

---

## 10 top tips for developing gender sensitive/transformational project proposals

Gender sensitive and transformational project proposals require a strong gender analysis from the start and consistent attention to gender throughout. This document can be used to help ensure your projects will meet the gender equality grade, and thus have the most impact on girls' rights. The list is not exhaustive but it does draw out some key project components which will have the most lasting benefits. More details on each of the tips overleaf.

1. **Target groups(s)** – Are the beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age?

---

---

---

---

2. **Situation analysis** – Does the problem description include disaggregated data and analysis by sex and age?

---

---

---

---

3. **Identify risks** – Have risks been identified that will challenge gender equality or impede project plans? If so how will they be mitigated and monitored?

---

---

---

---

4. **Participation** – In what ways are girls participating in the project?

---

---

---

---

5. **M&E** – Are there gender sensitive indicators throughout?

---

---

---

---

6. **Local partners** – Are there any women’s rights local partners on board? What is their role?

---

---

---

---

7. **Gender sensitisation work** – How will gender norms be explored and challenged at the community level?

---

---

---

---

8. **Advocacy work** – What advocacy work will be done to strengthen legislation or implement policies on gender equality?

---

---

---

---

9. **Gender focal points/gender advisors** - How have the gender staff in the COs been involved in the proposal/project design?

---

---

---

---

10. **Intervention logic** - Overall how does the proposal grade against the gender criteria?

---

---

---

---

## 10 top tips for developing gender sensitive/transformational project proposals

1. **Target groups(s)** - who specifically will the intervention benefit (directly and indirectly)? Language like children, youth, people, OVCs etc doesn't provide clarity on who we're actually talking about. Refer specifically to girls, boys, young women, young men etc. when describing participants, parents, decision-makers, service providers, authorities etc.
2. **Situation analysis** – Have you got a clear picture of the specific problems facing girls and young women and some of the underlying causes? COs should use participatory techniques to consult with different groups: girls, boys, women and men to map the issues they face and get an understanding of how unequal power relations shape the issues for different groups. Disaggregate data and analysis by sex, age, socio-economic status and ethnic groups as far as possible.
3. **Identify risks** in consultation with girls/boys women/men in the community including environmental (eg floods), social (eg resistance from communities to gender equality), economic (eg rise in food prices), and political (eg upcoming elections); plan how they will **mitigate these**; and develop mechanisms to **monitor** risks on an on-going basis.
4. **Participation** - ensure that girls and women have been consulted and they will be involved in the project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Bear in mind their disproportionate time burdens and subordinate positions. Does the project support girls to develop as young citizens and participate in decision-making? Do they need particular support (ie. assertiveness and communication training) for involvement in activities? Do you need to do work with parents/teachers/religious & community leaders to enable them to take part? Are the most vulnerable girls also being included: girls with disability, HIV, from ethnic minority groups, girls out of school?
5. **M&E** needs to be invested in from the start. Gender sensitive indicators that are both quantitative and qualitative must be developed (eg. number of girls completing primary education and community members more likely to value girls' education). Also girls' own *perceptions* of change in attitudes, relationships and behaviours regarding gender equality should be measured through the baseline and final evaluations.
6. Link up with strategic **local partners**. Find out who else is working on this issue locally that could enhance the project. If work on gender is new to the CO enlist the support of specialist (such as women's rights organisations or gender consultants). Develop clear partnership agreements with them – they can support your analysis, implementation (including any training and advocacy) and at the same time build the capacity of Plan PU and CO staff. Ensure that any other partners are committed to promote girls' human rights and gender equality.
7. **Gender sensitisation work** must be part of any project. This involves awareness raising activities with community members, service providers, decision-makers, especially with power brokers (e.g. traditional rulers, religious leaders etc, particularly targeting men and boys) to support an enabling environment for women and girls to realise their rights. It is vital that all community members (including girls) have the opportunity to discuss how girls are viewed and valued. This work should go beyond light touch posters etc and support the role of girls in awareness raising through child-led activities (eg. theatre, radio, video). This work is challenging and continuous but is vital to changing attitudes and behaviours towards girls and women.
8. **Advocacy work** should strengthen governments to enable girls to realise their rights. There may be a need to lobby for changes to legislation, better implementation of existing policies and

provision of girl friendly services etc. The project should support girls to conduct advocacy, have a voice and to participate in decision making. Is there currently a coalition working on girls' rights you could join or if not start one? Does the project align with the aims of other related CO advocacy work (Eg. LWF campaign, Safer School Campaign)?

9. Ensure Plan's **gender focal points/gender advisors** in the COs are involved in the design and implementation of the project. It's also important to ensure the project aligns with the CO's other programming. Advisors from other thematic areas should be involved in the project design and implementation where appropriate.
10. Overall, does the **intervention logic** challenge and/or address the problems facing girls and young women? How does it grade on the gender criteria (ie. Gender blind, neutral, sensitive, or transformative)?

## Criteria for grading proposals on gender equality

Plan recognises that girls and women face disproportionate obstacles to realising their human rights. As a result of this, Plan's current organisational strategy aims to prioritise the needs and concerns of particularly adolescent girls in all stages of project cycle management to ensure that these are responded to in project interventions. Please note, however, that a robust gender analysis should be carried out as part of project planning which will also identify the needs and concerns of men and boys. This way the differential needs and concerns of girls, women, boys and men can be clearly identified and responded to and work can be designed to make more equitable power relations between the sexes.

Please use the criteria below as a guide to determining the extent to which project proposals integrate girls' rights and gender equality. Some are easier to distinguish, ie those that may be gender blind but the difference between 2 and 3 may be more nuanced. However the key difference is if the project seeks to positively change the status quo of women and girls' subordination in society.

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	<b>Gender Unaware/Blind</b> – The issue of gender (girls' or women's rights, gender equality, power relations between the sexes) is not mentioned. The document will refer to generic terms such as children, adolescents, youth, families etc. The project fails to identify differences between women & girls and men & boys with regard to their activities, access and control of resources and participation in decision making.
1	<b>Gender Neutral</b> – Gender is mentioned as an issue and gender differential needs of women & girls and men & boys are acknowledged in the context but not in the response and thus not followed through in the rest of the document/proposal etc
2	<b>Gender Aware/Sensitive</b> – Gender issues are addressed and specific solutions to address the needs and concerns of women and girls are included in the project activities and outcomes. The response is more likely to focus on women and girls' practical needs – eg separate latrines, bursaries, Gender is apparent in the language, sex disaggregated data is used.
3	<b>Gender Transformative</b> - gender role stereotypes are challenged and the project seeks to transform unequal power relations between men and women through changes in roles, status and through the redistribution of resources. Gender is built into the response and the causes of inequality are addressed head on.

For further guidance on the difference between practical and strategic needs:

Girls' practical needs	Girls' strategic needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term, immediate, practical assistance for girls and women according to perceived need to assist their survival</li> <li>• Responses tend to include ensuring adequate living conditions eg access to health care, food security but also access to income opportunities</li> <li>• Reduces their work burdens – gives them more time to perform their triple roles (reproductive, productive, community)</li> <li>• Reinforces their existing socially accepted roles – doesn't challenge their subordinate position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs identified by women and girls that require strategies to challenge male dominance and privilege</li> <li>• Long term responses to challenge existing gender roles and achieve gender equality. Often perceived as more feminist in nature as they seek to transform women's status and role in society in relation to men and are far more likely to be resisted than practical needs</li> <li>• Responses tend to relate to gender division of labour, ownership and control of resources such as land and property, tackling domestic and sexual violence.</li> <li>• Ensuring girls and women become active agents of change in the development process</li> </ul>

Based on Moser (1989)

Please note however, that this is just a guide as it is only girls *themselves* that can determine their practical and strategic needs as this will differ greatly from one context to another.

For some background reading on how girls and young women are disadvantaged by gender discrimination which affects how they can realise their human rights, please see [Plan UK's Gender Resource paper](#) (2010).

If you need more help please ask the [Gender Champions](#) in your teams or The Gender Team (Kanwal Ahluwalia - Gender Advisor and Olga De Biaggio - Gender Equality Officer) in the Programme Department.

See here for [Plan IH's Gender Equality Programme Criteria](#) developed in 2012 after the UKNO criteria but which is very similar. This is taken from IH's Planting Equality gender training manual. Please ask the Gender Team for more information on gender resources.

Last up-dated March 2014