

The Gender Equality & Inclusion Conversation Guide

What this guide is, and isn't

This guide was developed for consultancies with IDRC and Global Affairs Canada and is intended to support a facilitated learning conversation between individuals or teams.¹ As examples, these conversations could include program officers and the partners they provide grants to, partners engaged in a consortium, or staff within an organization. The guide shared here has been designed for program officers to use in conversations with partners and can quite easily be adapted to suit other needs.

This guide aims to facilitate a conversation about how a project or program is integrating gender equality and inclusion (GEI) considerations in research and engagement. It can help to capture examples of where GEI is being strongly integrated into projects, identify where there might be capacity gaps or challenges, and distill GEI lessons learned from projects. **The tool is intended to be flexible and can be adapted as necessary to specific projects; it is not intended to be rigid in terms of how questions are asked and how information is captured.** As such, in the spirit of shared learning, staff are encouraged to adapt and test these suggested questions in line with the particular needs, context, and interests of project partners.

Use of Information:

Given that the focus is not on accountability, responses should not be monitored or evaluated, but rather will allow program officers to learn more about GEI in the project and address capacity needs. Partners should be invited to choose if they would like to remain anonymous (in which case only aggregate results will be shared) or if they are willing to share these stories internally and externally. These results may be of interest to a larger audience working with these same partner organizations and as such results should be shared where possible.

Top Tips for Introducing the Gender Conversation to Partners:

- Emphasize the learning nature of the conversation, specifically noting that there are no right or wrong responses. The integration of GEI into projects is not a linear process (i.e. it can move in a one step forward, two steps back manner) and the conversation aims to capture the nuances of this journey.

¹ This guide builds on a Gender Conversation Guide prepared by Shannon Sutton and Laura Haylock for a project with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in 2020 and was later adapted by Gender at Work for the KIX program at IDRC and a feminist monitoring, evaluation and learning consultancy with Global Affairs Canada.

- Outline all of the different ways that information may be used, such as sharing GEI related data within a program or supporting GEI capacity strengthening.
- Seek informed consent on data sharing, which is particularly important when it comes to sensitive elements of GEI in projects. Be sure to explicitly ask if partners consent to the use of data and information sharing (Section E).

A. General GEI considerations

This section allows the program officer to ask broad questions about GEI considerations.

1. To what extent do gender equality and inclusion considerations feature within the objectives of the project?

2. Are there any updates or new developments in terms of how you are integrating GEI in your project's research and engagement approaches?

Tip: If partners are using terms or definitions that differ from your organization's, this is a good time to seek clarification so that you, as the program officer, are aware of how they use these terms.

3. How would you say your research is addressing GEI? Please consider both the focus of the research you are doing as well as how you are carrying out the research.

4. Gender-based differences intersect with other aspects of identity such as age, ability, race, ethnicity, geographic location, sexuality, and wealth status. What are some examples from your project to date?

Tip: Make it relevant to the project and bear in mind that identities can intersect to compound the marginalization of certain groups compared to others. Throughout the entire conversation, encourage partners to incorporate reflections on intersectionality and structural barriers (social norms, power relations etc). in their responses.

B. Research

In this section the aim is to learn more about how these GEI considerations (Section A) are integrated in the research process. The questions below can be tailored to specific projects.

5. **Gender analysis:** How are you integrating a gender equality and inclusion analysis into your research so far?

Tip: Gender analysis can allow for a deeper understand of the specific contextual gender biases and inequalities relevant to the research. You may wish to also ask partners how a gender analysis is relevant to their research, as well as what they are learning most about GEI through this analysis.

6. **Researchers:** Please rate the current level of engagement of women, girls, and gender diverse individuals as active researchers.
- 1 - Not involved
 - 2 - Slightly involved
 - 3 - Moderately involved
 - 4 - Very involved
 - 5 - Extremely involved
- a. Please explain why you selected this rating and tell me more about the involvement of these groups in the research process.

Tip: Ask for key examples of how women, girls and gender diverse individuals could be involved in the process (i.e. Did they play a key role in data collection or help make sense of the data afterwards?)

7. **Participants:** Please rate the current level of engagement of women, girls, and gender diverse individuals as research participants.
- 1 - Not involved
 - 2 - Slightly involved
 - 3 - Moderately involved
 - 4 - Very involved
 - 5 - Extremely involved
- a. Please explain why you selected this rating and tell me more about the involvement of these groups as research participants/subjects.

8. **Findings:** What are you discovering about the needs, interests and priorities of girls, boys, women, men, gender diverse individuals, and other groups through your research?

Tip: We might not be at the Findings stage yet but it's important that findings reflect the differentiated needs of women and girls, as well as potentially integrate an intersectional gender analysis.

9. **Validating findings:** How are you validating the results of your research with groups involved in the research?

Tip: In order to ensure that the process is not extractive, how are research partners sharing results with the research subjects? Are they considering how to engage these research subjects in using the data for policy influencing?

C. Engagement

In this section we explore the integration of GEI considerations in engagement activities related to knowledge translation, communications outputs, and events, and aim to surface relevant change stories. Please note that Questions 10 and 11 may be more relevant in the later stages of the project.

10. **Knowledge translation:** Please describe any progress and/or obstacles made towards integrating GEI considerations in the project's knowledge translation plan.

Tip: Be mindful of the stage that the project is at in the project life cycle, encouraging reflection on GEI considerations in relevant knowledge translation efforts (such as images and language used).

11. **Outputs:** What are you discovering about how girls, boys, women, men, gender diverse individuals, and other groups participate in creating (authoring) and accessing knowledge?

Tip: Reflect on who writes and reads briefs, blogs, and reports, or presents at conferences and events. Does the project create opportunities for women, girls, and gender diverse individuals to participate in research communication and events?

D. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) & Capacity Strengthening

In this section we aim to learn more about partner monitoring, evaluation and learning activities as well as what, if any, capacity support is needed.

12. To what extent do you feel on track to meet the GEI objectives you set for yourselves at the outset?

Tip: Refer back to the response to question 1 about objectives above.

13. **MEL processes:** How do you monitor GEI in your project?

Tip: You can prompt with questions such as: How do MEL tools (theory of change, results framework etc.) incorporate GEI? Are there other ways you monitor GEI within the project? What good practices have you tested?

14. **MEL challenges:** Are there any challenges you face in terms of monitoring issues related to GEI in the context of your project?

15. **Capacity support needed:** Do you see a need for added capacity support within the project related to GEI? If yes, please describe the type and level of capacity support required.

Tip: This support could focus on specific topics such as knowledge translation, intersectionality, or safeguarding, which may be helpful probes.

16. **IDRC's role:** Is there any other way that IDRC could better support you to integrate GEI into your project?

17. **Insights for IDRC:** Can you offer any specific GEI insights that might improve the knowledge and practices of IDRC or other IDRC research partners?'

18. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

E. Confidentiality

19. Would you prefer that this information remain anonymous or are you open to sharing your story more broadly? Please select one:

- 1 – Remain anonymous
- 2 – Share internally within IDRC
- 3 – Share broadly with internal and external audiences

Tip: This information can be valuable for programmatic and IDRC learning, so long as the partner is comfortable with this.