes by, for instance, creating spaces for women to develop their skills, self-confidence and self-reliance. How we define empowerment will depend on the people and the context and trying to assert one definition of empowerment is by its very nature contrary to the spirit of empowerment, but some common elements of women's empowerment include: access to and control over resources, meaningful political participation, the reduction of women's unpaid care responsibilities, and the ability to have control over their own bodies such as living free from violence and making decisions in relation to fertility.

An important element of contributing to women's empowerment is to support women's collective organisation and co-operation to challenge power structures which subordinate women (or other marginalised groups).

Empowerment is multi-dimensional and occurs within social, cultural, economic, psychological and other dimensions. It also occurs at various levels, such as individual, group and community. It is a social process since it occurs in relationship to others. The core activities proposed necessary to help bring about change are political mobilisation, legal changes, consciousness raising and popular education. It is often described as a pathway or journey, rather than as a destination.

A challenging process

The process of empowerment, for both women and men, involves questioning gender roles and responsibilities, within our own personal and professional spheres as well as in the world around us. This questioning can cause friends, family and the wider community discomfort and even anger. It is these tensions that often make women appear to have contradictory levels of empowerment in public and at home and can cause people to withdraw from the process, even if it promises to benefit them in the long-term. This is a central challenge in women's empowerment, particularly at the grassroots level.

At another level, political change efforts, especially involving group rights and challenging cultural and social beliefs, can generate backlash and be dangerous to those involved. Sometimes a way to prevent backlash when working with women is to involve men in the process so they do not feel threatened. We have included specific exercises for dealing with potential resistance to change.

⁶ See for example Nazneen, Darkwah and Sultan 2014; Cornwall and Edwards 2014

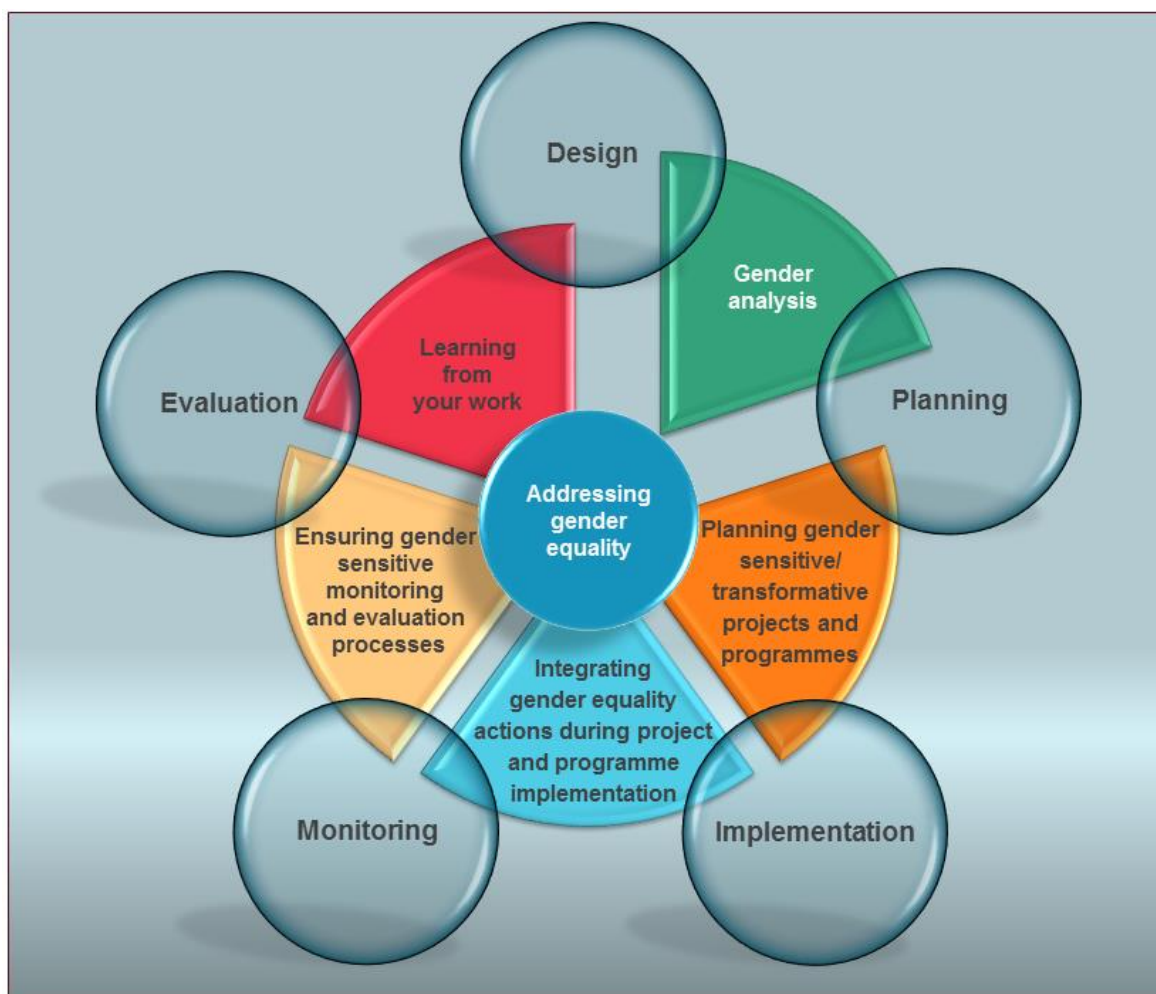
⁷ Deepta Chopra and Catherine Muller (2016) *Connecting Perspectives on Women's Empowerment*, IDS Bulletin

4. Gender analysis

Gender analysis is a process which helps raise questions and analyse information to understand the power relationships between men and women within a set context, their access to resources, activities and constraints they face relative to each other.

Now that you have a better understanding of gender and gender equality, this section provides you with some **practical guidance on how to conduct a gender analysis of an existing or new programme or project.**

Integrating gender into the project cycle



4.1 What is Gender Analysis?

Below are some overarching points for consideration. See also **Table 4.2: Gender Analysis Guidance** for specific questions which can help you when undertaking a gender analysis.

i. Doing a gender analysis meaningfully:

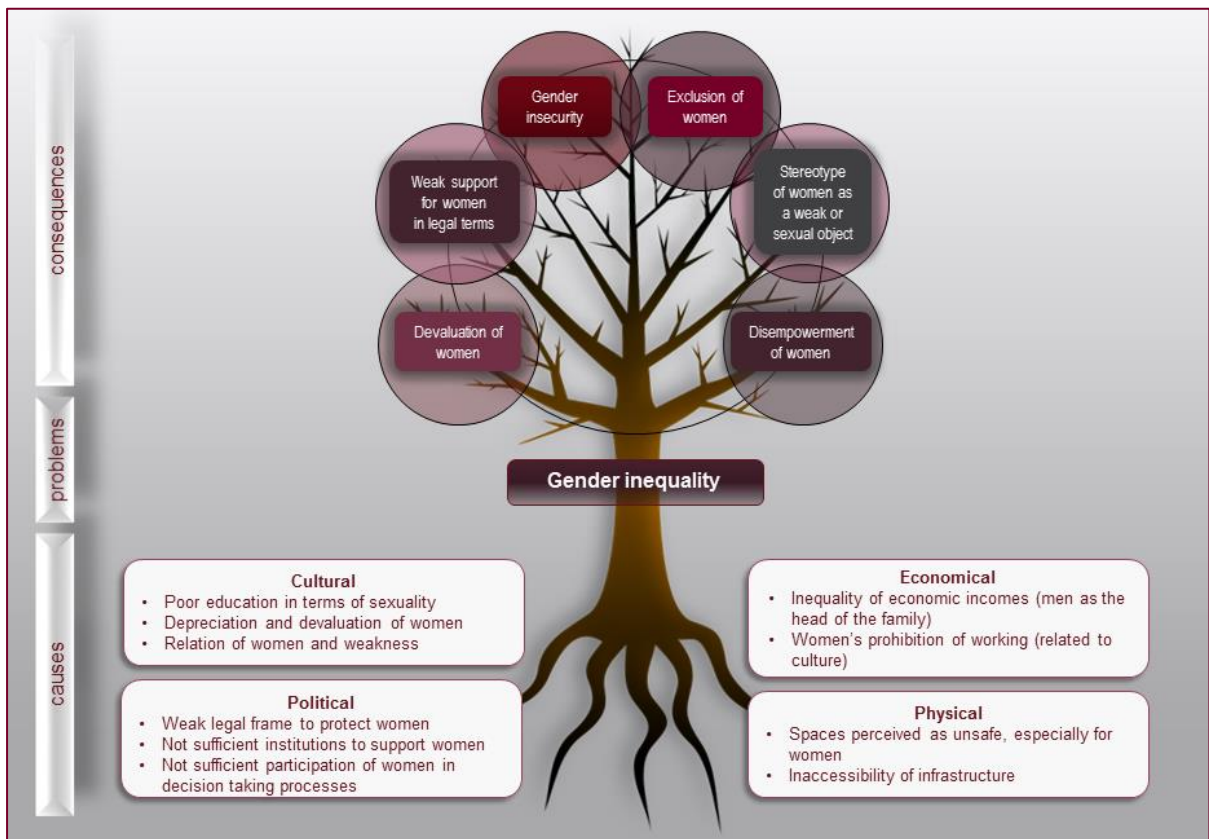
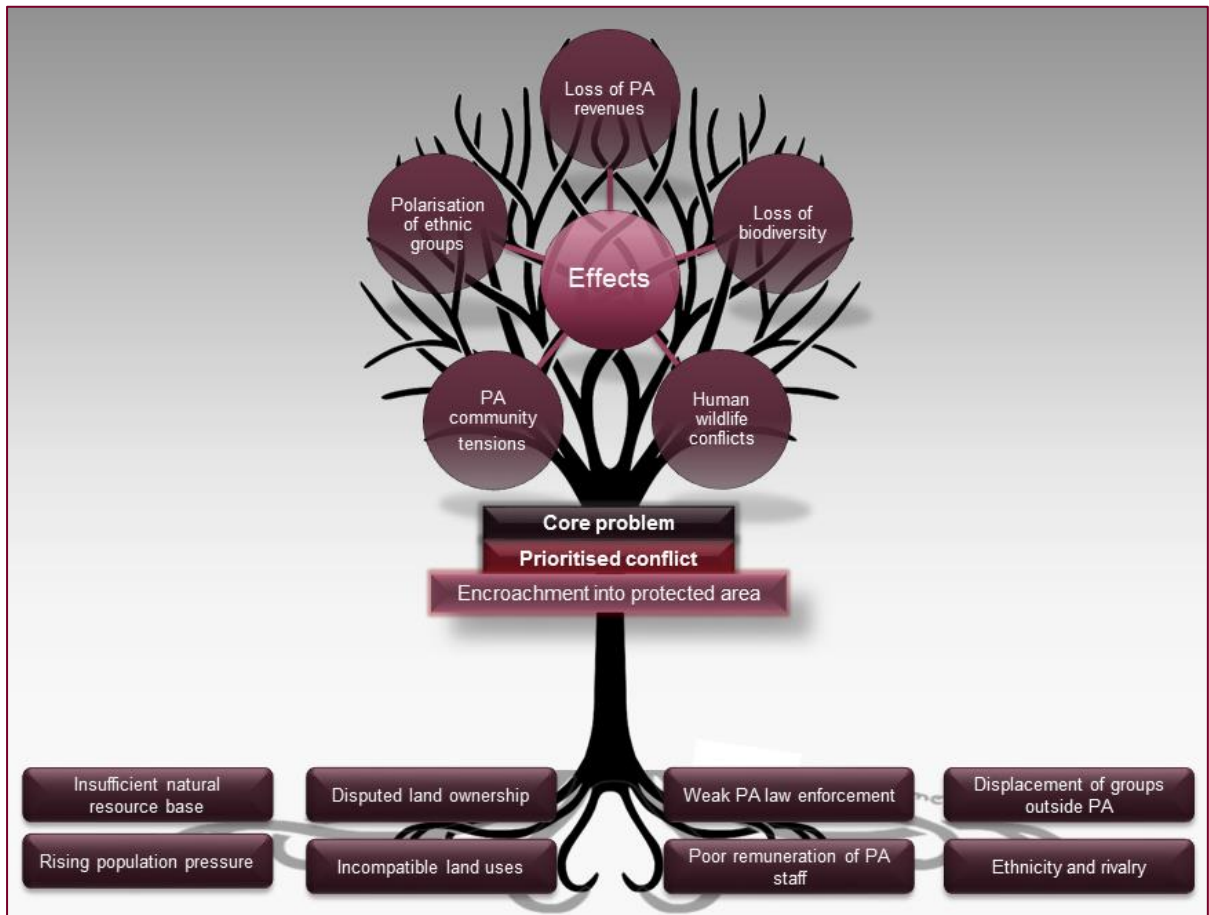
- The key to a successful gender analysis is asking the right questions. These will obviously differ depending on the context, but these should go beyond an individual's experiences of gender identity and instead focus on the existing social constructs and structural inequalities which perpetuate gender inequalities. See this [Oxfam article](#) for more information. It is also worth remembering that inequalities can often be implicit or hidden and exist within non-formal power structures.

- For the analysis to be meaningful, it should sit within the process as a whole, from the outset. For new programmes, it may be worth including the gender analysis as part of the Political Economy Analysis so that this is integrated effectively. See, for example, this Gender and Development Network Practitioners Guide on *'Putting gender in political economy analysis: Why it matters and how to do it.'*
 - For conflict contexts, you can consider doing a gendered context analysis. See, for example, this GSDRC topic guide on *Gender and Conflict* and Saferworld's *Gender Analysis of Conflict toolkit*.
- ii. **Think about the people involved in the process:**
- This toolkit will help to guide colleagues to think about integrating gender equality into their work, which may mean considering building in additional technical expertise to conduct the gender analysis, e.g. gender adviser, external consultant, additional training for staff, etc. Another option could be for colleagues involved in the programme design to undertake the analysis alongside the external experts, providing an opportunity for upskilling and to influence the policy and implementation phase.
 - Gender analysis for programming should go beyond what the programme is/is trying to achieve and should also consider how the programme is/will be delivered. It is therefore important that the analysis reflects upon the internal context in order to identify any potential negative consequences and possibilities for promoting/fostering inclusion. You can find more on the *EDI pages*.
 - As a people to people organisation, it is crucial that you think carefully about the people involved when conducting a gender analysis. Who are the stakeholders, participants, partners, beneficiaries? Who are we reaching/not reaching? What can we do when there are gaps in available data? How do we assess beyond 'participation', i.e. women's and men's engagement, autonomy and decision-making power?
 - Using participatory approaches to conduct a gender analysis will ensure that it reflects the reality of the situation and captures diverse perspectives. A number of exercises that can support this are provided in **Annex 3: Gender Analysis 2.1 to 2.3**.

Tools to use

1. A good gender analysis will help you to identify and define some of the root causes and manifestations of gender inequalities which you will have time to unpack and explore in more detail during the planning stages. Guiding questions are provided in **Table 4.2, Gender Analysis Guidance**.
2. **Problem analysis is a useful process** for understanding and solving a problem. You could use a *problem tree* (see example below) or table to consider the complex systems around those problems and identify key points of failure. **You may also want to undertake activities 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 in the Annex.**

Examples of problem trees:



4.2 Gender analysis guidance

See below some guiding questions to think about as you undertake your gender analysis.

Analysis areas	Guiding questions	Intersectionality (age, religion, sexuality, ethnic group, disability, domicile (urban/rural) and socio-economic status)	Rationale	Stakeholders (how can you work with them and what are the potential blockages and challenges?)
<p>Laws, policies, regulations, institutional practices</p> <p>[Rules]</p>	<p>Are there national laws relating to gender equality?</p> <p>Are these laws enforced at the national and local levels? Are men and women able to access justice – including law enforcement and judiciary systems – or do they encounter constraints? Are individuals, households and communities aware of laws?</p> <p>How do laws and policies actually influence reality?</p>	<p>Are there laws which recognise the additional barriers to gender equality posed by intersecting social identities? Are there laws which promote discrimination towards particular communities? Do people with protected characteristics have access to justice?</p>	<p>Understanding these dynamics can help implementers to design programmes that either will advocate for legal change or make the current system more effective.</p>	<p>Policymakers, local legal institutions, NGOs, women's rights movements, organisations and activists.</p> <p>Judges, police, government officials and civil servants, local legal institutions, teachers, employers and NGOs, WROs, women and girls.</p> <p>Traditional and community leaders, religious leaders, elders, women and girls, men and boys.</p>
<p>Cultural norms and beliefs</p> <p>[Rules]</p>	<p>What are the cultural norms and beliefs regarding men and women's roles and expected behaviours? What are the relevant norms and beliefs about girls' and women's roles as wives and mothers and boys' and men's roles as husbands and fathers? How do norms on gender roles affect beliefs regarding participation of boys and girls and women and men?</p> <p>What cultural and traditional practices prevent boys, girls, women and men from participating in certain activities or in decision making? What is the impact of this on women, girls, boys and men?</p>	<p>What are the cultural norms and beliefs about intersecting social identities, e.g. race, age, sexuality, disability? How do these norms affect people's participation in different activities?</p>	<p>Identifying key norm related drivers of barriers to participation can inform programme implementers how to design more effective programmes.</p> <p>In places where gender discrimination is deeply entrenched in customs or traditions, understanding how these impact women and men may help enable implementers to identify culturally appropriate solutions and key stakeholders to become involved in efforts to improve gender equality.</p>	<p>Traditional/community leaders, elders, parents, women and girls, men and boys.</p> <p>Media</p>

Analysis areas	Guiding questions	Intersectionality (age, religion, sexuality, ethnic group, disability, domicile (urban/rural) and socio-economic status)	Rationale	Stakeholders (how can you work with them and what are the potential blockages and challenges?)
<p>Gender roles, responsibilities, and time usage [Activities]</p>	<p>How much time do girls and women spend on unpaid care work compared to boys and men? What types of community work are girls and women engaged in compared to boys and men?</p> <p>How do gender roles, responsibilities, and time use differ between girls, boys, women and men? What is the impact of this?</p>	<p>What are the roles and responsibilities of boys, girls, men and women with intersecting social identities?</p>	<p>Using a gender lens to explore differences in gender roles, responsibilities, and time used will enable implementers to understand how these issues relate to participation and how programmes can better cater to those who might be at risk of being excluded.</p>	<p>Women and girls, men and boys.</p> <p>Wider family network (mother in laws, father in laws, grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc.).</p> <p>Wider community members.</p>
<p>Access to and control over assets and resources [People]</p>	<p>How do gender norms and practices affect whether males and females own, have access to, and have the capacity to use productive resources (such as assets, income, social benefits, public services, and technology) and the information necessary to be an active and productive participant in society?</p> <p>Which girls, boys, women and men face social isolation? Do they lack access to resources and the power and knowledge of how to control those resources?</p> <p>How does access to and control over assets and resources differ between girls, boys, women and men? What is the impact of this?</p>	<p>Do boys, girls, men and women with protected characteristics have access to resources and the information necessary to be an active and productive participant in society? Do they face social isolation?</p>	<p>Exploring these imbalances will enable programme implementers to design programmes that increase women's and men's access to resources and information.</p>	<p>Women and girls, men and boys.</p>

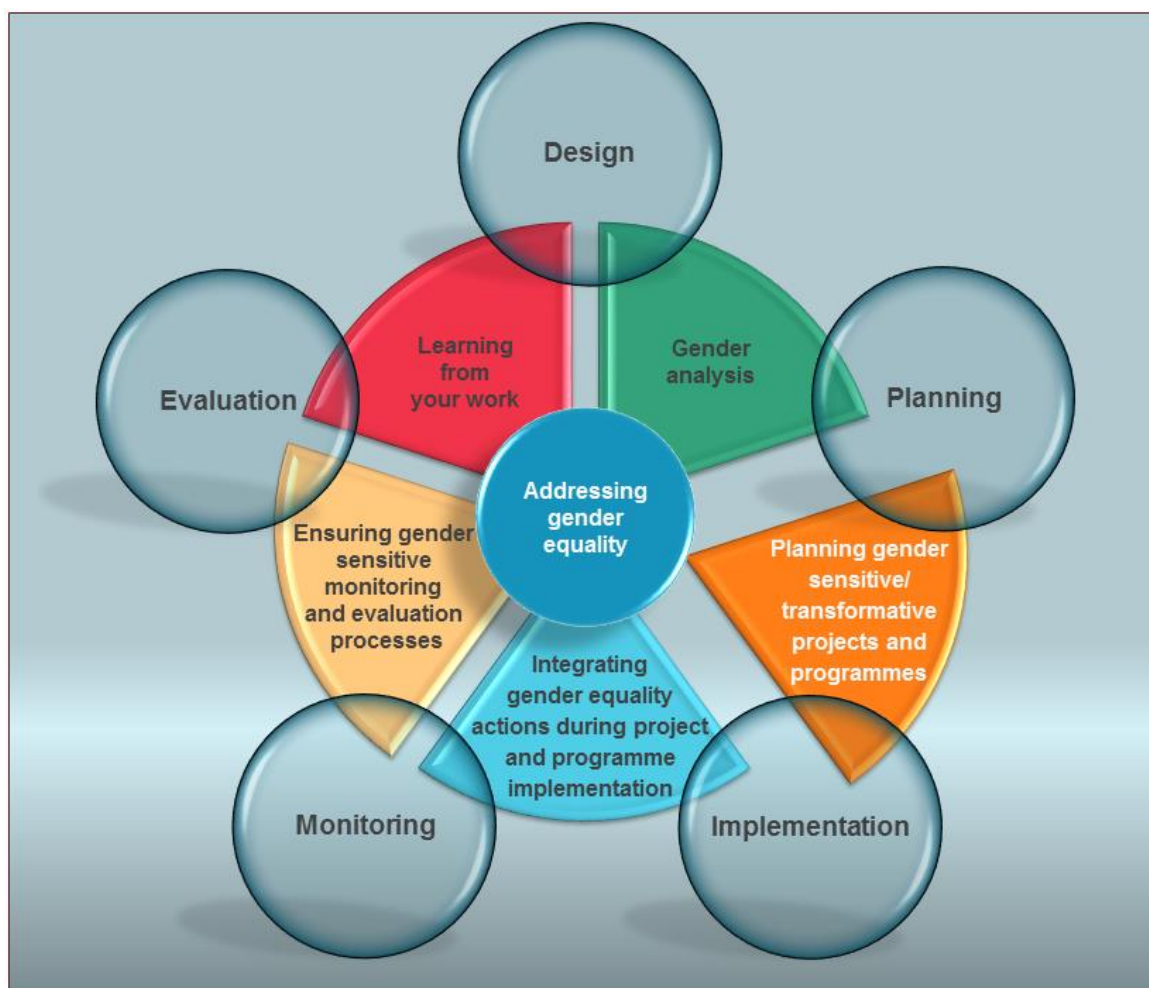
Analysis areas	Guiding questions	Intersectionality (age, religion, sexuality, ethnic group, disability, domicile (urban/rural) and socio-economic status)	Rationale	Stakeholders (how can you work with them and what are the potential blockages and challenges?)
<p>Patterns of power and decision making</p> <p>[Power]</p>	<p>Who within the family or community makes decisions about what men, women, boys and girls do or participate in?</p> <p>What kind of power and decision making do different family members exert over decisions within the household about education traditional practices, health, employment, etc.? Which community and religious leaders influence decisions? Where do women hold power and over what?</p> <p>Do power and decision-making dynamics within households promote gender-based violence and exploitation for girls?</p>	<p>How do age, religion, sexuality, ethnic group, disability, domicile (urban/rural) and socio-economic status influence these decisions?</p>	<p>Implementers can use this information to target programmes to empower girls, boys, men and women to make these key life decisions. Information can also be used to design programmes that create more equitable relationships between the sexes and within households and communities.</p>	<p>Traditional/community leaders, religious leaders, elders, parents, women and girls, men and boys.</p> <p>Women and girls, men and boys.</p>

5. Gender sensitive and transformative planning

This approach ensures that promoting a more balanced relationship between men and women and women’s and girls’ empowerment is central to an intervention.

This section will provide you with some **practical ideas of how to design interventions** to help address some of the gendered barriers and issues you have identified in your gender analysis.

Integrating gender into the project cycle



5.1 How to plan in a gender sensitive and transformative way

Getting started

For a basic checklist to help you to think about how to integrate gender equality issues into your planning activities; see **Annex 6: Checklist for integrating gender equality issues in your project planning process**. The checklist includes key questions and suggested tips for addressing identified gaps.

Gender sensitive and gender transformative programme criteria

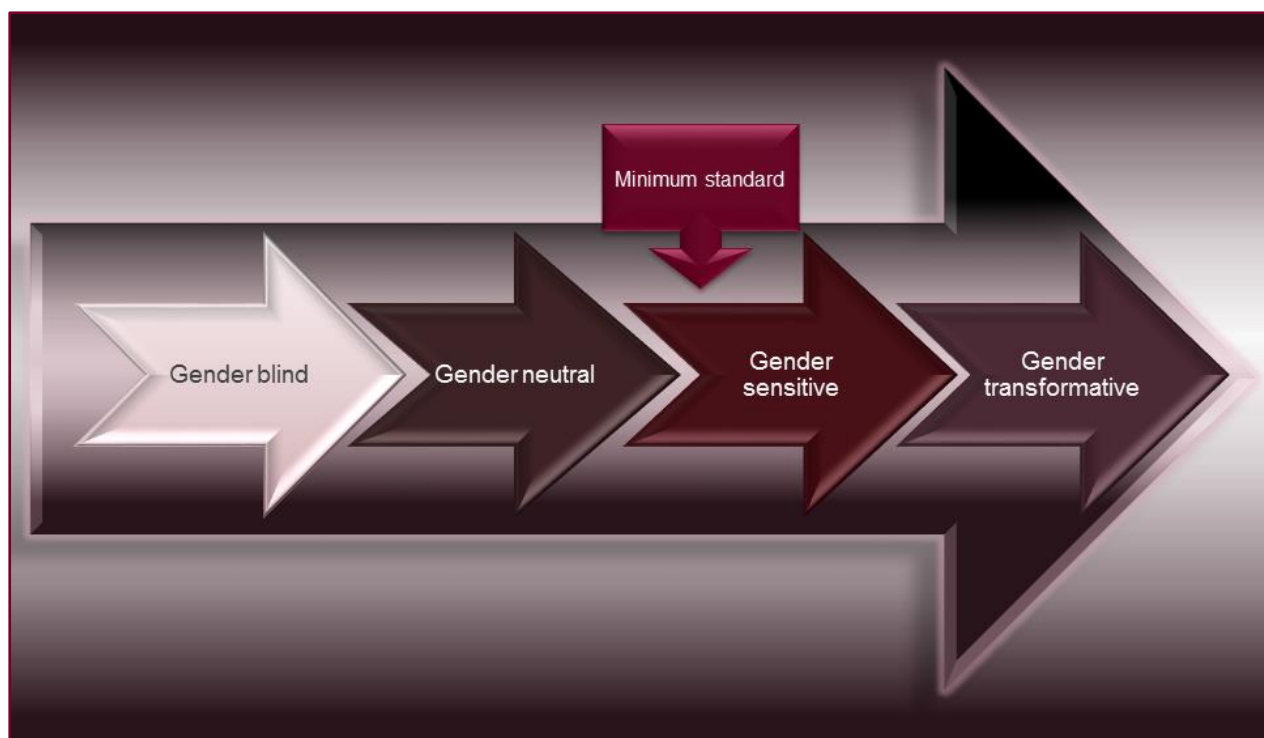
The gender equality policy marker (*GEM*) developed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is a well-known tool in the sector which can be used as a guide to determine the **extent to which a project is integrating women’s rights and gender equality**. The criteria should not be used as a blunt instrument in a prescriptive way but should give a sense of the underlying essence of what the project is trying to change for women and girls, going beyond the idea that gender equals women, but that it is relational and to do with unequal power relations between women and girls and men and boys. Some scores are easier to determine, i.e. those that may be gender unaware/blind but the difference in distinguishing between 2 (gender sensitive) and 3 (gender transformative) may be more nuanced. However, the key difference is if the project seeks to positively change the status quo of women’s subordination in society – and ideally this should be informed by women and girls’ own sense of change rather than perceived notions by British Council or partner staff.

Gender Blind or Unaware	<p>Programmes or projects do not recognise women’s rights and gender equality issues.</p> <p>The specific issues affecting women are not identified at project design stage. They may only refer to issues affecting ‘people,’ ‘communities,’ ‘youth,’ ‘audiences’, etc. rather than breaking these groups down by sex. There is no gender analysis of the wider context and it is not clear how women, girls, men and boys are differently affected by a particular issue.</p>
Gender Neutral	<p>Programmes or projects recognise gender equality issues in the analysis, but not in the response.</p> <p>The differential needs of women and men are identified in the project documents or by stakeholders, but these are not being addressed in the project activities.</p>
Gender Sensitive⁸	<p>Programmes or projects address practical gender equality issues, but do not tackle the root causes of gender inequality.</p> <p>A robust gender analysis has been undertaken to understand the different barriers and opportunities facing women, girls, men and boys using sex disaggregated data. There will be an analysis of the underlying causes of poverty and gender discrimination and the abuse of rights that are at play. Specific solutions to address the needs and concerns of women and girls are included in the project activities and outcomes. Activities are more likely to focus on women’s practical needs to improve their daily condition.</p>
Gender Transformative	<p>Programmes or projects improve both practical and strategic gender issues.</p> <p>There is an explicit intention to challenge the root causes of gender discrimination, for example, through addressing discriminatory gender norms, stereotypes and unequal power relationships between the sexes. Activities and methodologies focus on strategic needs that improve women’s and girls’ sub-ordinate position in society. This is an overtly political process.</p>

At the British Council, we want to ensure that **all** of our projects are at least gender sensitive. If you think of the work you do as a continuum (see diagram below), sometimes making progress and sometimes going backwards can help in managing expectations of what is a journey rather than something that happens overnight.

⁸ Note that gender sensitive and transformative is sometimes used interchangeably. For example, DFID conflates the terms gender sensitive and gender transformative. A legal requirement for DFID funding is that programmes are gender sensitive (transformative).

The gender sensitivity continuum



Methods you can use

1. A **solutions tree** to unpack and think about how to respond to the issues identified in your problem analysis/tree, what you want to achieve and to determine potential solutions and interventions. See more guidance in **Annex 4, activity 4.1 on solution trees**.
2. Designing a **Theory of Change** would help to ensure an increased focus on the changes you are seeking to bring about through your programme, rather than simply focussing on project activities. See also **Annex 4, activity 4.2 on theories of change**.
3. **Participatory planning** to ensure that the voices of disadvantaged and marginalised women and girls (and other groups as appropriate) as identified in the contextual analysis are included in the process.
4. A **stakeholder/partner appraisal**, to determine who will influence the process and resist/support change.
5. You should also refer to the **EDI toolkit** for advice on how to mainstream equality and diversity principles into the internal processes development, delivery and review of programmes.

Communications

For those of you working on communications and developing content and publications, see **Annex 7: Checklist for communications, publications and content**, which may help you to think about how to mainstream gender and other equality areas when choosing examples and writing stories.

Risk assessments

A risk assessment should be carried out to determine the potential harm or risks to participants and the types of challenges you may come up against in attempting to embed gender equality into your planning. To help you to overcome these, we have put together some tips and techniques, (see Section 5.2 below).

5.2 Tips and techniques for overcoming challenges in the early stages

Of course, gender mainstreaming can often be easier said than done so we have pulled together a list of potential challenges or blockages which you may come up against and some ideas for how to overcome them. You may also want to undertake **Activity 2.8 on Power in our Context or Community in Annex 2**.

Challenge: 'I don't know where to start! Help!'

Tip: Start here!

- Take a look at this guide and familiarise yourself with why gender equality is important to what we do and encourage your colleagues to do the same (see [Section 2](#)).
- Take a look at [Section 4.1 on What is a Gender Analysis](#) for an idea of the things you need to consider.

Challenge: 'Me/my team/my partners don't have time to think about gender'

Tip: Prioritise!

- As a cultural relations agency an approach which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion is not only at the heart of our ethos but adds value to our work.
- It's a legal requirement for some donors such as the UK Department for International Development.
- As the need to demonstrate a commitment to gender equality becomes more pressing, take some time to think about how you can do this. Perhaps you could join the Gender Community of Practice or run a session for your team/partners using our Gender Equality Training package?

Challenge: 'Our partners and stakeholders feel uncomfortable about getting involved in a programme or project that is addressing gender inequalities.'

Tip: Be confident and creative!

- When scoping for partners, think about identifying individuals and organisations that are committed to achieving gender equality. If they aren't explicit about this, start a conversation with them and be bold in declaring the British Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and how this helps improve the impact of the work that we do.
- If stakeholders have different motivations how can you use these to your advantage? Can you use this as an opportunity to discuss the wider implications of gender equality, (i.e. more prosperous, sustainable and secure societies?)
- Try and create a safe space to unpack some of the resistance that you may be encountering through the activities suggested in [Annex 2 and 3](#).

Challenge: 'Our colleagues and partners believe that equal participation rates for men and women (or boys and girls) means gender equality.'

Tip: Delve deeper!

- To approach gender equality meaningfully, we need to take some time to think so we can understand gender equality beyond the numbers. Can you use this guide and some of the activities to have a dedicated discussion about the gender relationships and power dynamics that exist in any given context? See [Annex 2](#) for ideas on potential activities.

Challenge: 'We have tried to embed gender throughout the project cycle, but the results indicate little impact upon gender equality.'

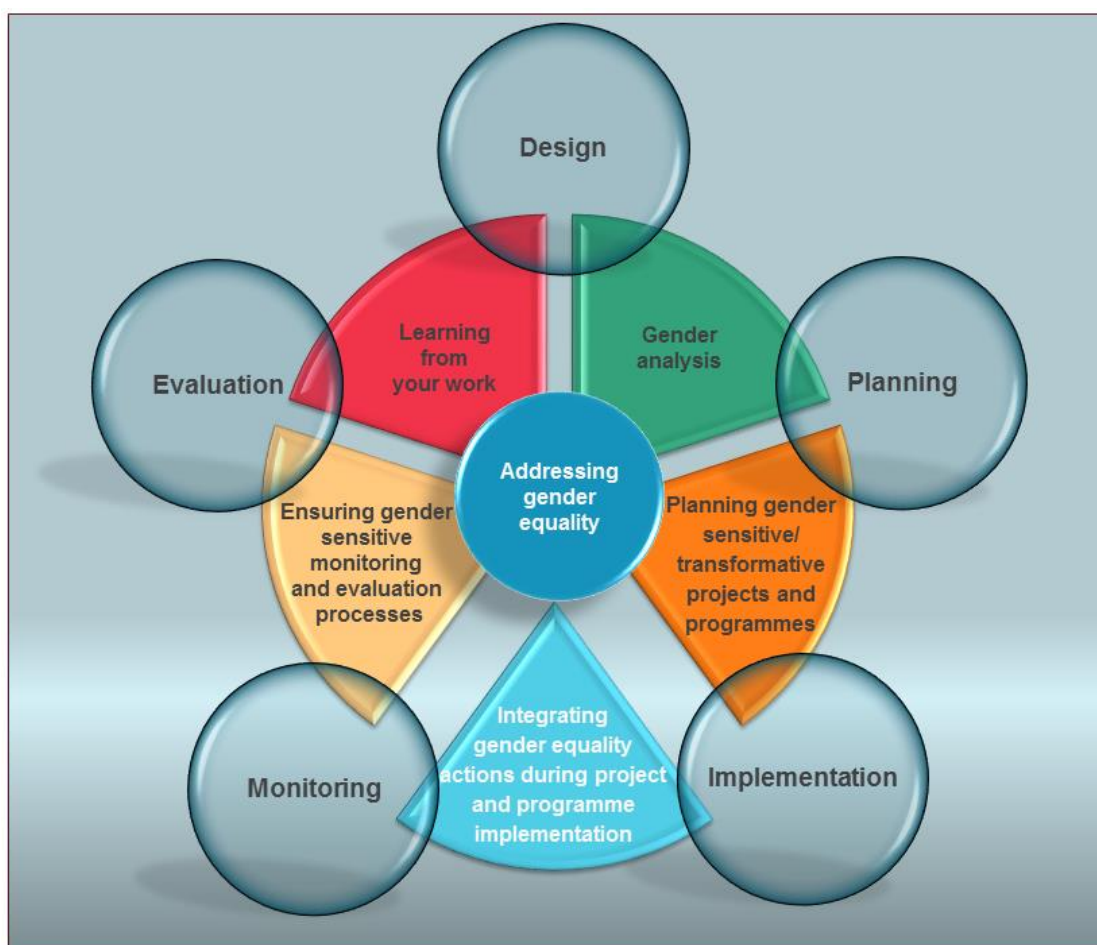
Tip: Be reactive and patient!

- Think about whether there is anything you can do differently based on the evidence you have so far. Are there any adjustments you can make to your current activities?
- In your M&E processes, are you measuring the rights changes, asking the right questions?
- Can you introduce a gender specific action? See [Section 4.2 on Gender Analysis Guidance](#).
- Don't lose heart; gender inequalities are linked to deeply embedded social and cultural structures and power relations which can take years to change. The process of addressing gender equality should be seen as a journey and a long-term process.

6. Implementation: Gender specific actions and gender sensitive or transformative delivery

The implementation of specific interventions that target women (or sometimes men) can help to redress the gender imbalances within a particular context. Alongside this, all of our interventions should mainstream gender issues to ensure gender sensitive delivery as a minimum. Where we are able, we should explore if we can make our work gender transformative.

Integrating gender into the project cycle



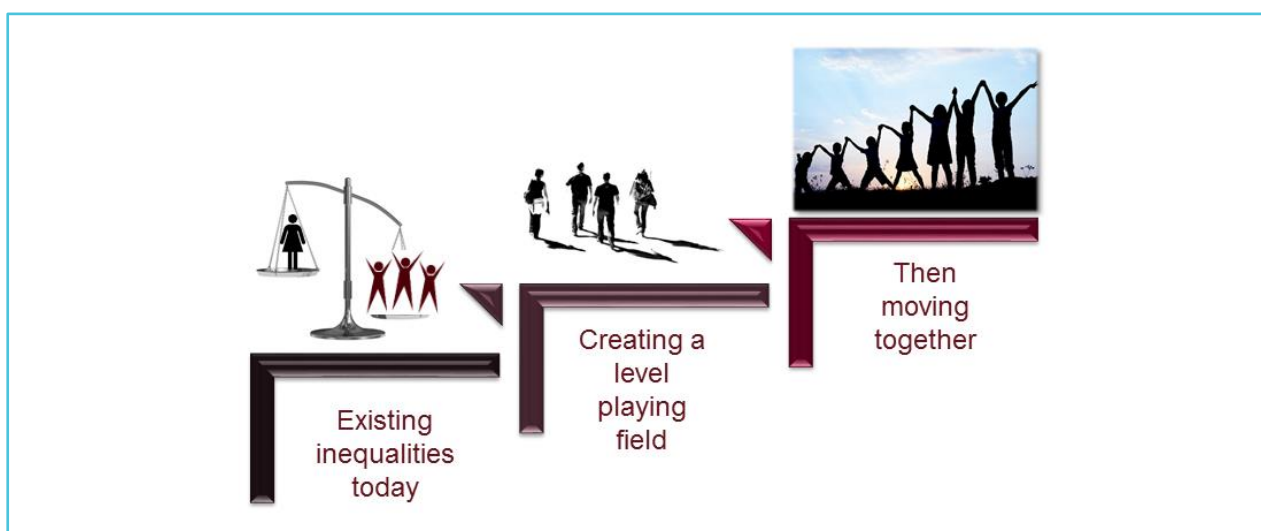
6.1 Specific interventions that target women and/or girls

As highlighted earlier, the British Council strives to ensure that **all** project and programmes are gender sensitive as a minimum, **even if** the achievement of women's rights and gender equality is not the main programme objective. However, we also aim to have a body of work that is gender transformative, where programmes or projects **specifically seek** to empower women and girls (see *twin track approach in Section 2.2*).

Sex specific quotas or targets, can be used to ensure a balanced representation of men and women. Some projects may also specifically target women and girls to redress any existing imbalances (see diagram below). This could take the form of a project providing services for women experiencing violence or a project to promote positive masculinities around ending violence against women and girls.

This section will help you to think about designing and implementing measures targeted at a particular group with a view to eliminating and preventing discrimination or to offset disadvantages arising from existing attitudes, behaviours and power structures. Traditionally such actions have focused on women and girls, because they tend to be discriminated against and underrepresented in areas of influence and power in most areas of society, but gender specific measures that focus on correcting the imbalances between the sexes can be targeted at men too. You may also wish to undertake **Activity 5.1 on creating safe spaces for women in Annex 5**.



If you yourself are not implementing activities, you need to make sure that partner organisations are skilled up to do this. What sort of capacity strengthening can you support them with? Can you identify local women’s rights organisations who can provide this support?



Learning from practice

There are numerous examples of ways in which the British Council has designed and implemented gender specific interventions. Further details on these case studies can be found below.

<p><u>English and Digital Girls' Education (EDGE), Bangladesh</u></p>	<p>Within the arena of education, skills development and English language learning, this joint British Council/BRAC initiative in Bangladesh offers English and digital education to adolescent girls. Through non-formal after school clubs, the programme specifically targets girls and promotes their opportunities to develop and strengthen skills in English and technology, which are typically more limited than those of boys and men, which ultimately restricts their access to the labour market. Our recent impact study finds 'evidence that EDGE contributes to female students completing the formal education cycle,</p>	
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	<p>which has positive societal impacts, including strengthening participants' likelihood of finding formal employment.' and is 'contributing to changing social norms (which in this context perpetuate early marriage).'</p>
<p><u>Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP)</u></p>	<p>Through the DFID funded Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation programme, the British Council and partners supports Nigerian efforts to reduce violent conflict and promote stability, peace and reconciliation. In recognition of the impact of violent conflict, particularly on women and girls, the programme has taken a 'safe space' approach through the establishment of peace clubs for women and girls. Co-ordinated by local civil society organisations who recruit and train the local facilitators who then gain the trust of the young participants, these spaces help to break the cultural of silence around violence against women and girls (VAWG) and to facilitate action to both prevent and respond to VAWG. Findings from our recent report demonstrate that the peace clubs are 'providing individual women and girls who have experienced violence the space and confidence to report it' which in turn contributes to their 'individual and collective power and agency.'</p> 
<p><u>Say it Through Breakdancing, Tunisia</u></p>	<p>Together with the Tunisian partner Art Solution, the British Council has brought established street artists from the UK to provide training for young Tunisians through Say it Through Breakdancing. Although gender was not considered at the outset of this project, colleagues took action when it became apparent that girls were not taking part. By creating safe and secure spaces, the project has actively sought to increase the participation of women breakdancing in Tunisia, helping to break stereotypes about girls participating in street dancing. Bringing women trainers and judges into the process is also challenging men's and boys' perceptions of women dancers. Our recent impact report concludes that this project is 'instrumental in contributing to changing gender norms that traditionally exclude women and that these spaces ultimately 'contribute to the power and agency of participating women', with one participant stating it 'is a good attempt to encourage women who are afraid to show their talent.'</p> 

<p><u>Addressing Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Kenya</u></p>	<p>The Addressing VAWG through Football programme in Kenya works with boys, girls and coaches through football to address some of the behaviours and attitudes that give rise to high levels of VAWG. By involving boys in ‘creating an environment of respect and safety and teaching them about their rights and responsibilities’, boys who participated said they had ‘increased their awareness of sex education and of inappropriate behaviour towards girls’ and ‘improved interaction between girls and boys.’ Our recent study also shows that the programme is also having an important impact in changing discriminatory social and cultural attitudes, beliefs and practices in the community that perpetuate violence.</p>	
<p><u>Women Participating in Public Life, Middle East and North Africa</u></p>	<p>Supported by the British FCO Arab Partnership Initiative, Women Participating in Public Life (WPIPL) has been delivered in Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories. In each country, the project is implemented through three main strategies: developing community leaders, especially</p>	 <p>women, aged 18–30 in marginalised populations; supporting capacity building of CSOs to conduct action research and advocacy to influence policy and practice; and learning, networking and coalition-building to provide platforms for experience sharing between the countries through regional learning events. WPIPL’s broader understanding of women’s political participation goes beyond simple political empowerment, looking at how women can engage and influence political processes through alternative means. This longer-term approach helps to build the capacity and confidence of women and women’s organisations to influence change. In our recent report, one participant, a lawyer from Egypt said WPIPL was ‘useful as it had legislation at the core of action research,’ which, as a lawyer, she thought important and added that ‘for the community at large the programme came at a critical time, democratic transformations, elections, new legislation’. She also noted how, as a result of the action research, she was able to witness the change in the mind-set, abilities, perceptions and concepts of the group working with her (while previously some of her collaborators did not believe in women’s rights, they now advocate for them).</p>

Maureen Chepkorir Butaki

You can find other examples of programmes which have helped to address gender equality in our report, *[Women and Girls: Making a Lasting Difference. A critical reflection on the impact of the British Council’s work with women and girls from 2010 to 2015.](#)*

6.2 Gender sensitive and transformative delivery

We need to ensure that we are delivering our activities in a gender sensitive way, as a minimum, and where possible, seeking to make our work gender transformative by promoting women’s rights and gender equality in everything we do, both in our project work and internally in our organisations.

This means thinking about:

- **The delivery team:** Do we have an equal sex ratio in the team? Are all team members committed to gender equality and do they understand the case for contributing to this through the programme?

- **Delivery partners:** Do they share our commitment to women's rights and gender equality and has this been agreed as an objective? We should also consider bringing in partners that have specific gender expertise relevant to the theme of the project. Do key individuals that are delivering the programme, e.g. facilitators, trainers and coaches, share the same commitment, attitudes and behaviours? Many of us hold gender inequitable attitudes, which have been shaped by the social and cultural norms which have influenced us growing up. There is often a need to ensure that these issues are discussed and that people have the opportunity to reflect on gender power relations and how that plays out in their own context. Codes of conduct can be useful tools to set out expectations in terms of behaviours.
- **The practical needs and constraints** of women and girls and men and boys targeted by the project/programme and how we can enable them to benefit and participate in the programme. This means thinking about when and where we hold activities, the barriers that might prevent different groups attending for example, safety concerns and domestic responsibilities are more likely to affect women's and girls' participation than men's and boys'.
- **Positively ensuring that we are promoting gender equalities through our activities** throughout the design, the expertise we are working with and who is engaged in the process and whose voices are heard – are we providing opportunities for women/men/boys/girls to benefit equally from the activity – training, study visits, policy events, etc.? Do we have an equal sex ratio amongst the experts we are working with, e.g. delivering training, on panel discussions, conferences speakers, etc.? Are we ensuring that gender equality issues are being integrated in to the content of training, conferences, study visits, etc.?
- **Communicating our commitment to gender equality** and ensuring that gender equality is reflected in our communications, marketing, etc. **See Annex 7: Checklist for communications, publications and content.**

Addressing VAWG Through Football (Premier Skills)



Coach Educators in a training session



English and Digital Girls' Education (EDGE), Bangladesh

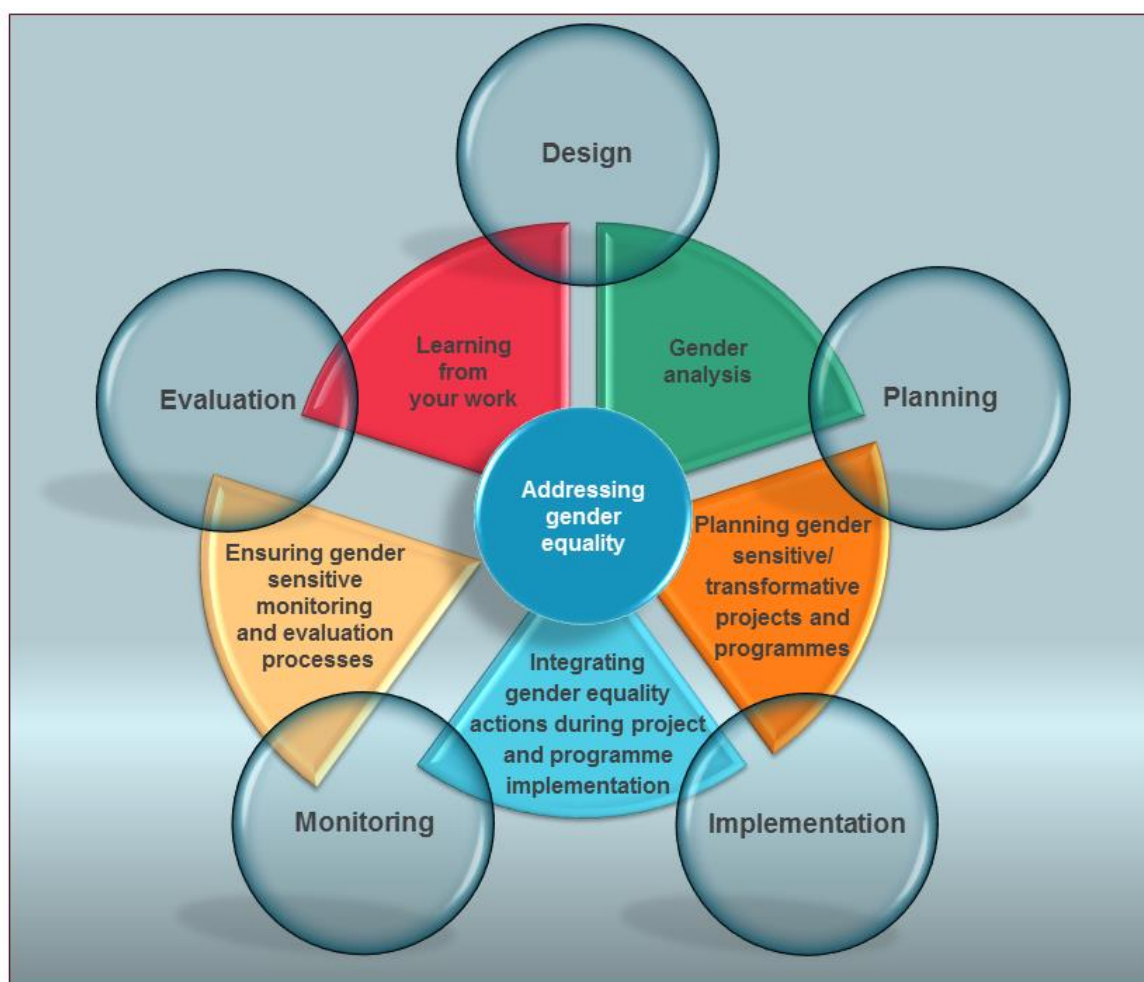


7. Gender sensitive and responsive monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Identifying indicators related to gender equality outcomes and assessing the impact of projects/programmes on gender relations and women’s and girls’ rights and empowerment is key to achieving transformative and sustained change.

This section will help you to think about monitoring the outputs, outcomes and impacts that your programme interventions or project activities could have upon the empowerment of women and girls and working towards gender equality, and how this links to our corporate results framework. By linking this closely to the analysis and planning process, it will help you to design a gender sensitive or transformative responsive M&E plan. This will help to determine whether a programme addresses the different priorities and needs of women and men, to assess the potential impact on gender relations and to determine the gender equality aspects that need to be integrated into your M&E systems. You can use these frameworks and tools as you think about the kinds of changes you hope to see in relation to gender equality and how to capture the evidence needed to support this.

Integrating gender into the project cycle



7.1 The results and evidence framework

A review of our evidence base shows that we are missing opportunities to help achieve women’s rights and gender equality or failing to capture this impact through our M&E systems. The **Results and Evidence Framework** goes some way towards creating some new systems to enable colleagues to collect data related to gender equality issues and to achieve transformative and sustained change to gender equality.

The new **Results and Evidence Framework (REF)** sets out the expected impact of our cultural relations model (see below) and provides a set of indicators that are used across the organisation and by each programme. The REF will gather evidence across eight results areas, one of which will be dedicated to ‘**Women and Girls,**’ which has been identified as a cross-cutting theme.

Level 2 will measure **participation** and focus on intermediate outputs which can be linked directly to our work (quantitative analysis).

Level 3 will provide higher quality evaluation and analysis of **impact** to demonstrate our results at a deeper level and the value we deliver for the UK and the countries where we work (qualitative analysis).

We will be aggregating evidence against the following statements for ‘Women and Girls’ which are closely linked to our Theory of Change outcomes and can be used by colleagues across different areas of work:

REF Level 2: Area description
Women and girls participate in, and benefit from decision making and social change.

REF Level 3: Impact statements for women and girls
Women and girls have the awareness, skills, confidence and networks to improve their own and others’ lives and contribute economically, socially and/or politically.
Women and girls and men and boys tackle gender norms and attitudes in ways which enable women and girls to participate and benefit in different spheres.
Women and girls have access to services, resources and opportunities that improve their lives.
Partnerships and collaborations address problems faced by women and girls and make progress towards gender equality.
Policy and legislative changes support gender equality and improve the lives of women and girls.

At **Level 2** the quantitative data will only be collected for programmes that have a primary objective focused on gender equality or empowerment of women and girls.

At **Level 3** programmes that have a primary focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls should contribute evidence to at least one of the impact statements and the expectation is that, if the programme is well designed and takes a holistic approach, it will be contributing to 2 or more.

Other programmes, where gender equality/empowerment of women and girls is a consideration or secondary objective but is not the primary reason for doing the programme – will also be expected to contribute evidence to support the impact statements.

7.2 Programme and project level monitoring, evaluation and learning

While the Results and Evidence framework is helpful in setting out the higher-level impact that we want our programmes to achieve, it does not replace good Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) frameworks that are required for every project and programme.

Why is MEL important?

MEL is important:

- i. to gauge if an intervention is relevant, efficient, effective, sustainable and has an impact
- ii. to deepen understanding about what is working and why or why not
- iii. to ensure accountability (to beneficiaries, donors, partners, etc.)
- iv. to empower and inform stakeholders
- v. to understand our role in the change process.

To ensure that our programmes and projects are helping to change gender relations and reduce gender inequalities, gender equality issues need to be embedded from the **outset** and **throughout**. To demonstrate that we are making a contribution to gender equality, gender equality issues need to be integrated into the programme design and theory of change as well as the definition of outputs, outcomes and impact. To achieve transformative and sustained change it is crucial that your M&E plan goes beyond numbers, participation and balanced representation, e.g. how can the programme/project/interventions/activities address the structural causes of gender inequality such as creating a more supportive policy environment and culture for gender equality?

Even if gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls is not the main objective or purpose of the programme, we must still ensure that our Monitoring and Evaluation is gender sensitive. This is important so that we know if and how our work is benefiting women, girls, men and boys, as well as helping us to identify any contribution the programme is making to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Sex disaggregated data

In order to plan and understand how the British Council's work is contributing to addressing gender inequality, we need to have a better understanding of the reach and impact of our work on our audiences and, in particular, men and women.

We know that gender inequality has an impact on people's lives and disadvantages are more likely to be experienced by women.

Through our programmes we want to make a difference to gender inequalities and to improve the life chances of women and girls, so that we are contributing to fairer and more inclusive societies. We also have a duty to consider how programmes reduce inequality between the sexes for any UK government official development assistance.

What does sex-disaggregated data tell us?

Across the world, women have lower incomes than men and are more likely to be living in poverty; girls are less likely to complete secondary school, are more likely to be unemployed and are less likely to be in leadership positions than men.

We know this because of sex-disaggregated data.

In the UK, sex disaggregated data is driving a number of Equality policies including reducing the Gender Pay Gap by legally requiring companies to publish sex-disaggregated data on incomes and bonuses.

In order to do this effectively this means we need to collect, analyse and generate sex disaggregated data through our work. This will help us:

- to understand the different realities and needs of men and women in the multiple contexts and countries that we operate and identify inequalities
- differentiate and tailor our programme to meet the different needs of men and women
- ensure that we are not ‘doing harm’ or unintentionally reinforcing gender inequalities through our work
- the benefits of our work are shared between men/women/boys and girls equally or there is a clear rationale why the benefits are focused on either women or men.

For this reason, we are integrating gender considerations into the **Results and Evidence Framework** and ensuring that we have **gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems** in place at programme and project level:

1. At a **minimum** it means collecting **sex-disaggregated data**. This includes **counting participation by sex**. Where we are collecting data directly from people about their sex – we should also provide the option of ‘Other’ and ‘Prefer Not To Say.’ This is to accommodate people who do not identify as male or female or would prefer to keep this confidential in line with our EDI approach.

To feed into the REF at:

Level 2 – all face to face engagement should be sex disaggregated. This means including the numbers of men and women that we reach through each of our activities, where possible we should be able to split the data into men and women. This is the case for any quantitative data that is captured about individuals, e.g. the number of people included in an activity, number of teachers trained, number of policy makers engaged with/influenced. This will help us to determine the reach of our project and programmes and at a very basic level, whether we are benefiting men and women/boys and girls equally. It may be more challenging to do this in some circumstances, e.g. number of people reached digitally.

Level 3 – we need to go beyond counting participation and plan and measure outputs, outcomes and impacts that contribute to reducing inequality between the sexes. This means collecting sex disaggregated data in order to do comparison work between sexes, e.g. what changes/effects have been planned? What changes and effects have happened a result of the programme? Are they the same or different for men/women/boys/girls? We can use this data to adjust our approach and strategy in order to ensure that we are positively contributing to gender equality.

2. We may also need to plan and measure **different outcomes and effects** that we want to achieve **for men and women** in the programme. This would be determined from the gender analysis at the project planning stage.

Specific issues relevant to designing MEL for gender equality and women’s empowerment programmes

Certain aspects of gender transformation and women’s empowerment make it more challenging to monitor and evaluate impact:

- Changing deeply entrenched social and cultural norms, attitudes and behaviours is complex, can be very challenging to address and take many years to change.
- There are multiple pathways and strategies for advancing women’s empowerment and interventions might involve working with a range of different sectors and actors, e.g. a project to improve the position of women with disabilities in public life might require a media awareness campaign as well as confidence and skills-building of the women themselves.

- Change takes place at a number of different levels, from the household to community structures, formal services and government policy making and at individual as well as at collective levels, therefore it's important to capture change at each of these levels.
- Measuring the results and impact of work to address issues such as violence against women and girls, which constitutes a major obstacle to women's empowerment, require a great deal of sensitivity and attention to ethical considerations when designing data collection approaches, in order to avoid compounding or exacerbating problems of violence.

Principles and approaches for the design of MEL frameworks and tools for gender equality and women's empowerment programmes

The following principles and approaches should inform the design of MEL frameworks and tools:

- i M&E strategies should reflect the long-term engagement and support strategies needed to bring about transformative change in gender relations and in women's lives.
- ii Develop a theory of change to drive the methods and approaches used in your M&E and then revisit the theory of change on a regular basis, (e.g. once a year) to explore whether assumptions made when the programme was designed were correct and whether M&E indicators and tools need to be adapted accordingly.
- iii Breakdown your impact into short, medium and long-term outcomes to make it easier to evaluate the different steps that contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- iv Consult with women on what success means. Progress and change on gender equality and women's empowerment will be context specific and may vary among different groups of women. Women are also often the best placed to identify the indicators of hard-to-assess dimensions of changes in gender relations, so a participative approach to developing indicators is recommended.
- v Always ensure the confidentiality and safety of survivors of violence when collecting data and evidence.⁹
- vi Do not limit evaluations to assessing the fulfilment of programme objectives and outcomes, but also aim to capture unintended consequences. Qualitative data collection tools, such as case studies and 'most significant change' methods can be useful tools for capturing unintended changes.
- vii The types of data that you want to collect will depend on the programme but ideally will include a mixture of quantitative (based on statistics broken down by sex) and qualitative (based on experiences, attitudes, opinions and feelings) to measure the impact upon gender relations. Mechanisms for data collection may include surveys, questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.
- viii No one tool on its own can help us understand how change happens – use mixed method and participatory approaches to evaluation (drawing on a range of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools) and triangulate data from different sources to yield a more holistic, comprehensive insight into what changes are taking place and how.
- ix To ensure that change can be measured effectively throughout the project cycle, longitudinal data collection will be crucial. This should include systematic collection of baseline data from the outset in order to be able to provide a comparison over time and measure the change that is attributable to the intervention. This should be followed up at least once through the collection of 'midline' data to track change over time and to determine provide opportunities for changes in programming if required. The collection of 'endline' data can be used to measure outcomes and where there are potential, longer term impacts.
- x Be realistic about what you can measure – sometimes, particularly when the programme is complex and seeking to address social change at multiple levels over a long period of time, it will be sensible to measure 'contribution' rather than 'attribution'.

⁹ See for example: World Health Organisation (2007), 'WHO ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies,' Geneva: WHO and World Health Organisation (2001), 'Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against Women,' Geneva: WHO: http://www.who.int/gender/documents/OMS_Ethics&Safety10Aug07.pdf

- xi** Be aware that working on gender equality and advancing women's empowerment is a non-linear process and can sometimes appear to go backwards instead of forwards. For instance, some women have reported increases in domestic violence as a result of their increased economic empowerment through microcredit programmes, for instance, it is important to document such cases of backlash as these may be signs that power relations are being challenged, and not necessarily that the programme is going backwards.
- xii** Strengthen accountability, empowerment and sustainability by building the skills of women and other key stakeholders to collect and analyse data. Effective women's organisations and movements are important for gender equality and women's individual and collective empowerment. Supporting women's organisations (financially and technically) to, amongst other things, gather and analyse data can be an important part of the process of enabling women to empower themselves.

Practical issues to consider when designing your MEL framework

You should consider the following issues:

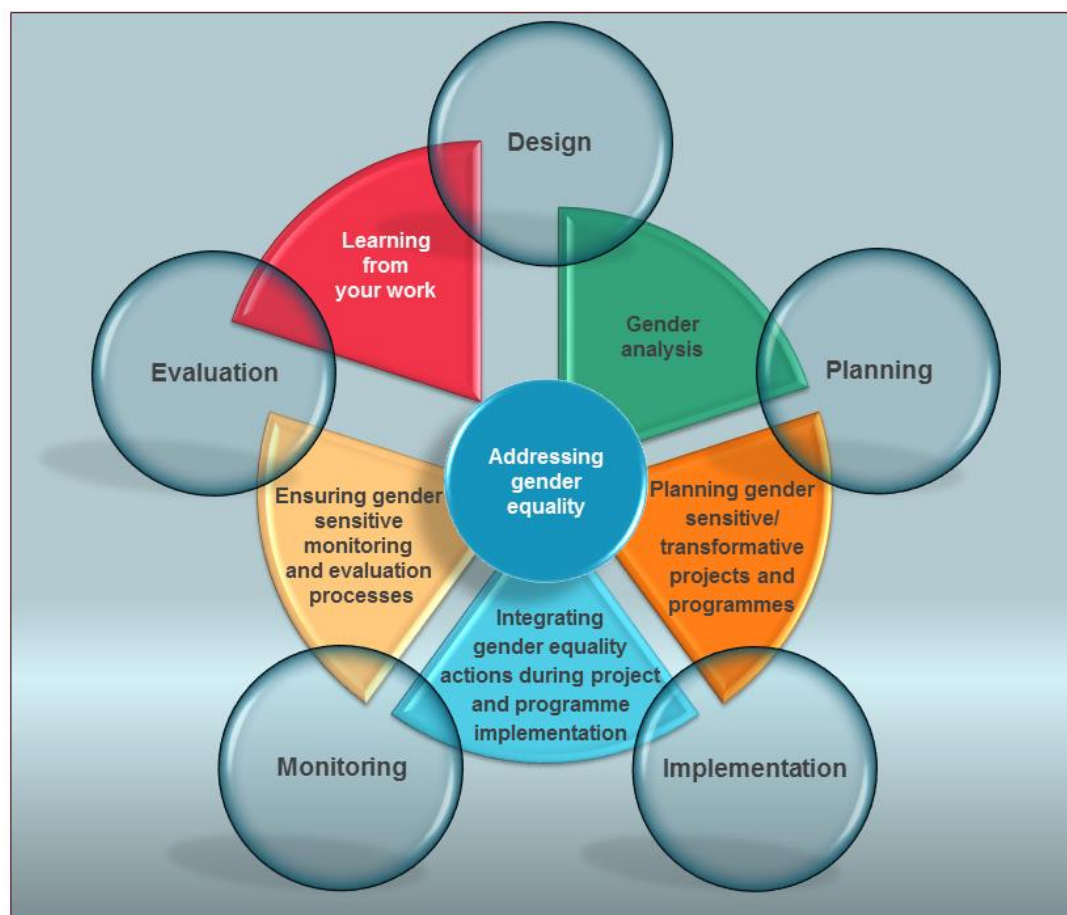
- i** M&E tools and systems often have **resource implications** so make sure you factor in both human (capacity, skills, training) and financial (M&E systems, development of data collection tools, baseline and endline costs, etc.) resources when developing the budget for your programme.
- ii** M&E frameworks should be flexible and adapt as the programme evolves if there's a clear rationale for this. It may be necessary to change what is being tracked and measured during the life cycle of the programme.
- iii** Plan for evaluations from the project design stage. There are many different types of evaluation,¹⁰ and you need to consider which would best suit your needs. While it may not be possible to fully define all your evaluation questions at the programme design stage, agreeing key evaluation questions will help to inform the baseline.
- iv** Make sure M&E is in proportion to the size of your intervention, you do not want to be collecting more data than you are able to analyse. If you're overly ambitious, it will become a full-time and costly job leaving little time for implementation.
- v** It is important to set targets to gain a clear sense of what the programme should achieve by set points within the project cycle. Targets should be realistic and reachable but, in some cases, (e.g. when targets relate to long term and cultural changes such as challenging discriminatory norms, behaviours, attitudes and practices) these may be aspirational.
- vi** When measuring impact, it is important to think beyond the individual beneficiary and consider what the wider benefits of the programme may have been upon the beneficiary's peers/family/community/society, etc.
- vii** It may also be worth thinking about incorporating a 'process evaluation approach' to examine the delivery model of the programme and the impact of 'how' it has been implemented. This may be particularly useful when trying to assess the benefits of a cultural relations approach and to demonstrate how the programme has provided opportunities for cultural exchange, mutual benefit and benefit to the UK.
- viii** In line with the Practitioner Expert Model and importance of learning from practice, we would also strongly recommend that all M&E plans include mechanisms for accountable sharing and learning across SBUs and REF results areas. One way of doing this would be to ensure that all programmes have a sharing and learning plan built into your M&E strategy, with opportunities for dissemination at key points of evaluation cycle.

See examples of indicators in **Annex 8: Sample Indicators**.

¹⁰ DFID's guide to different evaluation and review types and their value add for violence against women and girls programming is useful for designing evaluations of women's empowerment programming. See Guidance Note 3 on Monitoring and Evaluation for Programming on Violence against Women and Girls, May 2012, p12 – 13
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67334/How-to-note-VAWG-3-monitoring-eval.pdf

8. Lesson learning and knowledge sharing

Integrating gender into the project cycle



8.1 Opportunities for learning and knowledge sharing on addressing gender inequalities

We realise that the process of integrating gender equality issues into our work is an evolving one and that colleagues will have different levels of expertise in this area. We want to ensure that this is reflected within the toolkit and we will continue to support staff by providing opportunities for knowledge sharing, learning and capacity building. Some of these may include:

- **a distribution list** to bring together colleagues whose work contributes to the empowerment of women and girls ('Community of Practitioners') to share experiences of integrating gender equality into their work
- **quarterly meetings** of our 'Community of Practice' for updates and knowledge sharing
- **a central and accessible repository** on our SharePoint for signposting useful materials and resources such as examples of good practice, case studies, articles, research, guidance, documents, toolkits, M&E frameworks in conjunction with the Centre of Excellence and EDI team
- **creation/commissioning of a professional development course/core training modules** to be developed in conjunction with the L&D team and delivered face-to-face or via webinar
- **production of a newsletter** with latest updates on gender and inclusion internally and externally

- **co-creation of products, action research, webinars, documents** to ensure a collaborative and participatory approach
- **cascading and dissemination of knowledge from external conferences, events and networks**, e.g. BOND, the UK Gender and Development Network (GADN), connecting our work and colleagues to wider development communities and practice.

Wider staff



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