Supporting Gender Equality Outcomes in Development Research

Reflections on a Multi-year Collaboration between Gender at Work, IDRC and its Partners

IDRC · CRDI
Canada

Gender at Work

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Acknowledgements

This monograph has been a collective enterprise. It has grown out of reflections on the experience by research partners, International Development Research Centre staff, and Gender at Work associates and consultants. The monograph includes the writing of Sylvie Desautels, Kalyani Menon-Sen, Rex Fyles, Jeff Walton, Carol Miller, David Kelleher and Mitchel Odili. The last chapter makes liberal use of the thinking of evaluation consultant Barbara Klugman. Ruhiya Seward contributed to the original framing and thinking. Drafts were reviewed by Kate Waller, Michal Friedman, Ruhiya Seward and Laurent Elder. Final assembly and editing were done by David Kelleher, Rex Fyles and Carol Miller.

Finally, we express our gratitude to Laurent Elder, Ruhiya Seward and Mathew Smith who were the initial sponsors and supporters of this work and whose strategic advice was invaluable.

About IDRC

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is a Canadian crown corporation that funds development research in the Global South. Currently, its areas of focus are Climate Resilient Food Systems, Global Health, Education and Science, Democratic and Inclusive Governance, and Sustainable Inclusive Economies. IDRC has a long history of working on gender equality and its new strategic plan highlights the importance of gender equality and inclusion.

About Gender at Work

Gender at Work (G@W) is an international collaborative that strengthens organizations to build cultures of equality and social justice. We support both local and global social change organizations to change their cultures, structures, processes and programs to advance a gender equality agenda.

Executive Summary

The degree to which gender is studied or ignored in research can powerfully affect both research results and the communities those outcomes were intended to benefit. Yet, science and technology have historically and consistently ignored gender gaps. Critiques of systematic biases in research have made visible a multitude of biases and assumptions underpinning research and contributing to gender and diversity related data gaps. These biases are consistent with patriarchal and other social and power relations in societies, which in many countries in the Global South may be endogenous and/or the result of contact with colonial systems. Until recently such norms, and the barriers they create, have been invisible in research.

This monograph makes the case for a process-driven methodology that supports research institutions, and other development institutions, to fill the implementation gaps that are often found between formal gender policies and strategies, and the hoped-for gender equality outcomes. It draws on the experience of five International Development Research Centre research programs Gender at Work worked with between 2016 and 2022.

During this period, Gender at Work 'deployed' twenty individuals in different team configurations to work with dozens of IDRC staff members, individual researchers and research institutions working on scores of projects related to fields as diverse as digital technologies, food and health, climate change and education. Operating in multiple languages and using a range of engagement methods, the entry point, duration, reach and precise methods G@W team members used in each intervention varied widely. After six years, scores of people and dozens of organizations in more than 15 countries are now doing research differently. Attitudes have changed, new methods have been adopted, new ways of working with grantees have emerged, and new knowledge has been created.

G@W's approaches were originally a marriage of feminist theory and organizational learning. The emphasis of this approach is not to specify what is required and then monitor for gender compliance but rather focusses *learning, relationships and action*. In our work with IDRC and its partners, this learning led to a wide range of gender responsive outcomes, including shifts in methodology of a

single project, changes in a research team's overall approach to research, shifts in a research groups norms, practices and policies, shifts in research influence and shifts in grantmaking procedures, staff skills changes, organizational norms and processes within IDRC itself.

This document is organized into five chapters. In the first chapter we review existing studies on the problem of gender equality and inclusion in development research: overviewing strategies that have been used in trying to bring gender equality considerations to research institutions globally and to the research itself; and describing the G@W approach and framework that guided our work with IDRC programs. The next three chapters describe the process and achievements in the various projects – how we started, the change process and outcomes. Finally, the conclusion pulls together the main learnings from these six years of work.

At the beginning we posed the question: *What does it take to* improve *gender equality outcomes in development research?* This reflection Gender at Work has engaged in with IDRC and its partners over the past six years allowed us to identify six ideas that best respond to this framing question:

1. Change happens as a result of a judicious mixture of pressure and support.
2. Learning and change happen within reflective spaces that are characterized by trust, openness, creativity and personal exploration.
3. Learners will be motivated to solve problems which they have the power to define in terms that matter to them.
4. Providing conceptual material regarding gender and inclusion is only valuable when it is offered to shed light on a problem the research team is confronting.
5. Transformative change happens over time.
6. Change requires some sort of 'upset', often called disconfirmation.

Acronyms

AWARD	African Women in Agricultural Research and Development
CC	Climate Change
CIPIT	Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law
CPED	Centre for Population and Environmental Development
DOT4D	Digital Open Textbooks for Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
FEH	Food, Environment and Health
GAL	Gender Action Learning
G@W	Gender at Work
GDI	Gender diversity and inclusion
GEI	Gender equality and inclusion
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
KIX	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
M&E	Monitoring & evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
NE	Networked Economies
PMO	Program management officer
PO	Program officer
TTI	Think Tank Initiative
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Table of Contents

What does it take to improve gender equality outcomes in development research?

T his monograph seeks to provide some answers to this question.

When we first met with staff at the International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) Networked Economies (NE) program in late 2015 – to discuss how NE might improve gender outcomes in the research they funded in the field of digital innovation – we did not know that this meeting ultimately would lead to six years (and counting) of collaboration and exploration with eight IDRC programs. This innovative collaboration provided Gender at Work (G@W) with a unique opportunity to apply its distinctive approach to gender equality and institutional change with multiple research programs, researchers and research organizations. It also allowed IDRC and its grantees to experiment with less traditional, but potentially more impactful, processes and tools to build capacity to integrate gender considerations more mindfully into research. This stood in some contrast to more standardized gender training, checklists or toolkits.

This monograph makes the case for a process-driven methodology that supports research institutions, and other development institutions, to fill the implementation gaps that are often found between formal gender policies and strategies, and the hoped-for gender equality outcomes. It draws on the experience of five of the eight research programs and initiatives we worked with between 2016 and 2022.

The experience of working directly with researchers located in research organizations across the globe was a tremendous learning experience for Gender at Work. G@W associates and facilitators work extensively with UN agencies, trade unions, international non-governmental organizations (INGOS) and local civil society organizations (CSOs). The six-year collaboration with IDRC and its research grantees required G@W to test its assumptions about how change happens in research institutions and to explore researchers' motivations to change their ways of working. The collaboration with IDRC created both a unique opportunity and an imperative to document evidence of outcomes and to rigorously interrogate the processes and change pathways we have pursued.

We draw on two data sets to tell this story. The first is a corpus of some 400 documents generated through the life of these projects. This includes meeting notes, e-mails, meeting designs, team discussions, surveys, case studies and reflective pieces written by G@W team members. The second data set grew out of an Outcome Harvesting process we undertook in 2022 that focussed on five of these initiatives. This methodology systematically collects outcomes – defined as 'observable changes in behaviour' – that can reasonably and with a high degree of confidence be associated with our efforts. All these data were analyzed in a series of sense-making workshops over 3–4 years involving the G@W team members and IDRC staff who worked on the various projects. The final assembly of information was led by three G@W associates and then commented on by IDRC staff who had been involved in the projects.

The vast scope of the initiatives under review here offers a rich body of work and imposes some limitations to our analysis. Gender at Work 'deployed' twenty individuals in different team configurations to work with dozens of IDRC staff members, individual researchers and research institutions working on scores of research projects related to fields as diverse as digital technologies, food and health, climate change and education; they operated in multiple languages, with a range of engagement methods (from working with households and community groups to policy advocacy and regulatory debates) in dozens of countries across the globe. The entry point, duration, reach and precise methods G@W team members used in each intervention varied widely, but were guided by shared assumptions and principles. Between 2016 and 2022, the discourse and shared understanding of 'gender', 'gender equality', 'diversity', 'inclusion',

'decolonization', 'reconciliation', 'transformation' and 'justice' have evolved – and continue to evolve – enormously. Drawing meaningful inferences from such a broad range of experiences and rapidly changing contexts has proven challenging. We have sought to approach this analysis with both rigour and humility to draw out evidence-based lessons of use to researchers, grantmakers and gender equality practitioners.

The document is organized into five chapters. In the first chapter we review existing studies on the problem of gender equality and inclusion in development research, as well as strategies that have been used in trying to bring gender equality considerations to research institutions globally and to the research itself. We describe the G@W approach and the framework that guided our work with IDRC programs.

The next three chapters describe the process and the outcomes achieved in the various projects. We focus on how we started ('Tilling the Soil'), the change process itself ('Working in the Garden') and the outcomes ('The Harvest'). Finally, the conclusion pulls together the main learnings from these six years of work.

This monograph is written with deep gratitude to the research teams we worked with and the IDRC staff who supported this work. We have learned much from them. We hope this analysis is helpful to IDRC staff as they continue to think about how best to support gender and inclusion in research in very diverse fields and contexts. We also hope that the work is useful to other funding agencies, many of which have done innovative work in this area. We hope that researchers will find useful options here on how to engage meaningfully with the challenges of gender-responsive and gender-transformative research in their respective fields of expertise. And finally, we hope the work is of interest to leaders, consultants, scholars and managers in the broad gender and inclusion ecosystem.

The chart below shows the research programs with which we worked.

A brief chronology

2015 First meeting with Networked Economies and Foundations of Innovations. We decided to do a one-year scoping project to develop directions for change. This resulted in a gender strategy for NE, a short paper analyzing gender issues in the digital space, a staff learning needs assessment and a change plan for Foundations of Innovation (not part of this analysis).

2016 We agreed to a three-year project with Networked Economies to build partner and staff capacity — mentoring IDRC staff and partners, and beginning an NE team peer learning project with its Cyber Policy Centres.

2017 We began a one-year research support project with Food, Environment and Health — primarily working with program officers (POs) and partners to assess and improve proposals' capacity to deliver gender outcomes.

2018 We worked over 1.5 years with five think tanks in three regions largely virtually. We also designed and facilitated a large gathering with all IDRC program staff to honour the Centre's long history working for gender equality and to identify future directions.

2019 We began a three-year project with the Climate Change program to implement peer learning for six climate change projects.

2020 Network Economies 2. A renewal of the previous three-year grant to focus on cyber policy centres, the Feminist AI Research Network, COVIDAI, and to research the learning process itself.

2021 Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) – an eight-month consultancy to provide tools and training to the IDRC staff team to advance their gender equality goals.

2022 New projects begun with Artificial Intelligence for Development, Education and Science, and Global Health. (These projects are not part of this analysis.)

Who are the consulting team?

These projects involved a group of G@W associates and other consultants. The team that worked on some or all of these projects includes:

Altagracia Balcacer, Dominican Republic

Sylvie Desautels, Mozambique

Michal Friedman, South Africa

Nora Fyles, Canada

Rex Fyles, Canada

Fazila Gany, South Africa

Kirstyn Hunter, USA

David Kelleher, Canada

madeleine kennedy-macfoy, Belgium

Rose Mensah-Kutin, Ghana

Carol Miller, Canada

Nkechi Odinukwe, Nigeria

Tania Principe, Canada

Kalyani Menon-Sen, India

Rieky Stuart, Canada

Shannon Sutton, Canada

Rose Viswanath, India

Kate Waller, Canada

Jeff Walton, USA

What were the projects?

IDRC Program: Networked Economies (NE)
Duration: 6 years
Key Objectives: Improve the capacity of the NE program and its research partners to develop and scale up gender responsive programming and research. Focussed on cyber policy, open government, digital innovation and artificial intelligence.
Regions/countries: Latin America, Asia, North America, North Africa and the Middle East

IDRC Program: Climate Change (CC)
Duration: 3 years
Key Objectives: Increase research partners' capacities, enabling them to strengthen the quality and outcomes of the climate change adaptation research projects selected through the call for proposals to advance gender equality and social equity.
Regions/countries: Latin America, Asia, North America, North Africa and the Middle East

IDRC Program: Food, Environment and Health (FEH)
Duration: 1.5 years
Key Objectives: Strengthen the capacity of the Food, Environment and Health program and its research partners to integrate gender equity dimensions more consistently and explicitly into the design and implementation of new research projects.
Regions/countries: Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East, Africa

IDRC Program: Think Tank Initiative (TTI)
Duration: 2 years
Key Objectives: Support five think tanks to improve their capacity to deliver gender related outcomes.
Regions/countries: Bangladesh, Ghana, Nigeria, El Salvador, Guatemala

IDRC Program: Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX)
Duration: 8 months
Key Objectives: Provide tools and training to IDRC staff.
Regions/countries: Staff in Canada and Kenya responsible for Latin America, Africa and Asia-Pacific

Chapter 1

Conceptual Foundations

This chapter provides an overview of 'the problem' of gender bias in research and a brief evidence review on strategies that have been employed by research institutions to address gender inequality and gender bias. We wish to situate Gender at Work's approach to 'gender support' to IDRC and its partners in the context of existing strategies and good practice approaches. The review of evidence helps to ground the theory of change underpinning our gender support work with IDRC and grantees.

It is worth noting at the outset that in our engagement with IDRC we were invited to provide gender support to research teams across various thematic areas. G@W takes an intersectional approach to gender and it was inevitable that the processes we support would pick up on the multiple ways that gender intersects with other forms of discrimination and oppression.

The degree to which gender is studied or ignored in research can powerfully affect both research results and the communities those outcomes were intended to benefit. As Hearn and Husu (2011) stated, "Gender relations and gendered power relations are major defining features of science and technology."[1]

Yet, science and technology have historically and consistently ignored gender gaps.

Public attention is increasingly being drawn to the implications and costs of gender bias in research and the propensity for the category 'white male' to represent the population, particularly in scientific and health research. By chance, just as Gender at Work and IDRC opened the final workshop bringing together researchers from the Think Tank Initiatives' gender support project in March 2019, the media picked up a story that NASA had to cancel its first ever all female spacewalk because the suits did not fit the women astronauts.[2]

The Problem

The last two decades of studies and research in gender equality in science and technology show that if we want to implement change, the focus must shift from individual support measures to the structural transformations of institutions – from 'fixing the women' and 'fixing the numbers', to 'fixing institutions'. The first step is to convince countries that no policy is gender-neutral and that gender-blind instruments are detrimental to science.[3]

This prompted a wider public discussion on the shortage of safety equipment designed for woman's bodies that puts women in danger while doing their jobs; or even driving their cars, as another story captured headlines in 2022 on the safety of women motorists arising from the fact that crash test dummies are modeled on the male torso.[4]

In recent years, the growing awareness of gender bias in purportedly 'neutral' Artificial Intelligence (AI) has opened up a whole new terrain for exploring consequences of and solutions to gender bias written into AI coding.[5]

These examples only hint at the wider implications of the failure to integrate gender and other social determinants such as race, indigeneity, gender identity, neurodiversity and disability into research. Despite some progress over the past two decades, the integration of gender equality into research and research institutions is still a work in progress. As noted by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in 2016,

> *Much research is still gender-blind or gender-biased. This happens, for instance, when research results are extrapolated to the population as a whole without due consideration of the sample composition ... Sex and gender are fundamental determinants of the organization of life and society. Therefore, recognizing and taking into account these differences is paramount in scientific knowledge creation.*[6]

For example, a research project in one NE project provided free public internet stations for communities. However, within a short period of time women weren't using them. A follow-up revealed that women were not going to the stations because the men were looking at porn sites. The problem was solved when the computer screens were turned around so that everyone could see what the men were looking at. This is an example of a project that hadn't anticipated the effect of gender norms (even though the sites were for men and women). However, the project did find a way to notice that women weren't using the sites and found a solution.

Another example was how women were routinely excluded from climate change adaptation plans in several countries where we worked even though women are "more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than men — primarily as they constitute the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change. They also face social, economic and political barriers that limit their coping capacity."[7]

The UN notes that "Climate change will have unique and unprecedented impacts on women and girls" that "intensify existing economic and social gender disparities."[8]

However, researchers and research organizations are embedded in a complex world of research norms, cultures, hierarchies, publishing demands, policy ecosystems and personal histories (and biases) that influence their research questions, design and methods. Implicit in the quote from EIGE above is the suggestion that the solution may lie in addressing the relationship between gender bias in research and the gender bias hard-wired into research organizations and researchers themselves. Or, as framed by one G@W associate, "The barriers to change lie in the ways in which embedded hierarchies of power and privilege shape the thinking and behavior of individuals, and provide the scaffolding for the organizational structure and culture." (Menon-Sen et al. 2021 p.28)

The strategies

So, what does it take to support researchers and research institutions to navigate the complexities and to shift ways of thinking and working in support of gender transformative or even feminist research?

This section summarizes current good practice strategies used by research institutions and reflects on reasons why some strategies nonetheless get stuck in the implementation or produce results that are uneven or unsustainable. By exploring these issues, we seek to provide *an analysis and rationale* for the approach Gender at Work has taken to its gender support to IDRC over the past six years.

A light touch literature review – undertaken by G@W in 2021 on gender equality, diversity and inclusion in research institutions – suggests there is a broad understanding that improving the capacity of research institutes to integrate gender in research depends not only on addressing fundamental issues about research, how it is conducted and by whom, and what it is meant to achieve (i.e. transformative social change), but also on addressing the research workplace as a locus for shifting power relations that are barriers to gender equality.[9]

Nevertheless, the relationship between the two (the conduct of research and the culture of research institutions) is often under conceptualized, and few practical approaches exist to address the two areas simultaneously or in an integrated way. That is, research organizations often place emphasis on one or the other: 1) strategies to address and seek to mitigate gender inequalities perpetuated through research processes, design, methods and outcomes; or 2) strategies to address gender inequalities *within* research institutions (i.e. in staffing, human resources policies, organizational culture). Using the evidence from work with IDRC, we argue that the gender support approach taken by G@W provides one way of supporting processes that facilitates analysis and action on both of these fronts in a more integrated fashion.

Example of a gender continuum in research (IDRC)

GENDER AWARE

Gender (the differentiated and intersectional experiences of women, men, boys and girls) is considered in the research project's rationale but is not an operative concept in the design and methodology.

GENDER SENSITIVE

Gender is considered in the research project's rationale and is addressed in the project design and methodology, but does not (yet) extend to analysis and action to address gender inequalities.

GENDER RESPONSIVE

Gender is considered in the research project's rationale, design and methodology, and is rigorously analyzed to inform implementation, communication and influence strategies. Gender responsive research does not (yet) address structural power relations that lead to gender inequalities.

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE

Examines, analyzes and builds an evidence base to inform long-term practical changes in structural power relations and norms, roles and inequalities that define the differentiated experiences of men and women. Gender transformative research should lead to sustained change through action (e.g. partnerships, outreach and interventions)

Strategies to address gender in research processes, design, methods and outcomes

Critiques of systematic biases in research have made visible a multitude of biases and assumptions underpinning research and contributing to gender and diversity related data gaps. These biases are consistent with patriarchal and other social and power relations in societies, which in many countries in the Global South may be endogenous and/or the result of contact with colonial systems. Until recently such norms, and the barriers they create, have been invisible in research.[10]

The literature review[11] identified four good practice strategies for improving how gender is integrated into research processes, design, methods and outcomes. These include: 1) starting with a strong gender and intersectional analysis to ensure gender dimensions are embedded in research questions; 2) paying attention to 'how' gender is being integrated into research designs; 3) exploring the use of mixed methods, including non-traditional qualitative approaches; and 4) interrogating how power relations play out in research design, implementation and dissemination.

At a minimum, data needs to be disaggregated by sex and/or gender. Henry et al. analyzed benchmarking criteria for gender integration for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and proposed four types of 'gender data':

▸ data to make women and girls visible;

▸ data about gender gaps and disparities;

▸ evidence of what works to increase gender equality and women's empowerment; and

▸ data on the links between improvements in gender equality and enhancing the achievement of other development goals.[12]

Development research and programming has increasingly drawn attention to the different ways that gender is integrated, with many institutions using some form of a gender continuum to guide researchers and practitioners. The point is that **how gender is integrated into research has implications for research outcomes**.

IDRC, for example, has used a 'gender categorization system' for assessing research projects since 2017 (see box) that mirrors those developed by UN agencies and INGOs.[13] These are used in a variety of ways (for example, as part of the

Exploring power dynamics within the research context

Who is this research proposal meant to benefit? What are its implications for groups at the intersections of various hierarchies of power and privilege? Do women, girls and other marginalized people **have ownership** over the research process and findings?

Are the proposed research methods designed to sufficiently **'hear' the voices** that might be hidden or suppressed by gendered power relations, such as those that have traditionally been silenced or under-represented?

Does the process **value the knowledge of research subjects?**

Does the problem analysis take into **account existing knowledge, information and analyses** from different disciplines (e.g. gender and feminist research) and sectors (e.g. women's rights organizations)?

Does the **research process provide space** for research subjects to engage in critical learning, reflection, questioning and action?

Will the **research findings be shared and validated with the research subjects** in a way that acknowledges and contributes to their aspirations, rights and freedoms?

Adapted from a presentation by Gender at Work to the International Development Research Centre in 2019; IDRC (2019). Transforming Gender Relations: Insights from IDRC Research, 2019; and IDRC. Using Research for Gender Transformative Change: Principles and Practice. n.d.

research proposal assessment process, for tracking research implementation, or for evaluating research outcomes). The 'gender support' offered by Gender at Work sometimes involved helping IDRC researchers and grantees to make sense of and apply this guidance to their research projects. As we see throughout the monograph, as Gender at Work engaged with IDRC research teams between 2016 to 2022, the focus shifted from an emphasis primarily on gender sensitive or gender responsive research to building capacity of research teams to carry out **gender transformative research** and even **feminist research** as part of a research portfolio with different approaches to gender and inclusion.

Discussions about how gender is being integrated into the research design also touch on questions of research methods, especially in the context of supporting gender transformative research. Integrating qualitative methods into research design is one way to strengthen research methodologies to better understand people's lived realities. Such methods include focus group discussions, key informant interviews, case studies and narrative methods, as well other non-traditional methods for inclusive data collection and analysis that involve research participants (storytelling, body mapping, videos).

Gender transformative and feminist research includes explicit consideration of how knowledge is defined, the issue of its ownership and of how research 'subjects' are involved in the research process – from design, to implementation, to dissemination. This question is particularly important when it comes to the ownership and use of research by diverse women and structurally marginalized groups. The focus on power imbalances is rooted in the feminist research paradigm which "seeks to remove power imbalances inherent in research processes and correct for biases that shape what we know",[14]§ including correcting for the "gendered manifestation of power, both in the topic for research and the way in which the research is conducted".[15]

This focus on power imbalances in the research process itself is one that challenges how research has traditionally been defined. For example, co-production (participatory research processes that involve research 'subjects') places a high priority on social change and community benefit, and therefore can represent a trade-off for researchers in terms of publishing goals. Conversely, traditional forms of academic reward can result in the 'usefulness' of research from the perspective of communities becoming peripheral to the research process.[16]

> **"**
>
> The one-way dissemination of knowledge which is often found in science, when practiced in any social context or institution with existing hierarchies can exacerbate or increase knowledge 'monopolies'. Without addressing power, in other words, the means of producing, controlling and using knowledge stays in the hands of the privileged few and in fact, prompts bias.

Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), CARE International, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF). The Gender and Inclusion Toolbox: Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture. 2014: 10.

In looking at these approaches to gender responsive or transformational research, it is clear that significant change would be required by the institutions that support such research. This next section describes some of these strategies.

Strategies to address gender inequalities within research institutions

The literature review of what works to transform internal organizational culture, policy and practice in research institutions[17] identified six factors (linked to strategies) that support positive gender equality outcomes in research institutions. Very briefly, these include:

1. Commitment to gender equality and strategic vision from leadership, including communicating and modeling positive behaviours;
2. Gender (or Gender Diversity and Inclusion) Policies and Action Plans embedded in an institution's existing formal rules, structures and management procedures, with robust accountability systems;
3. Supportive human resources (work-life balance, equal pay, anti-harassment, child and eldercare policies) and career development opportunities for diverse staff
4. Regular staff training on gender, diversity and overcoming bias to reinforce gender and diversity policies, human resources policies and procedures;
5. Access to internal and external networks;
6. Evidence of inequalities at play in the research institutions – such as gender-disaggregated data on recruitment, retention, promotion, pay and committee representation, to raise awareness of gender, diversity, inclusion issues, explain the rationale for structural change, and provide the basis for the design of plans and initiatives.[18]

Overall, these strategies are common across organizations with a commitment to gender equality, yet there were specific examples in the literature review of how they are adapted for research institutions.

For example, some research institutions have introduced gender guidelines to ensure greater diversity on panels and among participants at research symposia and other convenings. This practice was adopted by IDRC's Think Tank Initiative at its final partner gathering in Bangkok.

Mentoring is almost universally cited in the literature reviewed as a key strategy to support women researchers, a very powerful and flexible instrument that institutions have been using to attract, retain and empower the advancement of diverse women researchers. Linking gender-related content of the research to personal-level mentoring strategies for diverse women researchers has been shown to further enhance the impact that a mentoring initiative can have.[19]

In addition to one-on-one mentoring, the establishment of networks and affinity groups has also been found to have positive impact in some areas, although in some cases the lack of senior managers in such affinity groups may limit the utility of these networks in improving career progression.[20] Creating the conditions that welcome and nurture diverse women's leadership in research institutions is described in the literature as another critical factor to catalyzing gender transformative change in research institutions.[21] Advancement (SAGA) Project, found that women in leadership positions are essential as catalysts for change, as they serve to empower other women in the same professions and act as role models.[22] Inter-institutional cooperation through mentoring initiatives has also been found to have a positive effect on outcomes for women researchers and to strengthen internal support for gender and research.[23] Initiating and supporting communities of practice for knowledge sharing between research institutions is also beneficial.[24]

A word on gender training

Once considered the panacea for integrating gender in development institutions, gender training has received criticism over the years for its failure to produce lasting changes in terms of individual and organizational capacity, culture and attitudes.[25] Many of these critiques focus not only on the content of gender training, but the process. For example, gender training is often approached as a one-time event or workshop as opposed to an ongoing process; time is often limited; and requirements that staff attend trainings turn them into largely procedural affairs.

Lessons from the failures of gender training have in some cases been applied in the form of new formats, timeframes and methodologies used for gender training by many institutions. At the same time, the limits of training or tools and checklists on their own to support sustained change without concurrent efforts to shift organizational structures, policies and procedures are better understood. The recent review conducted by G@W (2023) on good practice on gender diversity and inclusion (GDI) provides an interesting perspective on current thinking related to gender and diversity training.[26]

The review found that training for staff, board members and management on gender and diversity issues is seen as a key component of organizational culture change.[27] It must be noted however that research on the effectiveness of such workplace diversity programs is mixed at best.[28] One meta analysis of over 900 studies of anti-bias training found little evidence of attitude change or behaviour change.[29]

Some organizations are attempting to counter the difficulties with GDI training. For example, an important practice is to avoid 'one-off' GDI training and invest in continuous learning on GDI and cultural sensitivity. GDI-related training is a broad-based term for building sensitivity, skills and empathy to enhance gender equity, diversity and inclusion. Programs may focus on general GDI and on specific issues such as systemic and structural forms of differentiation across any axis of discrimination.

While gender and diversity training is still high on the list of strategies used by research and other institutions, the review also found that there is as much emphasis now placed on facilitating deep conversations and creating safe spaces to unlearn unconscious biases and exclusionary practices.

An article on organizational practices for gender equality in science and medicine, published in *The Lancet* (2019), observed that organizational learning programs to unlearn unconscious biases are pertinent to work culture that "typically prioritize objectivity, social consciousness, and (often illusory) notions of equitable meritocracy."[30] These spaces help leaders and staff acknowledge and unlearn patterns of dominance. For those with more privilege, "[…] it means acknowledging and unlearning patterns of dominance, like taking charge, leading, making decisions. Getting out of one's comfort zone, materially, emotionally and sometimes physically, and following the lead of those who are most impacted by violence and injustice."[31] However, another study cautions that staff members may be unable to enact new skills or attitudes within the current context due to workload, organizational culture or a lack of senior management buy-in.[32] Truly practicing reflexivity and challenging our biases in ways that help to dismantle privilege take time.

Spaces and networks for all staff to discuss, understand and integrate GDI issues are critical in this regard, in particular as they facilitate collaboration across the organization (for example, GDI professionals and senior management) and within senior management (for example, board members presenting a unified approach to support female board members' decision-making power).[33] As Coe et al. note "creating safe spaces for conversations about gender and diversity in scientific and social scientific research must be an explicit goal in improving organizational culture and is a key responsibility of academic and scientific leadership".[34]
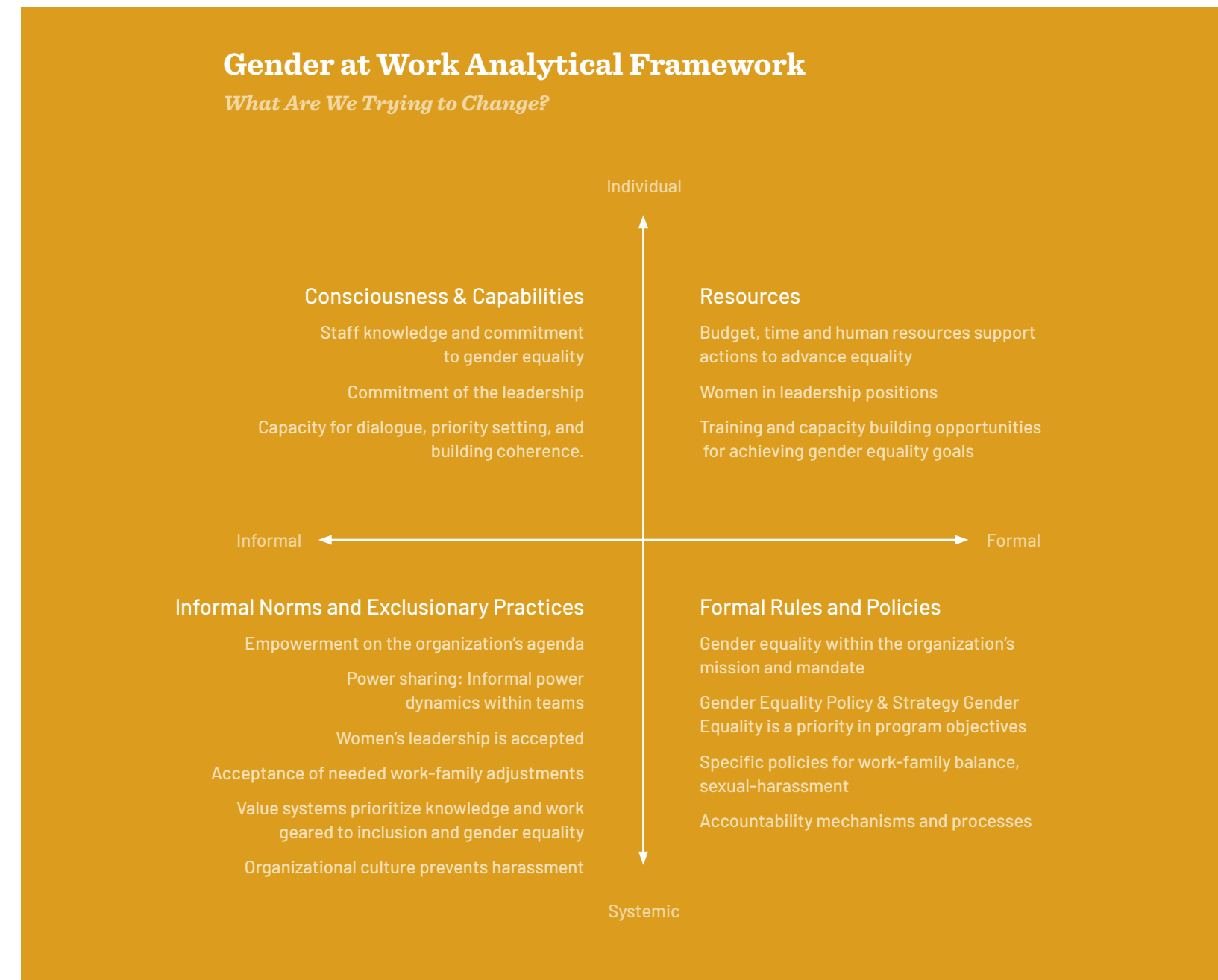
The G@W Approach

Gender at Work subscribes to many of the strategies for change described above, in particular, that change happens over time, and that approaches must be tailored to particular organizational issues and contexts. We also believe that research methods and practices are related to norms and power relations inside the research organizations. Therefore, work is required to change both research practices and institutional norms.

G@W's approaches were originally a marriage of feminist theory and organizational learning. Feminist thinkers such as Kabeer, Batliwala, Miller, Razavi,

Molyneux, Acker, Goetz and countless others helped us understand how gender relations worked. We also brought with us the work of organizational learning theorists such as Friere, Bennis, Kolb and Hampden-Turner who helped us understand how individuals and organizations learn.

Our conception of gender equality and inclusion is multi-factorial. It is concerned with both individual change and systemic or institutional change. It focusses on both formal change (policies, structures) and informal norms and exclusionary practices.[35]

The diagram below shows how these dimensions are related to each other.

Gender at Work Analytical Framework
What Are We Trying to Change?

Individual

Consciousness & Capabilities
Staff knowledge and commitment to gender equality

Commitment of the leadership

Capacity for dialogue, priority setting, and building coherence.

Resources
Budget, time and human resources support actions to advance equality

Women in leadership positions

Training and capacity building opportunities for achieving gender equality goals

Informal ←———————————→ Formal

Informal Norms and Exclusionary Practices
Empowerment on the organization's agenda

Power sharing: Informal power dynamics within teams

Women's leadership is accepted

Acceptance of needed work-family adjustments

Value systems prioritize knowledge and work geared to inclusion and gender equality

Organizational culture prevents harassment

Formal Rules and Policies
Gender equality within the organization's mission and mandate

Gender Equality Policy & Strategy Gender Equality is a priority in program objectives

Specific policies for work-family balance, sexual-harassment

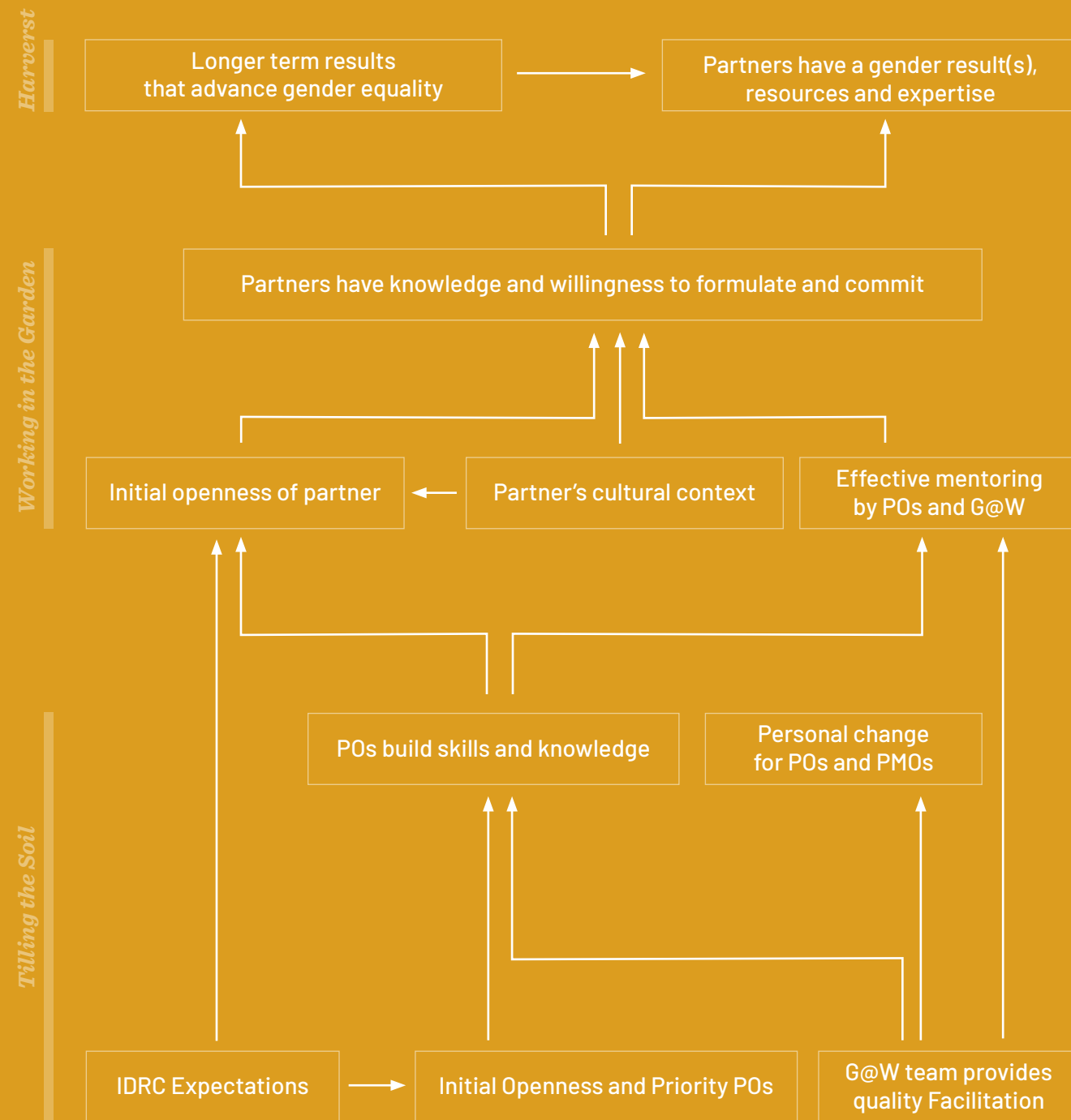Accountability mechanisms and processes

Systemic

The diagram above shows *what* we are trying to change: consciousness, re-sources, formal rules and informal norms. Our approach, or the *how* of change, is summed up in the following five dimensions:

1. **Reflective Space —** learning requires a safe space for participants to explore both personal and organizational issues in dialogue and relationship.

2. **Purpose —** Participants will be part of a learning process to the extent it meets important needs *as defined by them*. This purpose cannot be imposed from outside although a push in a general direction may be important to get started. But the specific directions must be owned by the participants.

3. **Power —** Norms and practices regarding research are rooted in power relations. Change will mean altering those relationships through a dialogue that connects norms, procedures and relationships. Further, if participants are going to be part of the process that develops solutions in complex situations, they must have the power to define their context and what solutions will make sense within that context. We do not prescribe solutions. We help participants build them.

4. **The Nature of Knowledge —** Knowledge about gender or intersectionality within a given project must be held lightly and tentatively. G@W consultants certainly carry knowledge about gender equality, but that knowledge is deeply contextual and its usefulness must be judged by each partner. The process of coming to contextually relevant knowledge happens over time.

5. **Process —** The above four dimensions require scrupulous attention to process to ensure that every interaction is respectful, inclusive, engaging, participatory and practical.

We return to these five dimensions in to see how they are actually part of the practice of accompanying research teams.

Theory of Change

Longer term results that advance gender equality	Partners have a gender result(s), resources and expertise

Partners have knowledge and willingness to formulate and commit

Initial openness of partner	Partner's cultural context	Effective mentoring by POs and G@W

POs build skills and knowledge	Personal change for POs and PMOs

IDRC Expectations	Initial Openness and Priority POs	G@W team provides quality Facilitation

Our theory of change

The theory of change below represents our best thinking at the start of our work with IDRC on how our approach to change would actually work in the IDRC context. Our articulation of the theory of change (or conceptual framework) was based on the existing literature on what works, as well as our collective knowledge and experience as development and organizational change practitioners and researchers.

We developed this framework in 2016 . Since then our designer has redrawn it and colour coded it for different stages of the change process described in the following three chapters. Tilling the Soil is in red, Working in the Garden is in purple and the Harvest is in lime. They could also be called start-up, the learning process and outcomes.

Reading from the bottom up, we believed that pressure of expectations from IDRC management, openness of the IDRC program officers (POs) and our own facilitation would result in some personal change in the POs, and also an increase in their knowledge and skills. This would mean POs would make it more of a priority and they would be better equipped to work with partners. This stage we called 'Tilling the Soil', which positioned us to begin work with the partners ('Working in the Garden'). At this stage we believed that the initial openness of the partner, their cultural context and our facilitation skill would result in the partners gaining more knowledge and committing to a learning process. This process would result in outcomes ('The Harvest').

In retrospect, this turned out to be a reasonably helpful map. For example, skilled POs and good facilitation are important pieces of partner learning. However, not all boxes were relevant. We never collected information on partners' cultural context, nor did we compare them. We could have understood the IDRC cultural context better at the beginning, although it revealed itself to us as we worked. Overall, the three stages serve as a way to organize the narrative but the details of what happened within each of the boxes is what matters. The following three chapters describe those details.

Chapter 2
Tilling the Soil

Pressure, openness and ambivalence

As both experience and the literature attest, how you start a change process matters.[36] In most cases a successful start-up (or tilling the soil) is primarily about relationship building, understanding the system, gauging readiness and enthusiasm, and developing early thoughts about purpose and direction.

This chapter is about how this phase was done in each of the programs we are analyzing. Our framework directs us to look at pressure for change, PO interest and learning.

Tilling the Soil
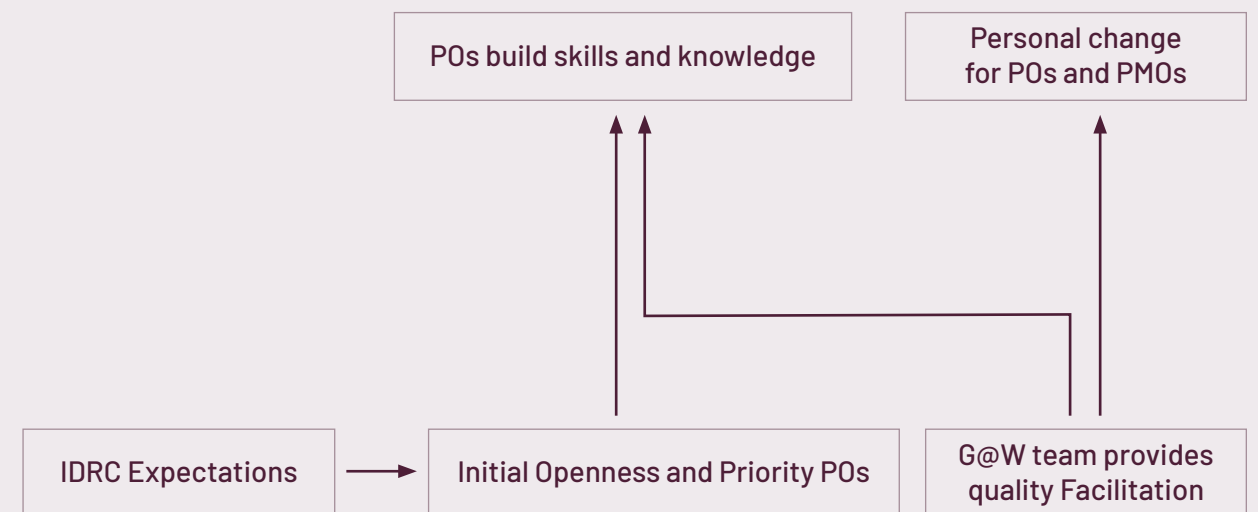
We hypothesized that if POs were open to change and that if IDRC's expectations for change were communicated strongly enough, we would step into an enabling environment where the G@W team's facilitated process would enable IDRC staff to acquire skills and knowledge, not just in relation to their day-to-day work but also in their personal lives. How did this work out?

In **Networked Economies (NE)** we began by proposing a year-long project to get to know each other and lay the foundation for work with partners. We interviewed the POs, read documents, identified levers for change, and set up learning groups. The learning groups produced a gender strategic plan, an assessment of PO skills and also a short document that identified gender aspects of NE work. We also had the opportunity to attend a meeting with NE grantees and present the project to them, although we did encounter some resistance from partners who believed that other variables (class, educational level) were more important than gender. Based on all of this we developed a proposal for three years work with POs and partners.

At the end of this phase, the G@W team drew the following insights:

- There was a general level of interest and enthusiasm for the project.
- The support of both the Program Leader and the Director was strong.
- The POs led very busy lives. We conducted a job analysis discussion and were surprised by the number of their tasks and the number of 'bosses' they serve.
- POs showed some skill for gender analysis but were unclear on how best to work with partners (who might be resistant).
- What wasn't in our framework, but emerged, was that as a developing field, there hadn't been a lot of thought about gender dynamics in research on digital technologies.
- The partners were not entirely enthusiastic. For example, some partners said that they had been 'doing gender' for years and didn't really need help, while others felt that gender was not as important a variable as class or race.

At this early stage, we did not see personal changes among POs, although there were important personal discussions. The workshops in the inception stage did build some skills and understanding about the nature of gender in research and how to work with partners in a helpful way to advance this agenda.

Our G@W facilitation at this stage was rated high in both post-meeting questionnaires and informal comments by participants.

In **Food, Environment and Health (FEH)**, we did not have the luxury of an extended start-up. Instead, we met with the champions: POs, who were leading the effort to bring a gender perspective to FEH work, soon took on a small contract to be part of two workshops with key research partners. This was very important because it allowed us to build relationships with the POs as we worked alongside them. We then interviewed each of the POs to build a baseline regarding knowledge and skill. FEH asked us to quickly assess a set of new projects with the POs. This too built relations and gave us an understanding of their field. Another key beginning task involved a series of writings and meetings within the G@W team to explore what we meant by 'mentoring' when applied to our accompaniment of IDRC staff across the different programs.

By the end of the start-up phase we felt we had a clear direction, were reasonably well connected with the champions, and believed that the other POs were willing to work on building their skills and knowledge.

In the **Think Tank Initiative (TTI)**, the start-up was a little different. One PO, with the support of some colleagues, approached G@W to work with TTI staff and partners. After some discussion, we proposed an approach that combined an ongoing seminar with staff and a modified Gender Action Learning (GAL) process for the partners. It soon became clear that because the TTI program was winding up after ten years, the focus of the staff was elsewhere and we decided to only work with the partners using webinars and occasional meetings. Shannon Sutton (the PO leading the project) polled the TTI partners and asked if people were interested they could be part of this educational opportunity, although there would be no extra funding. Five partners chose to be part of it and wrote expressions of interest describing what they would work on.

By the end of the start-up phase, we were not well connected with the TTI staff and there was little pressure (from within or outside IDRC) on TTI to work on gender as their project was wrapping up. However, we had the enthusiastic engagement of one PO in particular and the support of two others and the Vice President responsible for the program. Most importantly, the partners had volunteered to participate and had given some thought to what they wanted to accomplish.

Climate Change (CC) had a more difficult start. Climate Change asked G@W to develop a proposal for work with six partners who had already been funded to work on gender and climate change projects. They needed the proposal from Gender at Work in a hurry and we agreed to develop it over the Christmas holidays to meet their deadline. Given this timeline, there was no relationship building and no discussion of the project – either with climate change people or with the broader G@W team – before the proposal was submitted. As a result, the climate change POs were not entirely enthusiastic, the G@W team took some time to come together, and neither the IDRC climate change team nor the partners knew what to expect.

This challenging inception phase, characterized by lack of relationships, shared understanding and interest on the part of POs lasted roughly 10 months. The project turned around after a successful first peer learning meeting in which partners and climate change POs saw what was possible and that the method proposed by G@W could produce powerful learning. Ultimately, this three-year engagement produced many good outcomes (see Chapter 4).

With the KIX project, the KIX team designed and launched a Request for Proposals (RFP) with a list of predefined deliverables. As is always the case for competitive bidding processes, the G@W team designed a proposal without prior discussions with the KIX team. However, once the contract was awarded, Gender at Work worked with the KIX GEI[37] Co-ordination team to clarify their expectations of the consultancy, develop the workplan and revise the budget accordingly. They also interviewed the KIX team, read proposals and hosted a discussion of their findings with the KIX team as part of the first deliverable.

Tilling the Soil

How tasks were accomplished by the end of this initial stage

Legend:
- Strong | High
- Medium
- Low-Medium
- Low

	Relationship with POs at outset of inception	Shared, Clear direction by end of inception	Joint problem definition	Partners' engagement in defining G@W support	Role of Internal Champions at inception	Experienced pressure from IDRC mgmt or other funding partners
Networked Economies	Strong/High	Medium	Strong/High	Low	Strong/High	Strong/High
Food, Environment and Health	Medium	Strong/High	Medium	Low	Strong/High	Medium
Think Tank Initiative	Low	Medium	Strong/High	Strong/High	Strong/High	Medium
Climate Change	Low	Low	Strong/High	Low	Low-Medium	Medium
Knowledge and Innovation Exchange	Strong/High	Strong/High	Strong/High	Low	Strong/High	Strong/High

By the end of inception phase, the team had good connections with the KIX team members, and clear, joint agreement on the purpose and outputs of the consultancy.

So, what is needed at the start-up phase in order to lead to a good launch?

Tilling the soil matters because when it doesn't go well, the intervention itself can fail or at least lose time reclarifying direction, dealing with conflict, or scaling back to meet the concerns of dissatisfied partners.

Organization development literature puts great stock in senior management support. Also important are a felt sense of urgency of the problem and the beginning of a possible solution. Finally, internal leadership to carry the project is critical.[38]

We initially thought that a combination of management pressure, leadership of POs and some shared clarity of direction would be essential to any successful launch. As it turned out, things were not that simple. Two projects, TTI and Climate Change, had little management support at the beginning; in contrast, NE had considerable management support. Relationship with POs ranged from low to high.

The table below summarizes how the tasks of tilling the soil were accomplished by the end of this initial stage. The terms across the top of the table are generally thought of as predictors of readiness for change or success factors in ensuring a strong change process.

Looking at this table it is obvious that there is no clear pattern of key variables linked to a successful launch.

It appears that in this context it possible to do good work without many of the tried and true start-up factors. It may take longer to get going in difficult situations, but assuming a dialogic approach it is definitely possible.

What was not anticipated in our original framework was the role of champions (mid-level IDRC staff). Champions played a key part in all of our interventions. In CC where we had a difficult start, the role of PO champions was essential.

Our conclusion is that energy for start-up can come from a variety of sources and that management expectations are important but not essential. The important learning however is that the role of POs and Project Management Officers (PMOs) is critical.

Working in the Garden

Modalities, Methods, and Assumptions

Research scientists in a conference centre in São Paulo reflecting on memories of their favourite foods from childhood … NE staff in an Ottawa boardroom describing the meaning of drawings they have produced on what 'gender' means to them … NE partners scattered across three Ottawa conference rooms in self-chosen, open-space meetings … cyber policy researchers doing Capacitar exercises in a small hotel in Tunis … Zoom calls from Massachusetts to Cape Town advising on research frameworks …

These methods and others resulted in strong outcomes. Two external evaluations of NE programs have highlighted G@W's added value. Our own commissioned learning review found that,

> *G@W's emergent learning approach has demonstrated that facilitating spaces for action learning given the uncertainty of outcomes, effectively enables shifts in research and organizational practice that in turn deliver outcomes in the research but also in research use over time.*[39]

Working on the garden

Partners have knowledge and willingness to formulate and commit

Initial openness of partner ← Partner's cultural context → Effective mentoring by POs and G@W

Type of G@W activity	Type of G@W general strategy			
	GAL full	GAL	Mentoring 1-to-1	Total
Commentary	6		2	8
Container	5	1		6
Create Products			1	1
Facilitation			2	2
Grantee Workshops	5	2	12	19
Grantee Workshops & Commentary	2	1		3
Indirect	11	8	4	23
Mentoring	1	1	3	5
Mentoring & Commentary			6	6
Mix 3 or More	2			2
Networking	1			1
Peer & Grantee Workshops	1	2	2	5
Peer workshops	3	1	2	6
Repeat	7	1	12	20
Unclear	3	1		4
Grand Total	**47**	**18**	**46**	**111**

The diagram above shows the key considerations at this stage — **Working in the Garden.**

We hypothesized that a variety of factors, including cultural context, would determine the partners' initial openness to working with us to improve gender responsive outcomes in their research. Effective facilitation on our part could build on this openness to result in the partners' increased knowledge, skills and willingness to formulate new approaches and commit to using them.

In retrospect, the term 'cultural context' was an oversimplification of the variety of factors that condition a research teams' openness to ideas about gender equality. Some teams had little experience with gender considerations, but were interested. Others thought other variables such as social class or ethnicity were more important.

The table above from our recent learning review shows the variety of methods used by Gender at Work teams that resulted in outcomes such as improved research methods, new ways of managing the research team, deepened capacity to collect data that describes women's experience, and positive policy impacts.

Down the left side are the various *methods* we used and the number of outcomes associated with them. Across the top are *strategies* within which these methods were nested. 'GAL Full' means Gender Action Learning (the full version with peer learning meetings and mentoring). 'GAL' refers to different variations of that approach. 'Mentoring 1 to 1' refers to an extended relationship between a member of a research team and a G@W consultant. These outcomes are discussed in the next chapter, The Harvest.

All of these methods in the above table are related to each other by a particular

approach to facilitation. We believe that learning begins with the learner feeling a need or interest that comes out of experience and propels them into a learning process. Learners need to experience the process as supportive, respectful and related to their own needs and ways of learning. This approach does not begin with theories and frameworks, but with the experience of learners and their understanding of their situation. We also believe that relationship is essential. It is relationship that creates the safe spaces and openness which allows people to imagine new ways of thinking, working and relating.[40] As well, learning happens to *persons* who not only have thoughts, but also feelings, experiences and bodies. Engaging the whole person allows learners to 'own' their learning in a personal and enduring way.[41]

We have also been influenced by more recent work that focusses on learning in settings where there are many actors, considerable uncertainty as to what is needed and varying levels of motivation for change. In such cases learning is generally emergent. Recent research by Fourth Quadrant Partners highlights the importance of experimentation and emergence.[42] At the beginning of a process, we don't know what the learning outcomes will be. Directions and actions emerge in dialogue.[43]

The remainder of this chapter discusses how G@W endeavoured to facilitate this mixture of practical, relevant and emergent personal and organizational learning.

To begin our exploration of methods facilitation, we look first at what the table above would refer to as a 'grantee workshop'. This is an excerpt of a case study written by Rex Fyles, a member of the G@W team working with FEH in 2017. The case is a meeting of Latin America and Caribbean partners held by the Food, Environment and Health [FEH] program. The case was also described by Teralynn Ludwick and Daniela Neri in an article in The Pan American Journal of Public Health.[44]

FEH Partners' Workshop

Case Study Excerpt

" … For FEH, the meeting represented a major step forward to advance the emerging field investigating "how personal and external influences affect what people consume and their nutritional status[45]" at a time when obesity and high blood pressure are increasingly driving morbidity and mortality in middle- and low-income countries. Participants at the workshop were top notch researchers based in key research institutes and universities across the region with years of experience and publishing records in relevant health and nutrition related fields. In many countries, participants had succeeded in influencing national public health policy on several key issues like tobacco consumption and food labelling. This was the first time IDRC was bringing together these leading minds to share experience and advance the emerging field of food systems research so understandably the FEH team felt the stakes were quite high. They were planning a three-day residential workshop, with interpretation in three languages at a location which was a two-hour drive from the closest airport in São Paulo. With its renewed commitment to advancing gender equality through its work, IDRC FEH reserved a half-day session for gender.

IDRC staff were conscious that gender was not the topic highest on regional researchers' priorities. They were mindful of not imposing a donor-driven agenda while at the same time believing firmly that surfacing gender considerations could enhance the quality and relevance of research in this field. The fact that IDRC represented only one of several funding sources reduced the influence their funding might have on research methods. The pre-workshop survey had confirmed that relatively few researchers were integrating gender considerations explicitly into their research methods and outcomes. They detected some resistance from researchers who argued that class and ethnicity were more important determinants of healthy food choices than gender. The pre-conference survey also surfaced barriers researchers were facing: limited data (especially for researchers who rely on non-gender disaggregated secondary data); lack of evidence about gender variables in the literature; and lack of gender-specific knowledge, experience and capacity within research teams. How could a four-hour workshop on gender expect to address these systemic and individual barriers?

As I began to work with the team on how to design the gender session, I asked myself how G@W's experience and approaches might be useful for drawing on what I had learned from other G@W associates through participatory, peer-based, experiential learning processes. But the circumstances here were very different. This was a once-off, time-bound 'training' on 'gender' targeting academics and researchers rather than an experiential learning process spread over several months. Still, I tried to keep some principles top of mind:

▸ Start where people are. There are no good starting points, only real ones.
▸ Foster co-creation. This is an emergent field. Everyone has part of the picture and no one has all the answers.
▸ Draw on people's lived experience.
▸ Take a holistic approach to mind, body and spirit.

This last point felt like both a challenge and an opportunity. Researchers tend to spend a lot of time in their heads. When it comes to gender, people can get wrapped up in debating concepts and constructs which remain abstract, 'out there,' to be accepted, resisted or simply ignored. At the same time, I was struck by the insatiable curiosity of the people I met through IDRC who were always open to exploring new ideas. I wondered if we could introduce gender through something personal and embodied in such a way as to pique the researchers' curiosity and confidence to explore further.

I started the session by inviting participants to do free writing and share their stories on the following questions:

When you were a child, what was your favorite dish or meal?

In your memories, who cooked that food for you? Who served it?

Who bought it? Who sold it? Who produced it?

How were women and men involved differently in creating this food for you?

Some tables had trouble settling into that contemplative state we observe when people use free writing to reflect deeply but soon the room was silent, for about five minutes. When I invited them to share their stories with a neighbour, the

room exploded in animated conversation. I could see that people were speaking from the heart, reliving tastes, smells and emotions from the past, applying their minds in a rapid gender analysis of their personal childhood food systems. I also saw some people swap recipes.

I regretted bringing the conversations to an end after about 10 minutes but we transitioned to briefly introducing the G@W analytical framework on Power-Point. Drawing on the practice of other G@W associates, I pointed out that the framework was represented by lines of tape on the floor and invited everyone to stand up and move to the quadrant they were most interested in exploring. Here again the question to discuss was simple:

What questions (if any) come to mind when thinking about gender and food systems?
Very quickly clusters of people were sharing all over the room. Conversations were animated. It was striking to see that language no longer seemed to present a barrier; people stood in as volunteer translators so everyone could participate. Participants noted their questions on post-it notes and ultimately put them on the wall organized (roughly) around the four quadrants of the G@W framework.

After the coffee break, people shared impressions in plenary on *"What questions pique your curiosity?"* After a presentation of the gender-related results of the pre-workshop survey, participants then used free writing to reflect on *"What gender-related questions might you incorporate more deeply into your own work or research?"* and captured them on post-it notes. Finally, each table discussed *"What challenges do we face in this field to better address gender inequalities? What can we do together now to advance this agenda?"* again synthesized on post-it notes. Over lunch, the facilitation team organized the post-its into clusters around themes. The following day created more time for people to work in self-organizing teams to pursue further planning on many of the themes raised during the gender session.

"

The participatory workshop methodology led by Gender at Work helped present the activity as an intellectual challenge and produced a large number and range of contributions for potential gender-specific and gender-transformative research. Generating curiosity among researchers may be an important starting point. The workshop participants, in fact, surprised themselves with the extent to which they were able to challenge assumptions and spark new ideas where they had previously thought gender was not a relevant or interesting consideration. In the workshop, the participating researchers, stakeholders and donors found peer learning and challenge to be an important means of pushing and expanding their thinking.

Ludwick and Neri analysis of the workshop

Looking back, I find this description both accurate and different from my own memory of the event. Participants did grapple with gender issues as an 'intellectual challenge' but for me the catalyst was the embodied, relational and personal experience of reliving and sharing stories about food and home. The Gender at Work framework offered a welcoming space to 'analyze' the issues but the 'hunger' to share and understand came from the emotional charge childhood memories evoked. My perception here is clearly influenced by the Gender at Work lens I have gratefully acquired over the years of collaborating with other G@W associates. While this embodied, emotional charge may not provide all the answers to the complex methodological challenges food systems researchers face, for me it provides deeper meaning that can underpin and inspire researchers' approaches to the work.

One of the FEH POs later described the workshop as follows:

" *[The workshop] opened up a lot of minds and generated a lot of enthusiasm. Without that initial event, it would have been more difficult... I saw people saying, 'okay, I get it'. You [Gender at Work] didn't start off with 'this is gender sensitive research'. You said, 'let's talk about food and childhood memories'. We went right into gender analysis without calling it that. People didn't feel threatened and they could see they were capable of grappling with these questions. 'Okay I get it now. I can identify clear questions related to gender'. They made this shift in three hours.*[46]

Reflecting on the FEH Case Study Excerpt
In reading this case a few ideas stand out. First, the participants are experienced researchers who may or may not believe they need to learn about gender and its place in their research. In the majority of our projects we found researchers who were keen to learn but we also encountered many who felt that this was not a priority for them. And yet, the purpose of the workshop is to help everyone think about gender in their research. This calls for careful design and facilitation.

This case is an example of a variety of methods to generate personal meaning and understanding. Rex did not assume that what was needed was a well-developed presentation on food systems and gender equality. Instead, he tried to create the conditions for participants to discover what was of interest and of use to them. This is the difference between training and learning and grows out of a long tradition of thinking about adult learning.[47]

A second assumption we had is that, 'researchers spend a lot of time in their heads' and that we need to find non-rational ways of deepening the conversation, such as invoking emotional and embodied experiences. Activities like this are efforts to go beyond the scientist and touch the person. This reflects the belief that attitudes towards gender in research are rooted in personal beliefs and experiences as well as other factors.

What is somewhat unique about this case is that it was a 'one-off'. The bulk of the workshops we run are part of an ongoing process. We believe that this learning happens over time, such as in the next example.

Climate Change Gender Action Learning

What we referred to as 'the Climate Change project' was an IDRC project "Accelerating Climate Action: Social Equity and Empowerment of Women and Girls". It supported research institutions in six countries (Argentina, Benin, Bangladesh, DRC, Nepal and Nigeria) to investigate the interrelated climatic, environmental, social, cultural, economic, institutional and political factors that aggravate the impacts of climate change on vulnerable groups. These research projects were expected to generate policy recommendations for reducing inequality and strengthening resilience, as well as to promote "on-the-ground changes that enable women, ethnic minorities, indigenous people or youth to contribute to increased climate and disaster resilience, and become positive agents of transformation."

The Climate Change (CC) project provides us with an example of a Gender Action Learning project, what was earlier referred to as a 'full GAL'.[48] That is, a two-year process with a cohort of six organizations that included peer learning meetings and mentoring. Each research team worked with a G@W consultant over the two

years. The process unfolded within three peer learning meetings with mentoring between the meetings, held in French, English and Spanish. The first meeting took place in Nairobi in November 2019 with three participants from each team as well as two POs from IDRC. The second was held in December 2020 online because of COVID. Similarly, the final meeting was held online in December 2021.

The first peer learning meeting was facilitated by G@W associates Kalyani Menon-Sen and Sylvie Desautels, and was critical to the process. The description below is excerpted from the meeting report prepared by Menon-Sen and Desautels.[49]

Climate Change Case Study Excerpt

Each team selected a 'change team' that would lead change projects or 'experiments' in each research team. The change teams attended the first workshop in Nairobi and developed a vision and strategy for change in each of their research teams.

The objectives of the workshop were:

▸ Participants come to a common understanding of action-learning and feminist methodologies and collectively explore their relevance for the IDRC CC research projects.

▸ A safe space is created for country teams to interact, share and learn from each other.

▸ Research teams identify potential gender transformative experiments and design preliminary action plans.

▸ G@W, research teams and IDRC agree on parameters, modalities and next steps for collaboration and learning.

The workshop process was grounded in G@W's feminist action-learning principles. Practices aimed at challenging and dissolving the conceptual binaries ordained by patriarchy – between mind/body, personal/professional and inside/outside – were an integral part of the workshop process.

Each day began with bodywork, a suite of practices drawn from tai chi, yoga and other traditional forms of holistic healing. Pranayama ('yoga breathing'), visualization and mindful movement were used to bookend sessions. These practices were offered to participants as a way to be mindful of the connectedness of their bodies and minds, be fully present in the 'here and now', and engage more meaningfully with the learning process.

We used Open Space methodologies and emergent learning tools to introduce participants to different ways of engaging with the learning process, inviting them to step out of their comfort zones and experiment with new ways of reflection and expression.

The workshop was designed as a series of dialogues with research teams, IDRC POs and G@W facilitators coming together in different groupings around some key questions:

▸ What do we already know from global research about the connections between gender quality and climate change?

▸ What will it take to ensure that research on climate change impacts and changes the lives of people on the ground?

▸ What can we do to enhance the transformational potential of our projects?

▸ What can a feminist approach contribute to research on gender and climate change?

We aimed to create a safe space for teams to engage in critical reflection on their own and each other's work, thereby building a foundation for a sustained process of collective learning.

These questions were discussed from the experience and knowledge of the participants but also with expert opinion. The three guest speakers from Kenya, Dr. Jemimah Njuki, Edna Odiambo and Agnes Leina 'brought reality into the room' with their eloquent reflections on their own engagements with gender and climate change. In different ways, all three made the point that transformation demands more than policy change and technical fixes to meet women's practical needs. Transformative research must directly address gender power hierarchies and the institutions that perpetuate them. The workshop also shared the results of an assessment of the transformative potential of the six research projects by an independent expert, Dr. Sophia Huyer.

Participants revisited their proposals in the light of the expert analysis and articulated their own visions of transformation. These visions were then examined in the light of an integral framework that focussed attention on four domains of potential work: individual attitudes and mindsets, behaviour change, laws and policies, and cultural and norm change. Participants also heard a presentation on feminist research methods and were invited to think about their projects and potential methodological issues.

The workshop then encouraged participants to develop an 'experiment' or change project they would work on over the next two years. Examples of the change projects that teams came up with include: Transforming the research culture of our team; Women get in touch with 'power within' and work for well-being of family and community; and, Women develop capacity and confidence to negotiate with the state.

Following the workshop, the facilitators met with the teams to support their work on the experiments. For example, the facilitator for the Nepal team met in April 2020 with the Core Team, Project Director and IDRC PO to follow through on discussions at the Nairobi meeting and review possibilities in light of the Covid-19 situation and lockdown. Later, an online workshop was held with the full research team to develop a GAL action plan for 2020 and to discuss possible change projects. That summer, a webinar on feminist analysis of qualitative data was organized for the qualitative researchers from NWCF (Nepal Water Conservation Foundation and PEI (Policy Entrepreneurs Incorporated).

With the team in DRC, G@W facilitator Sylvie Desautels initiated a series of online discussion workshops (2.5 to 3 hours) with members of the research team (9 men and 3 women). The facilitator applied the GAL principles where the discussion space is open, horizontal and without judgment. She paid special attention to ensure that women, being in the minority, had the chance to express their opinions, as well as junior researchers. The aim was to avoid male or senior researchers monopolizing the discussion. Another facilitation technique was to ask if someone wanted to share a different idea, opinion or solution, in order to open the conversation to diverse points of view and alternative solutions.

" *The Zoom meetings were crucial and enriching. The various remarks and suggestions allowed us to take into account new aspects. We reviewed our methodology and the analysis of the 3 chapters made it possible to raise unspoken issues and reach more solid conclusions on our part.* [50]*

**Said Nicole Nsambi, Researcher, CRREBaC
(Centre de Recherche en Ressources en Eau du Bassin du Congo)**

In Nigeria, the facilitator met with the entire CPED (Centre for Population and Environmental Development) research team, Principal Investigator and IDRC PO to identify the team's change experiment and also analyze the project's evaluation framework that had been reviewed to include gender-responsive and gender-transformative indicators. Later in March, following the workshop, the facilitator met with the CPED project manager to discuss COVID 19 and project implementation possibilities. Together the facilitator and the team designed gender exercises that could be used for climate change community training activities.

These conversations and those in the other teams built the foundation for the second peer learning meeting in December 2020 that brought the teams and their facilitators together again, but this time virtually.[51] Sessions were held over three days, three hours each day. The meeting was an opportunity for teams to discuss what they had achieved and what they were learning about gender and climate change, and to rethink directions. The meeting also heard from Dr. Sophia Huyer, who presented research on Gender Transformational Projects.

Once again, the facilitators worked with the teams on an ongoing basis between the second and the third peer learning workshops.

The final peer learning meeting was held in December 2022, once again virtually. Teams presented the outcomes from their gender-related research and community work. The meeting also heard from a panel on transformational research.

Reflecting on the Climate Change GAL
We saw this as a successful project, based both on our team reflections and a subsequent learning review. As described in the previous chapter, we had a difficult start but we were able to get beyond it once POs saw how well the first peer learning meeting went. There was immense difference in the gender knowledge of the teams but the process was able to manage those differences. Each of the G@W facilitators was able to build helpful relationships with their teams. Finally, the support of two project officers in particular was critical to maintaining the research teams' attention, learning and commitment.

Responsive Mentoring with NE partners

Traditionally, mentoring involves an older, wiser person counselling a younger, less experienced person and is grounded in the knowledge of the former, and the ambition and motivation of the latter. Our approach, what we call 'Responsive Mentoring', retains much of what has been learned about effective mentoring [52] but differs in some important ways – principally, the belief that mentoring is a conversation between peers and driven by the mentee's definition of their needs and interests. Batliwala and her colleagues, in their description of feminist mentoring, make the point that traditional mentoring is meant to help mentees conform to the organization at the same time as building the skills to lead it, whereas feminist mentoring endeavours to change the organization.[53] Our understanding is similar in that we are helping participants to challenge current organizational norms about gender and inclusivity.

The mentor's job is to create a space where both can learn and problem solve to meet the needs of the mentee in whatever terms make sense to them. The core idea is that the mentor understands issues of gender and inclusivity, and the mentee understands their field (cyber policy, climate change, transport policy, etc.). The conversation brings the two together to problem solve how gender equality can be better represented in this particular project and perhaps others.

Although different mentors worked in different ways, the following case serves as an example of these principles in action and shows how a mentor can work as a learning partner and be a force for organizational norm change.

The following excerpt is drawn from a case study by Jeff Walton, a G@W consultant describing his work with Digital Open Textbooks for Development (DOT4D). We first met the team from DOT4D at a partners' meeting in Ottawa. They reported not much success on the gender question. They had hired a consultant who had given them a report that was expensive and impossible to understand. We said, "We can do a lot better than that."

DOT4D Case Study Excerpt
Driven by an acute awareness of the education crisis in South Africa, researchers, administrators and educators at the University of Cape Town (UCT) were exploring the potential of digital open textbooks as part of a broad strategy to address access and curriculum challenges. The overarching objective of the DOT4D initiative was:

" To investigate and support the development of digital open textbook publishing activity at UCT in order to create awareness of and engagement in a range of possible open textbook publishing models that could be implemented at an institutional, national or regional level, for the purpose of promoting greater social justice in terms of offering all students equitable access to learning resources which are deemed appropriate and relevant in terms of their localized learning contexts.

The Mentoring Process and Emergent Activities

The mentor relationship with two members of the DOT4D research team began in September 2018 and continued as partners completed project implementation.

Process
The process included three related and intersecting tracks. These were agreed to at the start, but were also allowed to emerge in form and function as the relationship developed and as learning informed the mentoring practice. This process was reflective, reflexive, generative and emergent.

One of those tracks is **learning** itself, which is both individual and collaborative. On the individual level, my own learning included a review of all of the preliminary research leading to the development of the project concept note, including literature review, theoretical and conceptual framework, and related research supporting the project hypothesis, approach and methodology. Also, on the individual level, the partners' learning included review of theories of feminist critique and gender-based analysis.

A second track is **engagement**. This included consistent communication via Skype and email to maintain momentum, 'check-in', asking and fielding questions, presenting additional resources and findings as they arose, and troubleshooting challenges. Engagement also included face-to-face interaction.

A third track is **ongoing review**. This included document and instrument review from a gender-analytic perspective, as well as review of approach and design issues at key moments of project development and implementation.

Mentoring Relationship

Year One

It was during the initial review and familiarization process that we began discussing the possibility of a face-to-face meeting that would allow us to dig more deeply into the gendered dimensions of the project. Scheduling this meeting in Cape Town required that the partners and I devote significant time to preparing for a meaningful workshop. This two-day meeting set a solid foundation for the mentoring relationship, and also created an opportunity to experience the research context firsthand.

Following this face-to-face meeting, over the next six months, I continued to review documents and hold regular (monthly when possible) mentoring calls to check in with partners on both their project as well as their self-perceptions of capacity. Along the way, I invited them to participate in a brief partner survey so that the G@W team could learn how partners feel about their own capacities to apply gender-based analysis.

As the DOT4D project continued, the partners added a new team member, and also became very busy with implementation. This reduced our ability to maintain regular monthly contact, and the need for me to review documents also declined. In short, the first six months laid a good foundation and seemed to set the partners and the relationship on the right track to take forward their work more independently.

However, mindful that partners continued to implement their project and would soon be conducting interviews, collecting data, and analyzing content, I felt it was important to check in with them at key points or during key phases of the project. This led to the development of both the 'capacity check-up' and the 'theoretical reflection'.

The 'capacity check-up' was intended to gauge partners' self-perceptions of their own capacities for employing gender-based analysis in their research, and consisted of three questions:

1. How do you feel (how comfortable, how confident, etc. and why) about your capacities to think about how gender factors into your research or about your efforts to understand the gender-related issues your research addresses?

2. What do you feel you need (skills, knowledge, etc.) to help you build your capacities for developing gender responsive or gender transformative research?

3. What challenges (if any) exist that prevent you from developing these capacities?

The three partners reflected on these questions individually as they had time, and then met to discuss their responses before sending them to me. Their responses provided me with a deeper understanding not only of potential progress in terms of learning and capacity development, but also of the more 'concrete' elements that contribute to their perceptions and how to adapt my mentoring to meet their perceived needs in strengthening their capacities.

The 'theoretical reflection' emerged in response to a key phase in the project. Specifically, partners were developing two sets of questions as elements of the project research methodology: one for a survey and one for case study interviews. While reviewing the two instruments, I suggested that partners 'revisit' the project's theoretical and conceptual framework, as well as the G@W analytical framework, and use them as 'lenses' through which to view and analyze the questions in each instrument. We discussed the value of this in terms of consistency across the project, and I used it as one way to respond to their needs regarding individual capacity building.

Over the last three months of the first year, the DOT4D partners participated in a follow-up capacity survey, and we were able to maintain email check-ins as their data analysis continued. One comment from the partners on the capacity survey summarizes the consistency, ongoing strategic engagement and overall evolution of the mentoring relationship over the first twelve months:

> *As a project we have had support … on the objectives of our research, our interview questions and a subsequent discussion on more research that we plan to conduct. We value his input and he will help again when we have some initial findings.*
>
> **Mentoring participant**

Also of note is the response to the following survey question: "Please share the most important thing you have learned about advancing gender equality in research in the last two years. Why is this significant to you?"

> *In my context in South Africa our focus in our research is on redressing inequality. This is often firmly focused on Race and it has resulted in less focus on gender and so gender representation in higher education has become less of a focus. This was an important lesson for me. The approach we have taken is to have gender and race as key features in future work.*
>
> **Mentoring participant**

Reflecting on Responsive Mentoring

This case is a good example of a mentoring relationship where there is a good relationship, an ongoing series of meetings in response to the development of the project and adapting over time to the needs of the mentees. The process does have the structure of the three tracks (learning, engagement and ongoing review).

More specifically, Jeff was able to build a relationship (including organizing a trip to South Africa), give it some structure (conceptual material, the three tracks and capacity check-up), maintain contact and be responsive to the needs that arose from the research project itself.

Other mentors have worked in a less structured manner, but the keys are maintaining relationship over time and responding to mentees' needs.

Perhaps most importantly, the mentor is not there to push for a particular approach to research. The relationship must be experienced as partnership not as supervisory.

Feminist Thinking, Organizational Change and Technological Research at CIPIT

The following description was excerpted from a case study written by Mitchel Ondili, staff member at CIPIT.[54]

CIPIT Case Study Excerpt

The Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (CIPIT) is a think tank and training centre established in 2012 at Strathmore University in Nairobi, Kenya. The centre was part of the Cyber Policy Centres project initiated by NE in 2018. As part of that project CIPIT took part in a Gender Action Learning process that included mentoring by G@W facilitator Michal Friedman. The program was conducted over a two-year period and facilitated by G@W using the GAL process, supported by three principles:

▸ Affirmation of human relationships as the ultimate touchstone of value and driving force for change.

▸ Application of feminist pedagogies and practices to challenge patriarchal binaries and build connections between the 'interior' and 'exterior' worlds of the organization.

▸ Safe spaces for participants to explore new ways of 'seeing, being, doing and relating' by testing and experimenting with new perspectives, behaviours, actions and relationships.

The first phase focussed on positionality and inclusion. The context and positionality problem was raised by the staff in the form of questions relating to CIPIT's role in influencing global knowledge production from the Global South, the research context regarding gender and feminist practice, and internal bias that can affect research themes and outcomes.

Ultimately the matrices of power, role and mission of the organization and its part in the wider social structure is inextricable from research practice and process. Understanding the role of power systems, which we participate in and are part of, brings to the fore implicit and explicit biases that deter effective research. The team discussed introducing gender specific research that would ultimately contribute to a more inclusive research practice. Inclusion, however, is not merely

an output of research but forms part of organizational culture. Asking important questions around who gets to define the change process, who are the agents of change, and what power is afforded to them while they try to enact this change, allows for inclusion in the research process as well as the outputs.

This entails addressing both formal and informal barriers to inclusion, acknowledging broader inequality as well as the underlying complex factors that affect the inclusion of women, not just as subjects of research but in the design of the research process as partners of the research process. Additionally, it encourages more nuance in policy recommendations such that policy efforts move beyond the introduction of quotas and address issues that contribute to the necessity of the quotas in the first place.

Following this discussion, two members of the team developed a paper on Data, Technology and the Gender Gap, examining bias in data collection and how it widens gender gaps in technology.

At this stage in the process two members of the team travelled to Tunis to be part of a peer learning workshop with other cyber policy centres. At that meeting the team developed goals for their work for the next several months.

CIPIT's primary goals were:

To implement a revised organizational culture

To effect more strategic hires

To create an environment that engendered more open communication

To create more room for experimentation/innovation

To have greater ownership of projects for younger team members and to provide mentorship to incoming interns

Phase 2 of the work focussed on organizational culture and developing a project that would apply the learning to an artificial intelligence (AI) project. Over two meetings the staff analyzed CIPIT culture and then developed a plan for an AI research project that would have a strong gender perspective.

The project would take into consideration aspects of gender that are related to artificial intelligence and the outcome was centred around artificial intelligence bias. Data does not emerge from a vacuum and data analysis needs to develop a situated, reflexive and contextually nuanced epistemology.

The mapping centred around projects that have originated in Africa, to glean a real sense of the diversity struggles particular to AI start-ups, and what those struggles exemplify in an African context and the mechanisms that can be put in place to curb these. The mapping intended to identify the sex disaggregation of those working in the projects and whether that sex disaggregation differs by region, by position (managerial or otherwise) or by different industries. The project tracked 160 AI projects across the continent and found a 29 – 71% gender disparity in AI participation.

Inclusion is not only gender specific but occurs across different intersections. CIPIT undertook research charting of vulnerable groups, assessing the AI divide in terms of the greatest beneficiaries and those at greatest risk, and developing an AI inclusive framework to include vulnerable groups.

Phase 3 focussed on reflective practice as integral to the research process. A two-day workshop was built around the question: *What will it take to kindle a collective, reflexive and inclusive research practice in CIPIT?* The meeting used a variety of feminist pedagogical tools and discussed questions of situationality, inclusion and working with colleagues with different perspectives. One of the outcomes was the AI4D (Artificial Intelligence for Development) team committing to writing practice journals and sharing them biweekly.

The practice journals were an important step. As described in a learning review commissioned by G@W:

The journals included discussions on the projects the team members were working on and provided an avenue to flesh out underlying concerns within the project. Some examples follow.

One team member noted:

Testing out new peer to peer leadership with the RFs has proved that the concept of project design is also quite different among different RFs and therefore expecting them to lead others and that they know how to determine when there

is an RA who needs more time for understanding and conceptualizing has also shown more gaps in the structure.

Dr. Angeline Wairegi noted:

The reflective journals allowed participants to examine the hierarchies within project groups and the research practices and determine whether these structures and practices were conducive to carrying out the studies. It also allowed participants to reflect on whether these structures and practices allowed them to fully participate in the project.

The learning review also surfaced other important outcomes. Among them:

By May 2020, CIPIT leadership (Isaac, Kendi and Melissa with Betty, Angeline and Mitchel) had consciously shifted their ways of engaging staff in the online meeting context, to recognize them more holistically and were giving more attention to CIPIT's institutional culture, including shifting the online reviews of projects in ways that enable more staff engagement, and ensuring interns and staff have personal learning goals beyond the projects they are working on and the need to produce papers. They were working on how to strengthen participation of everyone in these meetings, also prompted by the advent of the Covid Pandemic.

Dr. Angeline Wairegi noted:

Furthermore, CIPIT's current business practices reflect an understanding of the importance (and impact) of inclusive, *diversified, and equitable practices throughout the organization*.

Experience with G@W significantly impacted the organization's recent (2021-22) IDRC applications. Knowledge gained on inclusive design practices was integrated into the project design and the outlined activities. Similarly, the insights gained by the team from the workshops, journals, meeting, and study formed the basis for the gender-centred activities and goals outlined in the proposal.

Reflecting on the CIPIT case

This case is an interesting example of change of both approaches to research and change at the level of the research team itself. Its research focus expanded to include a clear understanding of power relations and how they influence research choices. The team also came to understand that their own inclusivity as a team needed to come under scrutiny in order to fully develop the inclusivity and positionality they wanted to achieve in their research.

CIPIT was part of a peer learning network including other cyber policy centres. Reading the case we learn that the peer learning meeting was important in giving their project direction and impetus. Along with peer learning was a mentoring relationship with G@W Associate Michal Friedman, who met with them over a two-year period both online and face-to-face. Michal pushed the team to discover the deeper cultural currents that conditioned both CIPIT's research and how it was organized to do that research. Once again, the key factors of 'relationship, over time, responding to mentee needs' seem significant.

Creating Products with the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX)

This project was intended to enhance the KIX team's knowledge, confidence, motivation and skills to advance gender equality and inclusion throughout their work. Our project with KIX was different from the above examples in some respects. It was short term (March through October 2021) and focussed on particular, predetermined deliverables (training and tools).

The tools included:

▸ GEI Proposal Review Framework

▸ GEI Conversation Guide

▸ Strategic Issues and Key References on Gender Equality and Inclusion in Education

▸ KIX Gender Analysis Facilitators Outline

▸ GEI MEL indicators

The G@W team also supported the KIX PO responsible for communications in reflecting on how gender equality and inclusion (GEI) can be further integrated across KIX communications. This included the development of slides for a November 2021 communications information session with KIX grantees with the aim of providing guidance and resources on GEI integration.

Although in many ways this looks like a traditional project, we asked Rex Fyles, the Project Lead to reflect on how this project demonstrated a Gender at Work approach to learning, as follows.

I would say that what might distinguish how G@W worked from a more traditional consultancy (though I think lots of people work this way) is that we sought every opportunity to 'co-create' through dialogue with the cross-section of KIX staff. Given the time and budget constraints, we decided we would not interact extensively with grantees. I also think we took an 'appreciative' rather than a 'deficit' approach. For example:

▸ Reflecting the appreciative approach, our initial 'needs assessment' (based on a pretty standard document review and key informant interviews) sought to identify 'assets' and 'opportunities' (rather than 'weaknesses' or 'shortcomings'), and to propose 'tools' that corresponded to the 'needs' they expressed.

This may sound like a repackaging exercise but I think the foundation was to honour their hard work, commitment and existing skills (which they didn't always recognize themselves) and point to fairly small things they could do to make some strategic shifts.

▸ Developing the 'proposal review grid' combined both 'capacity building' and 'collaborative tool development'. We first developed and tested the grid ourselves to analyze a sample of proposals that KIX staff had selected. Then we shared the grid with those POs that expressed an interest (they self-selected) for them to analyze other proposals. Then we met with the POs to compare and discuss the results of their and our analyses, what new insights they gained, and how best to use and improve the grid. The final 'tool' we handed over incorporated these suggestions.

▸ We designed and facilitated a very 'genderatworky' online, interactive gender analysis webinar for all KIX staff who were interested in using the G@W analytical framework and drawing on their own lived experience of discrimination in education settings. Based on their feedback, we revised and handed over a very detailed facilitators guide for the sessions in the hope they would feel equipped and confident to offer the approach to grantees.

▸ We worked really closely and in dialogue with the Communications PO and the MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) PO to develop tailored tools for their particular challenges.

A reflection on these cases

What is core to these various interventions described above? We believe that the concept of 'container' as a useful way to think about this.[55] Just as a jug holds water and gives it shape, a container can hold a social process. Building and maintaining a container is the key job of the consultant. Our intent is to build a strong container that will support work that will in turn lead to strong outcomes.

We believe that a strong container can be described using five dimensions.[56]

These five dimensions are: relationship, purpose, power, nature of knowledge and process.

Relationship — Relationships of trust and respect are essential to building safe spaces for the discussion of often very challenging and personal issues. All the interventions above devoted attention and time to building relationships with POs, partners and within the G@W team itself. G@W consultants began with relationship and creating a learning space where participants would feel valued, safe, included, engaged and empowered. In the FEH case, Rex started by asking people to remember childhood food favorites, think about the relationships between the people that cooked that food and allowed new relationships to develop.

Purpose — Participants will be part of a container to the extent it meets important needs of theirs as defined by them. Early on in the relationship it must become clear that G@W is not there to tell them how their project must change to conform to some gender standard. Instead participants will realize that the purpose of the discussion must be theirs. This purpose cannot be imposed from outside, although a push in a general direction may be important to get started. The specific directions must be owned by the participants. It is up to them to decide how their project will evolve towards being more responsive to gender dynamics. For some that will mean rethinking research methods, for others it might mean including other voices. For example, in the Digital Open Text Books case, Jeff created a space in which people were generating ideas about gender and research — he didn't prescribe them.

What was important in all the efforts described above was not the specificity of the purpose but the collective ownership of a particular direction. It is also important to mention that in all cases clear outcomes were not possible to specify at the beginning but emerged through dialogue.

Power — If participants are going to be part of the emergent process that develops solutions in complex situations they must have the power to define their context and to define what solutions will make sense within that context. Often, it is necessary to broaden the conversation to include others in the empowered circle beyond the research leaders, such as younger female staff, community women or local government staff. In the climate change project, research teams became more inclusive of younger staff, trained community women to push local government and built a female team of disaster relief trainers.

The Nature of Knowledge — The place of knowledge in all of this is closely related to power and the need to help participants build their own analysis, and take action that makes sense to them. Knowledge about gender or intersectionality and a given project must be held lightly and tentatively. G@W consultants certainly carry knowledge about gender equality but that knowledge is deeply contextual and its usefulness must be judged by each partner. Our role is not to bring our knowledge to solve problems, but to use our knowledge in a tentative way to stimulate discussion and to open up areas for discussion. For example, the Gender at Work Framework points to four areas of engagement to stimulate change, it may be helpful to share those four areas, but it would be far from helpful to use this knowledge to prescribe what area a participant should focus on.

Process — The above four dimensions require scrupulous attention to process to ensure that every interaction is respectful, inclusive, engaging and participatory.

Chapter 4

The Harvest

This chapter describes the outcomes achieved in this series of Gender at Work interventions with IDRC programs. The bulk of the outcomes are drawn from a learning review we conducted using Outcome Harvesting (OH) methodology.[57] This methodical approach and the assistance of our evaluation consultant Barbara Klugman give us confidence that the outcomes are substantial.[58]

G@W contributed to these outcomes. The change process in most cases was complex, involving many participants and therefore it is difficult to attribute causality.

Types of Outcomes

Shifts in methodology
of Specific Projects
31 Outcomes

Shifts in research team's
overall approach to research
28 Outcomes

Shifts in research group's
organisational norms, practices and policies
27 Outcomes

Shifts in research influence
dissemination of ressearch results
13 Outcomes

Shifts in research influence
others take action
12 Outcomes
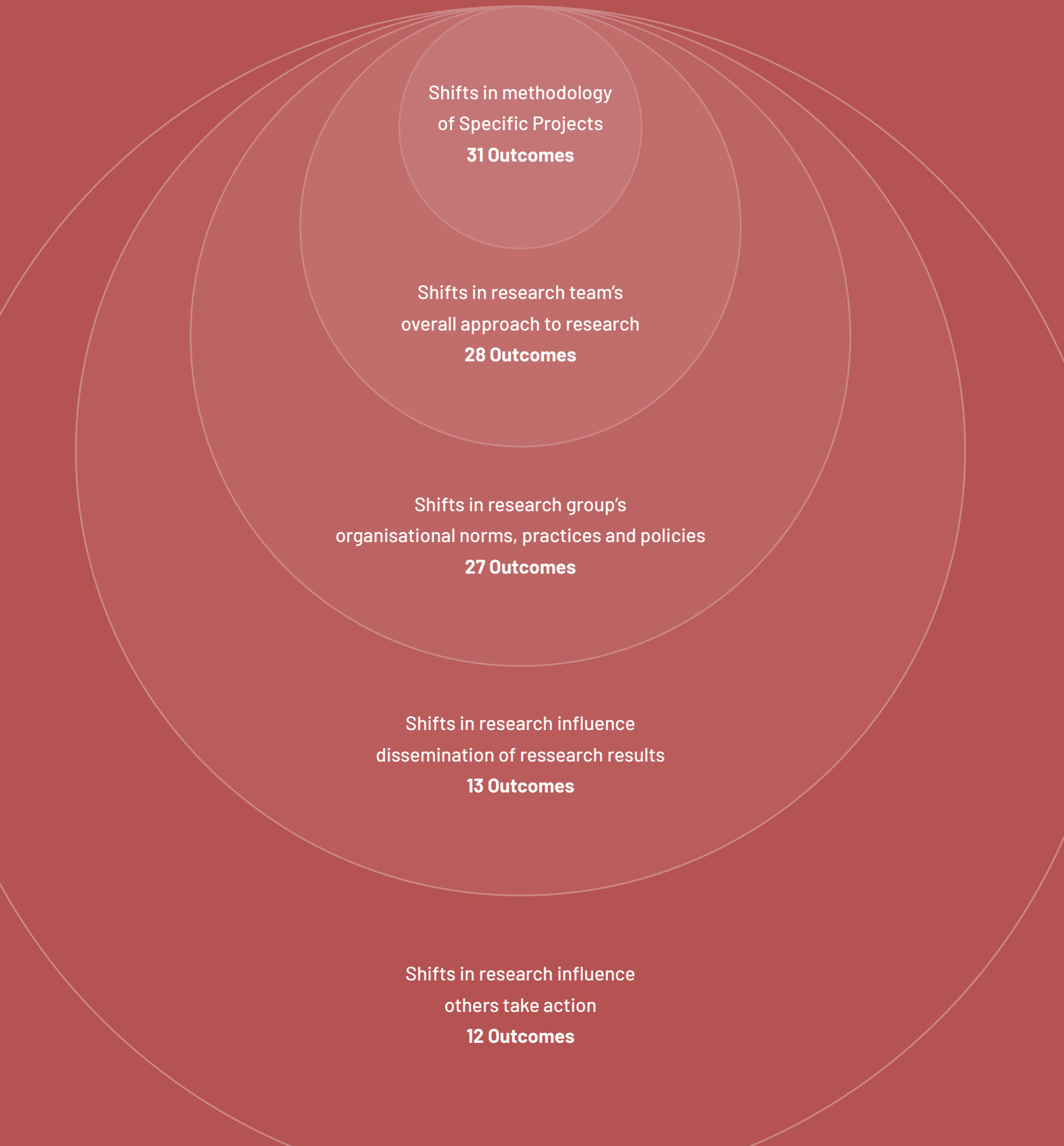
Types of changes in the research groups

The diagram below shows the types of gender-related changes found by the OH review, by number of outcomes identified through 'outcome harvesting'.

Starting at the inner circle, and perhaps the smallest unit of analysis, there were 31 outcomes within specific research projects. They included such changes as:

▸ Research teams revising the research framework to include significant attention to gender equality and social equity more generally.

▸ A research team made some changes in the way they frame questions and issues (for example, when wording a survey questionnaire, or in how they question their own assumptions, or consider their own positionality).

▸ A research team decided that sampling should be consolidated, considering the representativeness of men and women on the one hand, and migrants and non-migrants on the other hand, with a view to improving the analysis of social inequalities in the study area. For this purpose, quota sampling was recommended instead of random cluster sampling.

At a somewhat broader scale were changes in the teams' overall approach to research. There were 28 outcomes in this category and included changes such as:

▸ ASIES (Association for Research and Social Studies) in Guatemala developed a gender protocol and tools for gender sensitive research for their policy think tank, which was co-created with research consultants through a series of three related training workshops.

▸ A research consortium in Nepal broadened their focus from 'women' to a feminist approach that included intersectionality.

▸ CPED in Nigeria developed an approach to gender and inclusion that they now include in all their research proposals.

A third category was change in institutional norms and practices. There were 27 outcomes in this category and included changes such as:

- Leadership in one of the cyber policy think tanks consciously shifted their ways of engaging staff in the online meeting context, to recognize them more holistically and give more attention to institutional culture, including: shifting the online reviews of projects in ways that enable more staff engagement; and ensuring interns and staff have personal learning goals beyond the projects they are working on and the need to produce papers.

- Members of the Change team, having previously been silent, started questioning internal dynamics within and between the partner organizations, highlighting the need for gender policies and asserting their own agency in taking decisions on the research. This created some turbulence but ultimately expanded the democratic space within their institutions. They also successfully advocated for regular coordination meetings between the three institutions as a necessary mechanism in a joint project.

- Team members began questioning and shifting the patriarchal elements in their own practices, such as the use of gendered language, unthinking acceptance of technical definitions and categories, and the tendency to replicate hierarchies of privilege in their relationships with colleagues and research subjects. For example, in their field work Core Team members began experimenting with the feminist principle of 'putting oneself in the frame', practicing reflexivity and locating themselves and their experience as part of their conversations with community members – "this is my location, this is where I am, so when I'm talking about vulnerability these are my vulnerabilities" – opening themselves and their vulnerability to the group in the way they expected the women to open up. The heads of all three research institutions noted the impact of the feminist approach in raising 'sticky questions' about their own practice.

The fourth category is shifts in research influence beyond the specific project or research group. These shifts were influenced directly or indirectly by G@W's support to individual researchers and research teams. Their participation in the gender-focussed peer learning process that G@W facilitated contributed to the increased confidence and new approach adopted by researchers in these examples. There were 25 outcomes in this area including:

- A think tank responded to the Ghana's Parliamentary Select Committee on Gender and Children request for help in identifying whether Ghana's budget was gender sensitive and how they could establish a gender sensitive budget. One member of the Gender Change Team ran a workshop for parliamentarians on the basic tools for a gender inclusive budget.

- One of the young women team members from a think tank wrote a policy brief on susceptibility of women and children to climate change induced infectious diseases.

- In rural Nepal, possibly for the first time, women in local communities identified and voiced their needs during interaction programs on disaster preparedness. In particular, women champions trained by the project led community consultations for the municipality's Local Disaster and Climate Resilient Plan (90% of participants were women). Through this action research process, with separate meetings with each group, participants identified what they needed and their priorities. Everyone was then brought together to agree on priorities.

- In Nigeria, rural leaders in 10 communities established Community Project Implementation Committees, training women on types of adaptation & risk reduction strategies (like construction of artificial lakes, fencing of ponds, fish traps, planting of cover crops to protect the land from direct rays of the sun and erosion, using improved seedlings for better harvest and crop rotation), thereby enabling women and their families to experiment with various approaches to eliminate constraints in production.

In many cases these changes worked together and rippled into other areas. From the learning review, it was observed:

> What is clear and demonstrated, is that [outcomes in different categories] are mutually motivating and reinforcing. Irrespective of where they began, where groups engaged with G@W in an ongoing way, rather than only in proposal development, in most cases they contributed towards a mix of the following types of outcomes: shifts in the research project itself, in the group's broader research approach and in its organizational culture.

The diagram below shows how outcomes were related to one another at the Centre for Population and Environmental Development based in Benin City, Nigeria. CPED participated in both the Think Tank and Climate Change initiatives. G@W's Nkechi Odinukwe worked with CPED on the climate change project.

CPED Outcome Timeline

Shifts in Research Project
CPED5 - CPED programme manager convened online reflection sessions to strengthen staff skills & practices in gender training as community facilitators

CPED4 - CPED used an improved climate change module that integrated gender concerns

Shifts in Overall Research Approach
CPED6 - One of the women team members wrote a brief on challenges women face in responding to survey instruments

G@W Activity
Peer workshop

Shifts in Research Project
TTI-CPED4 - CPED's final technical report to TTI/IDRC demonstrated the inclusion of gender analysis in relation to research design and outcomes

G@W Activity
Workshop on project monitoring and evaluation matrix

Shifts in Research Influence
CPED6a - One of the women team members wrote a policy brief for advocacy on susceptibility of women & children to climate change inducted infectious disease and Challenges women face in responding to survey instruments

Shifts in Overall Research Approach
CPED1 - CPED Deputy Director indicated he is now more intentionally including women as researchers and respondents in research project activities

CPED2 - A woman community facilitator said she experienced more support from project staf team members which has made her more confident testing out new approaches

Shifts in Research Project
G@W activity - G@W convenes on-line peer learning program with 5 Think Tanks.

G@W Activity
Peer workshop

G@W Activity
GAL Think Tank Initiative peer learning meeting in Bangkok

G@W Activity
Peer workshop

| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |

2019   **2020**   **2021**

Shifts in Research Influence - Indirect G@W contribution. Outcomes flow out of CPED's increased capacities for gender-sensitive research processes
Nov 2019 to Jan 2021 - Rural leaders in 10 communities established Community Project Implementation Committees training women on types of adaptation & risk reduction & enabling them to experiment (CPED8)

G@W Activity - March 2020 - June 2021 - Facilitated biweekly reflection meetings

Shifts in Overall Research Approach
After Feb 2020 - Workshop CPED created a section in its M&E Matrix to address gender equality & intersectional inclusion in all the org's research proposals moving forward (CPED3)

2019 - *Shifts in Research Group's Norms, Practices and Policies*

TTI-CPED1 - CPED did a participatory gender audit and reallocated tasks on more equitable basis

G@W Activity - **Integrated gender into climate change training modules**

TTI-CEPD2 - CPED developed a gender policy for building an enabling org environment for gender equality

Shifts in Research Influence - Indirect G@W contribution. Outcomes flow out of CPED's increased capacities for gender-sensitive research processes
CPED9 - During 2021, men in 2 communities have given women more access to land and have begun to consult them before taking decisions affecting them. e.g. on community infrastructure

> The conversation in programs was a key moment and helped us in programs and policy groups realize that while there was a high level of awareness and good intention, willingness to do more, the capacities to do this were uneven across teams and the lack of overarching approach led to fragmented ad-hoc implementation that did not support the telling of an IDRC-wide story. So yes, the event did contribute and fuel the momentum around making decisions to escalate the corporate attention to the issue.

Dominique Charron, IDRC,

Substantiation correspondence from the learning review

Looking at this diagram a few things stand out. First, there is a non-linear but consistent progress over time. There is a variety of interventions from G@W that respond to the unfolding process of change. CPED members engaged in considerable learning. This learning was both conceptual and personal. The learning extended to community members who were engaged with the research. Key to achieving social change, they translated the learning into actions. G@W's role in this long chain of changes can be seen as contribution, rather than attribution. To quote Lennon and McCartney, "it's a long and winding road".

Changes in IDRC

Roughly a quarter of the outcomes were changes made within IDRC. Six of these are evidence of strengthened attention to gender within IDRC as a whole or a specific program (for example, the introduction of new policies and mechanisms for addressing gender). The remaining IDRC outcomes are changes in grantmaking. They include new ways of engaging grantees about gender, to establishment of gender-specific initiatives such as the initiation of the Feminist Artificial Intelligence Research Network.
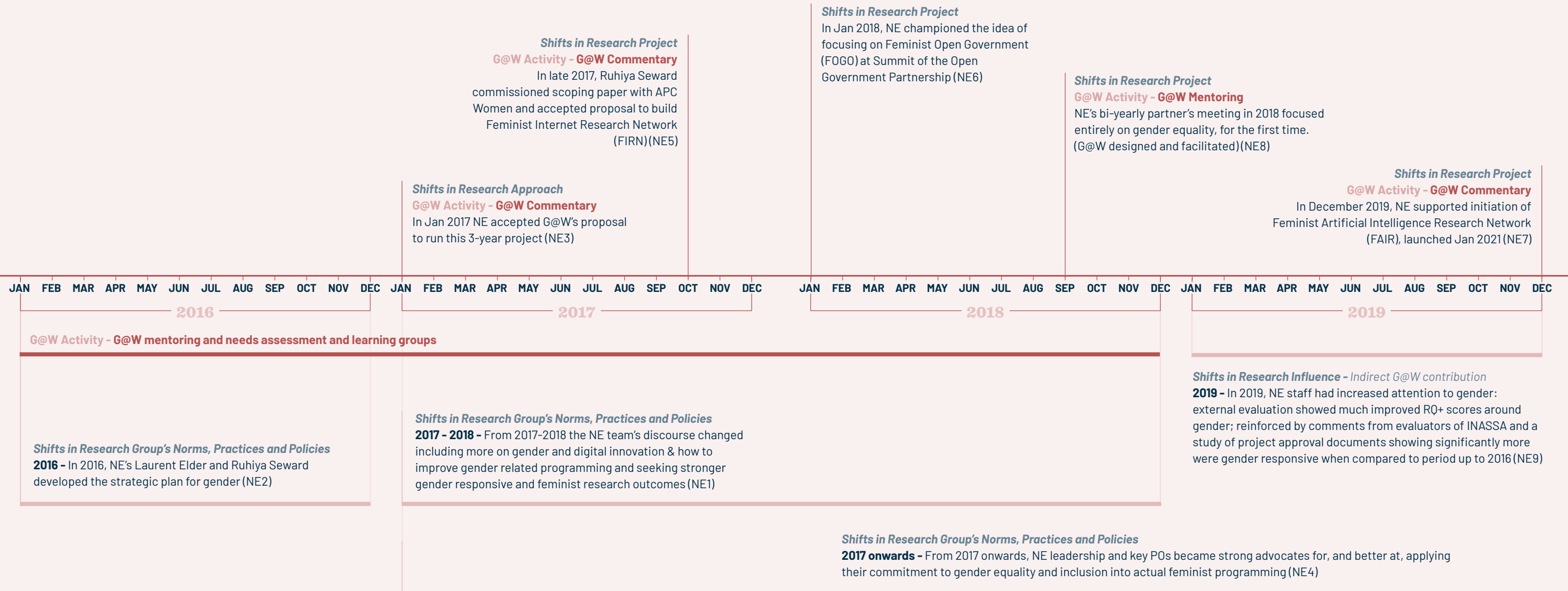
These changes can be seen as three types:

1. Change in centre wide thinking and action on gender
2. Change in the culture and norms of a program (NE)
3. Change in grantmaking in individual programs

Centre wide changes related to gender

Over the past six years IDRC has made several important steps toward ensuring that considerations of gender equality and inclusion are central to their work. They commissioned two papers on gender transformational research, convened a variety of task forces, made gender equality a key part of the new strategic plan, and currently have a Gender Equality and Inclusion Leadership Team with representation from all the program divisions. Over 2019 and early 2020, the Gender Equality and Inclusion Programming Framework was finalized and integrated into IDRC's organization transformation agenda as a key priority.

NE Outcome Timeline

Shifts in Research Project
In Jan 2018, NE championed the idea of focusing on Feminist Open Government (FOGO) at Summit of the Open Government Partnership (NE6)

Shifts in Research Project
G@W Activity – G@W Commentary
In late 2017, Ruhiya Seward commissioned scoping paper with APC Women and accepted proposal to build Feminist Internet Research Network (FIRN) (NE5)

Shifts in Research Project
G@W Activity – G@W Mentoring
NE's bi-yearly partner's meeting in 2018 focused entirely on gender equality, for the first time. (G@W designed and facilitated) (NE8)

Shifts in Research Project
G@W Activity – G@W Commentary
In December 2019, NE supported initiation of Feminist Artificial Intelligence Research Network (FAIR), launched Jan 2021 (NE7)

Shifts in Research Approach
G@W Activity – G@W Commentary
In Jan 2017 NE accepted G@W's proposal to run this 3-year project (NE3)

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC | JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC | JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC | JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

2016 — 2017 — 2018 — 2019

G@W Activity – G@W mentoring and needs assessment and learning groups

Shifts in Research Influence – *Indirect G@W contribution*
2019 – In 2019, NE staff had increased attention to gender: external evaluation showed much improved RQ+ scores around gender; reinforced by comments from evaluators of INASSA and a study of project approval documents showing significantly more were gender responsive when compared to period up to 2016 (NE9)

Shifts in Research Group's Norms, Practices and Policies
2017 – 2018 – From 2017-2018 the NE team's discourse changed including more on gender and digital innovation & how to improve gender related programming and seeking stronger gender responsive and feminist research outcomes (NE1)

Shifts in Research Group's Norms, Practices and Policies
2016 – In 2016, NE's Laurent Elder and Ruhiya Seward developed the strategic plan for gender (NE2)

Shifts in Research Group's Norms, Practices and Policies
2017 onwards – From 2017 onwards, NE leadership and key POs became strong advocates for, and better at, applying their commitment to gender equality and inclusion into actual feminist programming (NE4)

G@W contributed to this with their work with different programs, but also through facilitating a day-long meeting with 150 IDRC staff on April 23, 2018 as part of the special Programs and Partnership Branch staff meeting in Ottawa.

Change in norms and culture of a program

The **NE program** was an example of a change in the norms and culture of a team. In the first two years of the project (2017–2018), the G@W team noticed a marked difference in the discourse within the NE team and increased interest in building gender considerations into projects. From the Learning Review:

> There was more discussion about gender and digital innovation, and new field building work with the Feminist Internet Research Network, innovative programming around feminist open government and Internet 5 (a project partnership idea that never gained funding). There was also a renewed focus across programming, and NE team members actively participated in IDRC discussions on ways to improve gender related programming. The discussion about gender equality deepened among the NE team so that gender was no longer an afterthought but central to many discussions, including the team's overall program strategy. The NE team changed its basic understandings and ways of working to bring a much stronger focus on gender equality to their work. The norms about what was an acceptable level of gender responsive and feminist research outcomes changed considerably.

The people who were into it, felt encouraged and became more focused on gender and began to see opportunities."

David Kelleher

The outcome diagram below shows the sequence of outcomes that added up to cultural change in the period from 2016 to 2020 (when the program was closed in an internal reorganization).

Changes in grantmaking

All of the programs we worked with altered their approach to grantmaking or grant management in some ways that paid more attention to gender. The following examples are illustrative:

▸ FEH POs described a new way of engaging their PIs (Principal Investigators) in a dialogue, with probing questions, trying to figure out things together, sharing useful resources and offers of G@W mentoring support, in order to build the interest and capacity of PIs (as opposed to going in with a deficit-based approach). It was noticeable in project notes and proposals that were introduced to G@W later in the Research Support Grant Project that IDRC POs were engaging in more dialogue on gender with PIs.

▸ During 2018, the TTI team at IDRC produced three sets of guidelines to support gender and inclusion at the Think Tank Initiative Exchange held in Bangkok, November 2018: 1) Inclusive and Accessible Event Planning; 2) Guiding Principles on Gender and Inclusion: For Facilitators & Moderators; and 3) Guiding Principles on Gender and Inclusion: For Participants. They also shared these documents with participants at the final TTI Exchange in Bangkok (Nov. 15, 2019), where the team ran through the guidelines with participants in person at the start of the workshop to set the tone.

Changes in consciousness

Although the outcome harvesting methodology does not 'count' changes in consciousness unless there is a related change in behaviour, G@W is interested in consciousness change because it can go well beyond the current project and is likely to influence the learner's behaviour in future research as well as a variety of other settings. For example, a researcher from Nigeria was very affected by the issue of women's inequality as he took part in the GAL process. We discovered later that he had begun to teach drumming to the girls in his church (a very counter-cultural activity).

Important changes in consciousness and understanding were reported by POs:

> I feel comfortable in asking partners important questions about their work, exploring implications of gender on social, technical, and economic issues. I feel comfortable debating and guiding them towards methodologies and exploring new pathways for their work and in discussing the importance of these issues on their work overall, as well as within more gender transformative projects

> It's about asking the questions, and nudging to get clarity on those questions; the importance of leadership in driving gender equality; to not be afraid to ask about gender.

> I have learnt that you need to work 'along' partners so that they genuinely integrate a gender perspective so that it become sustainable in time. Getting them to understand the importance of the issue and the relevance of asking the right questions to trigger curiosity and genuine interest in their side. It is significant because that was not the way I use to operate in the past and this is a much more effective ways of approaching the problem.

Similarly, insights about research were reported by participants in the Tunis workshop of the Cyber Policy Centres:

> Unexpected learning: the liberating and transformative aspects of feminist methodology as a mode of thought, as a research framework and as part of an organizational philosophy...the nonbinary nature of working; having a personal and professional angle; the recognition that inclusion, justice and equality improves work, creates better workflow and increases resources; the place of intention and positive perseverance.

> I feel that I have a better understanding of ... institutional process and culture

with a more feminist approach beyond gender specific considerations. ... We are closer now to be able to implement concrete steps to work with a feminist perspective using as starting point our core cultural transformation...It was very challenging ....to go out from the more rigid frameworks of workshop and open to this more flexible negotiated methodology, but definitely a very rich experience.

> An eye opening session going into the specifics of what we're doing and looking it with feminist practice in a specific case..... framing the research question in a feminist way has a big impact on how we think about methodology and data. Was listening and processing a lot of information that I will use beyond this meeting.

Finally, in a blog post, one researcher described her learning experience of coming to understand feminist research approaches:

> But does the community I do research on share my enquiries or questions? In designing projects – I begin to unpack how, with my curiosity, this project will also have value for the research participants – making it a process of co-creation of knowledge. It means that I intentionally shift from making myself the complete knower – coming to extract the juice of your knowledge and applying my own meaning to it. It also means that while my resources may limit me to transform injustices, the knowledge from the research returns to the community as well as policymakers.[59]

Reflections on the outcomes

It is clear from the rigorous learning review and data we have collected in less formal ways that given sufficient time, resources and contextual relevance, it is possible to deploy learning approaches which strengthen the motivation, capacities and behavior of researchers and project officers to work in more gender-responsive ways and to ensure stronger gender-related research outcomes.

The outcomes included changes in a particular research design; changes in approaches to research; changes in institutional arrangements that allow for more focus on gender and inclusion; changes in policy environments and communities directly engaged in the research; and finally changes in consciousness regarding gender equality and its place in development research.

Conclusion

When we started the project, we had many questions and faced many unknowns. We were told that many research partners were resistant … we did not know if POs would commit to it … and we did not know if the methods we had tested with organizations like NGOs, trade unions and UN agencies would work with research teams and institutions.

What does it take to improve gender equality outcomes in development research?

We also were well aware of the difficulties facing the researchers themselves. For them to be more gender responsive would mean finding new methods, working with different kinds of community partners, and going beyond (and perhaps against) years of training and experience. Some researchers believed that these changes would hinder their capacity to have their papers published and accepted.

Yet, after six years, scores of people and dozens of organizations in more than 15 countries are now doing research differently. Attitudes have changed, new methods have been adopted, new ways of working with grantees have emerged, and new knowledge has been created. How can we make sense of all those changes?

The approach described in this monograph departs from typical efforts to encourage research grantees to be more gender responsive. The emphasis of this approach is not to specify what is required and then monitor for compliance. Instead we focus on *learning*. Further, the type of learning practice is much more profound than an occasional webinar or a gender training workshop. Participants in this program were often engaged with their team over 18 to 24 months in a relationship that asked them to consider the fundamentals of their craft. This relationship often called upon them to understand personal motivations as well as intellectual ones. Finally, the learning was focussed on *action*. Teams learned practices that led them to involve new

people, collect data differently, and work with different community partners. This learning led to a wide range of gender responsive outcomes.

How do we understand the role G@W played in these changes?

After considering the wide range of changes and pathways to change we have observed, we make sense of this vast body of work with six ideas fundamental for change to occur. The fundamental ideas that follow are our current best answer to our framing question, *What does it take to improve gender equality outcomes in development research?*

1. **Change happens as a result of a judicious mixture of pressure and support**. This is a longstanding principle of change of social systems.[60] It is evident that there was pressure for change from the IDRC board of directors and management. For example, early in the project an executive at IDRC told us that his performance evaluation now depended upon his team showing better gender outcomes. At the same time a variety of sophisticated supports were provided to help grantees and POs actually take action. The most effective use of 'judicious pressure' in our experience was the skilled intervention of project officers showing a consistent interest in grantees' efforts to advance gender equality through their research projects and practices, and in their organizational cultures.

2. **Learning and change is most likely to happen within a reflective space that is characterized by trust, openness and creativity.** None of the changes in this monograph were prescribed. They emerged from discussion and reflection. The most powerful changes emerged when that reflection happened within a climate that included personal exploration. The outcomes from the Tunis workshop described in Chapter 4 are excellent examples. Participants engaged in thoughtful reflection on their own practice as researchers. The climate of the discussion allowed for personal exploration of the meaning of equality and inclusion, and how that is related to work on particular problems in particular contexts.

3. **Learners will be motivated and energized to solve problems which they have the power to define in terms that matter to them.** For example, in the Think Tank project participants were asked if they wanted to be part of a project that would help them learn about gender equality in policy research.

The participants defined problems that were germane to them — a gender-responsive municipal transport system, a gender budgeting capacity in order to advise government, and a gender-responsive protocol for policy research.**Providing conceptual material regarding gender and inclusion is only valuable when it is offered to shed light on a problem the research team is confronting.** In two of the Climate Change teams in particular, the teams needed to understand basic gender concepts in order to move forward with their change project. That conceptual material was clearly focussed on issues facing the research team, such as collecting data from a particular community. Importantly, the discussion was done in ways that reinforced or rebuilt emerging inclusion and power sharing within the team.

4. **Transformative change happens over time**. This too is a longstanding principle of social change.[61] Many of the projects described in this monograph are good examples: five of the Climate Change research teams achieved very strong outcomes but the outcomes only began to emerge after one year and required another year to come to fruition. At the same time, it is possible to take important steps towards change through well placed, short-term interventions such as the FEH partners' workshop in Brazil described in Chapter 3.

5. **Change requires some sort of 'upset',** often called disconfirmation. Powerful members of the team must realize that something new must happen in order to solve a problem. Sometimes that is a cognitive realization, such as a team leader realizing that he could not get the data he required without working with women's community groups – a task where he lacked previous experience. More often in our cases, young, female researchers felt empowered to make demands of the team, which resulted in sometimes radically new ways of working. See for example, the story of CIPIT in Chapter 3.

This review leaves us confident that these fundamental ideas are valid and 'travel well'. They can guide not only our ongoing work with IDRC, but can also be applied in a wide variety of contexts, locations and fields of research. It is our hope that they may also offer useful guideposts for colleagues undertaking similar work, both with research institutions and other organizations seeking to move towards a culture of gender equality and inclusion.
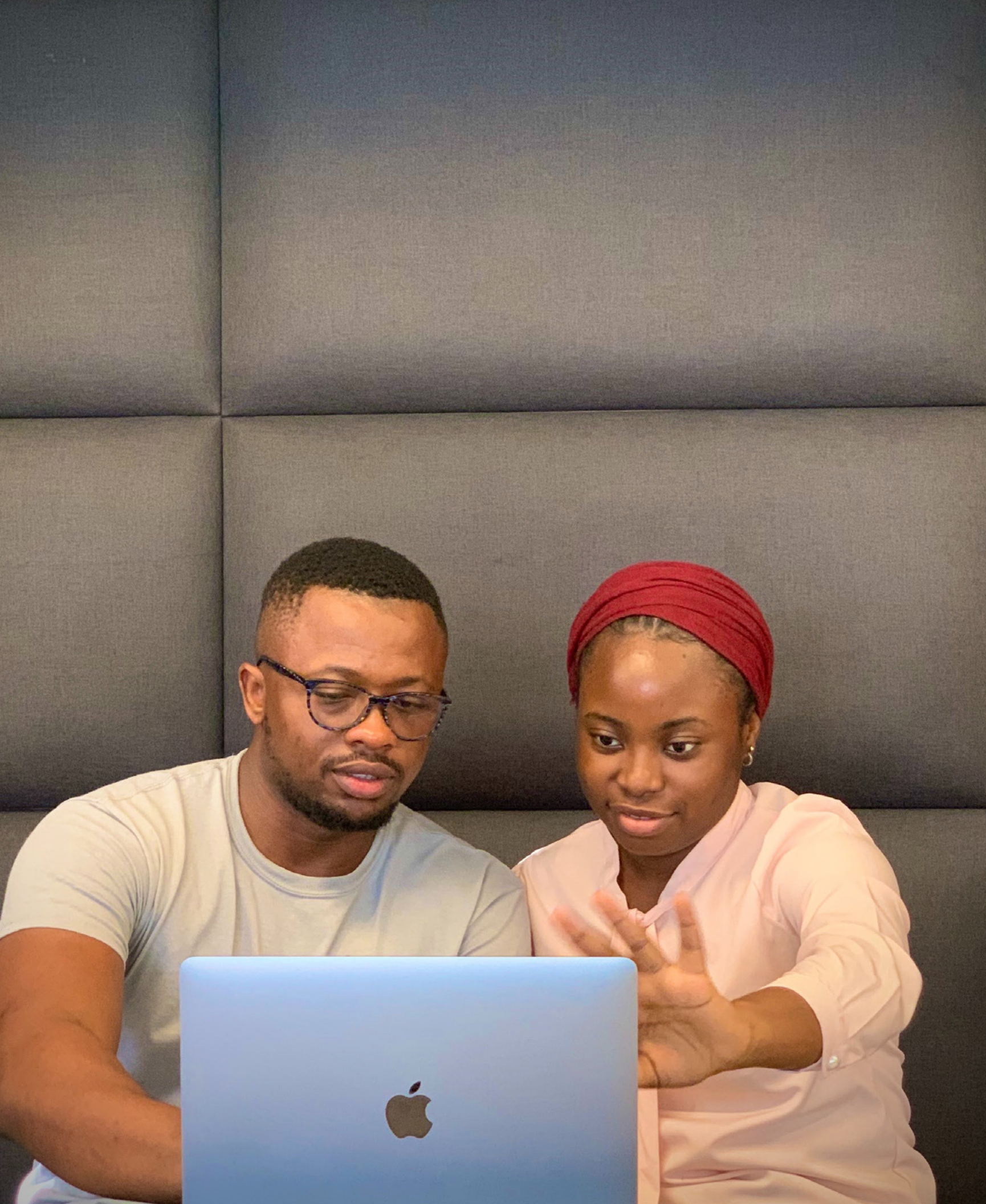
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Supporting Gender Equality Outcomes in Development Research

Reflections on a Multi-year Collaboration between Gender at Work, IDRC and its Partners

IDRC · CRDI
Canada

Gender at work