TOOLKIT FOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

USAID GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLANS

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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ANNEXES

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives Systems
A/COR	Agreement/Contract Officer's Representative
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategies
CLA	Collaborating, Learning and Adapting
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
GAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GID	Gender and Inclusive Development
GIDAP	Gender and Inclusive Development Action Plan
IDA	Inclusive Development Analysis
IP	Implementing Partner
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
POC	Point of Contact
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics
SOW	Scope of Work
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEEE	Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment

INTRODUCTION

The USAID 2023 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy (USAID Gender Equality Policy) and Automated Directives Systems (ADS) 205 recommend that USAID implementing partners (IPs) be required to submit a gender equality action plan (GAP), outlining how gender equality will be integrated into the work plan and monitoring plan based on the results of a gender analysis. This toolkit provides practical strategies and tips to help IPs fulfill this requirement.[1]

The toolkit is designed for IP staff, particularly gender advisors and focal points, staff members, and project leadership responsible for planning, managing, and/or conducting a gender analysis process and developing a GAP. It offers advice for IPs with varying degrees of gender expertise, especially those with limited experience. The toolkit outlines five steps for planning and managing a gender analysis process, including the development of a GAP based on relevant findings and feasible recommendations.

GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLANS

The USAID Gender Equality Policy affirms that gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are fundamental for the realization of human rights and effective, sustainable development. According to the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018, gender analysis must shape all USAID projects – including their design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This section explains the role of gender analysis in developing a GAP. (Refer to ADS 205's definitions section for terms used within this toolkit.)

WHAT IS A GENDER ANALYSIS? According to ADS 205, a gender analysis is a socioeconomic analysis to identify, understand, and explain gender gaps between individuals. When the analysis also examines broader inclusion gaps, it is sometimes called a gender and inclusive development (GID) or gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) analysis. A gender analysis should be conducted during project start-up and *updated annually* to account for the changes that may occur during the project.

Conducting a gender analysis is a crucial step to integrating gender across the program cycle. It should produce actionable findings and recommendations to directly inform work planning and implementation. A lengthy report is not always necessary; instead, IPs should select a format that facilitates easy use and practical application for developing the GAP. Annex 1: Post-Award Gender Analysis Template is a recommended simplified format; Annex 2: Gender Analysis Formatted as a Report is available for formal reports. The gender analysis may be presented with the GAP, either as an annex or as a separate document.

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[1] Because IPs are the primary audience of this toolkit, the terms "project" and "activities" are used in the way that IP staff typically use them to refer to their work implementing a USAID-funded "project": "activities" are laid out in a "project's" work plan. This differs from USAID's Program Cycle terminology, which uses the term "Activity" to refer to what IPs call "projects."

WHAT IS A GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GAP)? A GAP is based on the results of a gender analysis and outlines how a project will integrate attention to gender equality — including, as relevant, the experience of marginalization — into the work plan and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan. A GAP should detail the specific actions the project will implement in order to fulfill gender analysis recommendations and to reduce gender gaps, address the root causes of gender inequality, and mitigate identified gender-specific risks. A GAP may be a standalone document or may be integrated into the project's work and MEL plan. When integrated into other documents, GAP-specific actions should be clearly marked — for instance, as a separate section or through highlighting or color-coding. Refer to Annex 3: USAID Post-Award GAP Guidance and Template for IPs and Step 5 for further guidance.

WHAT SHOULD A GENDER ANALYSIS INCLUDE? A gender analysis should examine how the project will address the context, opportunities, and risks related to advancing gender equality, for each project objective. These three analysis areas, as outlined in Box 1, identify how gender inequalities could inhibit the achievement of project objectives. They are designed to ensure that project implementation, at minimum, does not exacerbate gender inequalities and related risks.

BOX 1: KEY QUESTIONS OF A GENDER ANALYSIS

CONTEXT	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
What are the **gender gaps and root causes of gender inequalities,** including across identified marginalized groups, that will affect achievement of the project objectives during implementation, specific to the target geographic locations? How will this context influence the project outcomes for women and girls, men and boys, and gender-diverse individuals?	What specific **integration strategies** will the project adopt **to advance gender equality** in response to this context? How will the project track and report on reducing gender gaps and addressing root causes of gender inequality, including across identified marginalized groups?	Are there potential **gender-specific risks or unintended consequences** that the project activities may pose to certain groups? How can the project mitigate these risks?

BOX 2: KEY DEFINITIONS

Gender gaps are disparities between women and girls, men and boys, and gender-diverse individuals, across identified marginalized groups, regarding who can access, control, and benefit from economic, social, political, legal, educational, health, and cultural resources, as well as wealth, opportunities, and services. Gender gaps often manifest across the gender analysis domains defined in ADS 205.

Root causes of gender inequality are the norms, behaviors, relations, structures, and systems that sustain and perpetuate gender inequality across identified marginalized groups. To address root causes, activities must transform harmful gender roles, norms, power dynamics, and inequalities; strengthen norms, laws, policies, and other systems that support gender equality; and manage the risks associated with shifting power dynamics.

Gender-specific risks are potential negative consequences that may inadvertently exacerbate, deepen, or further entrench gender gaps and inequalities across identified marginalized groups, including gender-based violence and other human rights violations. Gender analysis should identify an activity's potential adverse impacts on gender and power dynamics, recommending potential strategies for prevention and mitigation.

ADS 205 provides the five **gender analysis domains** shown in Box 3. In addition, inclusive development analyses recommend a sixth domain — personal safety and security. Although domains are useful for analyzing gender gaps and root causes of gender inequality, projects should organize their analysis by their result framework's objectives or intermediate results, to facilitate the applicability and use of findings and recommendations. Review Annex 5: Gender Analysis Domains and Customized Research Questions on applying gender analysis domains and using sector-specific resources to customize gender analysis questions specific to a project.

> BOX 4: What are the differences and similarities between **gender analyses** and **inclusive development analyses**? Turn to Annex 4 for a comparison of these two analyses. Box 8 reviews what information should be included when the analyses are combined as a **GID analysis**.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A GENDER ANALYSIS?

- **Desk review findings** should identify existing secondary literature that provides qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the project's results framework, including person-level quantitative data that is sex-disaggregated and further disaggregated by intersectional characteristics (when available).[2] If available, build upon the gender analysis conducted by USAID during the solicitation stage by adding information specific to the project activities and target communities.
- **Primary data** — when feasible, based on context and available resources — should fill information gaps identified during the desk review, providing specific insights relevant to the project's context and objectives.
- **Intersectional analysis of all data** is critical to reflect how each person has multiple characteristics that shape their experiences of gender inequality and marginalization. These include age, marital status, income, race, ethnicity, disability, geographic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Analyze barriers and opportunities for engaging specific groups to ensure that your project effectively addresses their needs.

BOX 3: GENDER ANALYSIS DOMAINS

- Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices
- Cultural norms and beliefs
- Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use
- Access to and control over assets and resources
- Patterns of power and decision-making
- Personal safety and security (optional)

Source: USAID ADS 205 and USAID ADS 201 Guide to Inclusive Development Analysis

[2] As USAID's LGBTQI+ Inclusive Development Policy recognizes, it remains challenging to find disaggregated data based SOGIESC and other factors, on an intersectional basis. USAID also recognizes the underlying ethical and security- and safety-related considerations in collecting and storing demographic data related to SOGIESC. However, where it is safe and feasible to do so, IPs should consider responsibly collecting person-level data disaggregated by gender identity and (where possible) by additional SOGIESC dimensions.

I PLAN THE GENDER ANALYSIS

This section outlines five key actions for project leadership and gender focal points in planning a gender analysis to inform a GAP. Despite the urgency of many tasks during project start-up, taking time to convene project leadership and engage USAID as needed is crucial for setting common expectations and scoping the analysis.

Form a Steering Committee — Determine Resources and Current Context — Develop Gender Analysis Questions — Identify Relevant Intersectional Identities — Develop the Scope of Work (SOW)

1. FORM A STEERING COMMITTEE

A project's gender analysis is often managed by one person, usually the gender advisor or focal point. However, developing a gender analysis and action plan should be a collaborative effort rather than the responsibility of a single staff member or consultant. The best practice is for the project's gender advisor or focal point to convene a steering committee — including management, MEL, and other technical team members — to provide input, feedback, and support during the process. This diverse committee not only brings varied technical expertise but also fosters buy-in across the project team, underscoring the importance of gender analysis and gender integration. The committee should provide input at key steps and should align the gender analysis process, including GAP development, with other project priorities and deliverables, such as work planning and MEL data collection. Annex 6: Providing Feedback Throughout the Gender Analysis and GAP Deevlopment Process outlines the input the committee should provide at each step. The project should also engage the Agreement/Contract Officer's Representative (A/COR) and the Mission's gender advisor/point of contact (POC) in planning. Annex 7: Discussion Guide for Effective Collaboration between A/CORs and IPs during the Gender Analysis and GAP Development Process includes key questions for A/CORs and IPs to review together in order to establish a shared expectations for the gender analysis.

BOX 5: SELECTING A GENDER ADVISOR/FOCAL POINT

Given the pivotal role a project's gender advisor or focal point plays in developing the gender analysis, senior management should prioritize recruiting a gender advisor or identifying a gender focal point as soon as possible after project inception.

BOX 6: IDEAL TIMING FOR THE GENDER ANALYSIS PROCESS

The gender analysis should ideally be completed during project inception, within 90 days of initial receipt of the USAID award. This timing ensures that the gender analysis and the GAP will inform the development of key project documents, notably the Annual Work Plan and MEL Plan. **Since the context, opportunities, and risks related to gender inequalities can change over time, it's important to revisit the gender analysis and GAP each year**. Consider integrating ongoing gender analysis during any regular project monitoring, in planning new project components, during mid-term reviews, and/or when exploring a project expansion. Any new findings or changes should be reflected across key project documents.

2. DETERMINE RESOURCES AND CURRENT CONTEXT

The steering committee should assess available and needed resources, as well as the current context, to inform the scope and methodology of the gender analysis, as depicted in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCOPING A GENDER ANALYSIS

Planning Considerations	→	Scope and Methodology
1. Staff availability and expertise 2. Timing and resources 3. Context 4. Extent of available data		1. Method for conducting the gender analysis, through in-house resources, a consultant, or a hybrid model 2. Extent of primary data collection

During a Kick-Off Planning Session or in informal discussions among steering committee members, assess the following factors that will shape the scope of the gender analysis:

- **STAFF AVAILABILITY AND EXPERTISE.** Assess staff's availability and ability to complete gender analysis steps, including conducting a literature review, developing data collection tools, applying qualitative research methods, and analyzing findings. If your team has a focal point with gender expertise and available time, consider conducting the analysis in-house. Otherwise, consider utilizing an external consultant to work closely with your gender focal point. Refer to Annex 8: Consultant Selection Considerations and Annex 9: Consultant Terms of Reference for guidance for recruiting a consultant. When identifying consultants, prioritize local expertise and assembling a gender-balanced team that represents the identities of the communities where your project works.
- **TIMING AND RESOURCES.** The gender analysis process can take approximately three to eight weeks, depending on the scope and methodology. Account for other scheduled activities when determining timing of the analysis. Projects should ideally have a gender analysis budget; otherwise, identify alternative budget sources (e.g., MEL), in concert with your project leadership and A/COR.
- **CONTEXT.** Consider how your project's geographic, safety, and security context may impact your gender analysis. Could unexpected responsibilities and priorities emerge to limit staff availability? Will insecurity (e.g., travel restrictions) or geographic obstacles (e.g., absence of roads in remote areas) limit in-person data collection?
- **EXTENT OF AVAILABLE DATA.** Determine the availability of secondary data related to your project's geographic focus and objectives, to avoid duplicating existing data and to ensure that any primary data collection is targeted to fill specific information gaps. Substantial secondary data can reduce or even eliminate the need for primary data collection. When assessing available secondary data, start by reviewing existing gender analyses relevant to your project. These may include: gender analyses conducted by your organization during the proposal; a pre-award analysis conducted by USAID; or other studies.[3]

[3] The USAID Gender Equality Policy requires that Missions/Operating Units complete a pre-award gender analysis before releasing solicitations. Ask your A/COR whether a pre-award gender analysis is available for review.

3. DEVELOP GENDER ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Tailoring the gender analysis questions to your project's objectives and planned activities will lead to actionable recommendations that can be integrated into your GAP. Gender analysis questions should uncover (1) the **context** — gender gaps and root causes of gender equality related to your planned activities — as well as (2) **opportunities** to reduce these gender gaps within the project's activities. The analysis should also identify (3) potential **gender-specific risks** and mitigation strategies to address any unintended consequences that project activities may pose to certain groups. When developing gender analysis questions, consult Annex 5, which includes resources with sector-specific illustrative gender analysis questions and examples for tailoring these questions for projects.

BOX 7: USING A KICK-OFF GENDER ANALYSIS PLANNING

A Kick-Off Gender Analysis Planning Session is recommended to bring together your steering committee with other relevant stakeholders (e.g., your A/COR, Mission gender advisor/POC, sub-recipients, and other partners) to define the scope and methodology of your gender analysis. This session is an opportunity to reflect on the extent of existing secondary data, to determine what marginalized groups and/or intersectional identities to prioritize, to decide whether primary data will be collected, and to identify key gender analysis questions. If the session will involve external stakeholders, it is important to determine in advance how the gender analysis will be conducted, based on the availability of funds, staff, and expertise. Annex 10: Tips for a Gender Analysis Kick-Off Planning Session includes detailed guidance.

4. IDENTIFY RELEVANT INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

USAID projects should strive to be inclusive and equitable for those individuals and groups who have been denied access to and control over services and resources on the basis of their identity, or who are marginalized, underrepresented, and/or made vulnerable by systemic and structural inequities and discrimination. The steering committee should identify relevant characteristics that shape a person's experience of gender inequality in relation to the project, such as age, marital status, income, ethnicity, race, disability status, geographic location, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Specifying particular intersectional identities during the planning process helps guide the analysis to yield findings and recommendations specific to these groups. Consult Annex 15: Resources for references on applying an intersectional lens.

BOX 8: What if you are conducting a gender equality and inclusion (GID) analysis?

For a GID analysis, it is recommended to **prioritize up to three marginalized groups**. Select groups that face systemic disadvantages and unique challenges related to the project's goals. Maintain an intersectional lens to understand how varying identities and inequalities within these groups intersect and have shaped members' unique experience of power, privilege, and/or exclusion and inclusion. Always consult with these groups to shape the findings and recommendations. Referring to key disaggregated data can help in brainstorming the identification of marginalized groups; however, gaps in data may indicate the invisibility or marginalization of certain groups.

BOX 9: THE IMPORTANCE OF USING AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS IN GENDER ANALYSIS

An intersectional lens, or intersectionality, recognizes that all people have multiple social identities that shape their lived experiences, including but not limited to SOGIESC, class, race, age, disability, and nationality. In combination with systems of inequality, these identities often shape one's status, privileges, and protections from human rights violations. Intersectionality examines the impact of complex forms of discrimination based on intersecting identities. However, these identities are not static and can evolve over time, with changing political, social, and cultural contexts, necessitating updates to the gender analysis as identities and contexts change.

Intersectionality serves as an essential analytical lens that considers and addresses how a person's overlapping and/or intersecting identities contribute to unique experiences of oppression, privilege, and access (including access to development programming). Applying an intersectional lens during the gender analysis process improves the analysis by identifying — and strategically addressing, with relevant recommendations — the ways in which gender and other inequalities can limit certain people's access to, participation in, and potential benefit from your project.

Source: ADS 205; USAID GEWE Policy; USAID Inclusive Development Additional Help for ADS 201

5. DEVELOP THE SCOPE OF WORK (SOW)

After making decisions on the scope and methodology, informed by available resource and context considerations, you will have the necessary information to develop the gender analysis SOW. Whether the analysis is conducted by staff or by a consultant, a SOW is important for defining the purpose, the gender analysis questions, and steps. The SOW should be treated as a living document that may need revisions during the process, such as adjusting the level of primary data collection based on findings from the desk review. Annex 11: Gender Analysis Scope of Work Template is a practical, editable tool. The Annex is a suggested template only; the SOW can be less formal, as long as it organizes all relevant information in one place to guide the analysis process. For example, a Kick-off Gender Analysis Planning Session (Box 7) is recommended but optional for deciding on SOW sections (Annex 10). Alternatives are also effective, such as having the steering committee draft sections that will be validated with the broader technical and/or partner team.

BOX 10: OPTIONS WHEN RESOURCE ARE LIMITED

Below are low-cost options for accessing gender expertise, identifying secondary data, and/or collecting primary data. These options are detailed in Annex 7.

- Leverage in-house and local expertise
- Harness insights from staff and partners
- Update existing gender analyses
- Integrate gender analysis questions into MEL activities

2 CONDUCT A DESK REVIEW OF SECONDARY DATA

Data collection for a gender analysis involves two phases: (1) a desk review; and (2) primary data collection, depending on the sufficiency of secondary data. A desk review assesses the existing secondary data to inform if and what additional primary data is needed, and also to answer the key gender analysis questions, as defined in Step 1.

DESK REVIEW ACTIONS

1. COLLECT AND REVIEW SECONDARY DATA. Focus your data review search to find data relevant to your project-specific gender analysis questions. If an existing pre-award gender analysis was conducted by your organization or USAID, narrow your search further to target secondary data that can inform necessary updates (Box 11). Diverse sources of information should be used; Annex 12: Desk Review Sources summarizes data types and examples of sources. Reaching out to local organizations, experts, and government entities can be valuable for accessing literature that may not be available online.

2. ORGANIZE FINDINGS FROM DESK REVIEW TO IDENTIFY DATA GAPS. As the desk review progresses, gaps in existing data may become apparent. Using a matrix can be helpful to organize data and highlight the key findings and gaps in the literature. Refer to Annex 13: Gender Analysis Matrix Template for an example structure. While the ADS 205 gender analysis domains provide a useful lens for analyzing findings, the **findings and recommendations should be organized by your project's objectives.**

BOX 11: HOW TO UPDATE AN EXISTING GENDER ANALYSIS

To update an existing gender analysis, such as a pre-award analysis developed by USAID or an analysis completed as part of your organization's project proposal, complete these steps:

1. Compare findings and recommendations from the existing gender analysis with your project's objectives and planned activities, to determine relevance and missing information. Check if any of the data is out of date or may require refreshing, based on a rapid desk review and consultations with colleagues.
2. Document the updated information and note what data remains unchanged.
3. Use this updated version as your post-award gender analysis.

3. DETERMINE WHETHER PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION IS NEEDED. After completing the desk review, discuss the findings with the steering committee. As a group, examine whether the desk review findings adequately address the proposed gender analysis questions, and whether any new questions emerged. Collectively evaluate the need for primary data collection, balancing the available time and resources identified during the gender analysis planning stage with the additional information needed to inform the work plan and MEL plan. If the desk review is sufficient and/or if primary data collection is determined to not be feasible (in coordination with the USAID A/COR), skip to Step 4.

3 COLLECT PRIMARY DATA (AS NECESSARY)

MODELS FOR PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

The extent of primary data collection will be driven by the desk review and any identified data gaps, considering the available time and resources assessed during the planning stage. Figure 2 provides two models for primary data collection — limited and standard — based on different contexts and resource levels, followed by tips for each model. Refer to Annex 14: Primary Data Collection and Research Ethics.

GRAPHIC 2: PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION MODELS

LIMITED PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

CONTEXT AND RESOURCES	APPROACH
• Available secondary data sufficiently identifies how the context, opportunities, and risks related to gender inequalities will affect the project's objectives and implementation. For a GID analysis, adequate data also identifies inclusion barriers for up to three prioritized marginalized groups. • Crisis or unstable settings, safety concerns, and/or timing constraints limit primary data collection possibilities. • Budget constraints, discussed with your A/COR, prohibit extensive primary data collection.	• Consult with the project team and partners for insights based on their experiences and observations related to the gender analysis questions. At minimum, hold discussions with partners during a Kick-Off Gender Analysis Planning Session. Consider conducting targeted key informant interviews virtually. • Identify how gender analysis questions can be incorporated into the project's baseline studies, monitoring tools, learning products, and evaluations.

STANDARD PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

CONTEXT AND RESOURCES	APPROACH
• Available secondary data insufficiently identifies how the context, opportunities, and risks related to gender inequalities will affect the project's objectives and implementation. • Current data lacks the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders and participants, especially from the prioritized marginalized groups. Additional primary data and consultations would enhance understanding of how the project may affect and engage with persons of different intersectional identities and/or marginalized groups. • A targeted analysis would improve planning for project components and activities. • Budget allows for primary data collection.	• Conduct interviews, focus groups, and/or other qualitative methods with diverse project stakeholders. To support gender integration within MEL, collect quantitative data to establish baselines for gender gaps. • For a GID analysis, gather data on inclusion barriers for up to three prioritized marginalized groups. • If potential participants are not directly engaged, collect data from organizations representing (or with strong ties to) participants, including representatives of the prioritized marginalized groups.

TIPS FOR PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

1. PRIORITIZE QUALITATIVE METHODS. Gender analysis questions are often better answered through qualitative methods (e.g., interviews and focus groups) than through quantitative methods like surveys. Qualitative methodologies allow researchers to hear directly from people who will be involved in and impacted by the project, to ask questions that require elaboration and probing, and to obtain data that explains the bigger picture behind the statistics.[4]

2. ABIDE BY KEY PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL RESEARCH AT ALL TIMES. Ensure that anyone conducting primary data is trained in and adheres to the following ethical research standards:

- [x] **INFORMED CONSENT**

Obtain free, prior, and informed consent from all participants in a voluntary and meaningful manner. Participants must fully understand how their responses will be used and that their choice of whether to participate will not result in either benefits or repercussions. Annex 14 includes an example of an interview script that obtains informed consent.

- [x] **CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

Respect anonymity and participants' needs for confidentiality. Always safeguard participants' personally identifiable information.

- [x] **RESPECT**

Treat participants with dignity, ensuring they are participating voluntarily and without coercion. Be culturally sensitive at all times.

- [x] **DO NO HARM**

Always follow the "Do No Harm" principle, maximizing benefits to research participants and minimizing any possible harms during research.

Annex 14 includes detailed information on research ethics, sampling, and qualitative data collection methods and tips. Additional resources about primary data collection are also available in Annex 15.

[4] Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. n.d. "Analyze: identify and use gender data and engage with stakeholders." *Empowering Change Tool*. (Link); Michelle Adato. 2010. "Using qualitative methods for gender analysis." Presentation Slides for International Food Policy Research Institute. (Link)

4 DRAFT AND FORMAT THE GENDER ANALYSIS

DRAFTING FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Your final gender analysis should present clear and specific findings and a limited number of targeted recommendations, making it easy for the project team to understand the key gender gaps and opportunities, across identified marginalized groups, that your project should address. Remember to refer to Annex 13 for an easy-to-use tool for documenting and organizing findings, gender-specific risks, and recommendations, including proposed risk mitigation measures. For additional guidance on identifying and mitigating gender-specific risks, refer to Annex 16: Analyzing and Mitigating Gender-Specific Risks.

Targeted recommendations are one of the most important outcomes of the gender analysis process, as these ultimately support the development of the GAP. Box 12 offers prompts for developing recommendations to inform the project's GAP, work plan, and MEL plan (within the scope of specific award requirements and obligations).

BOX 12. PROMPTS FOR DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS

- What underlying **gender gaps** are critical to address, across identified marginalized groups, so that the project achieves its intended objectives and results? How can these gaps be addressed to advance both project objectives and gender equality?
- What are underlying gender gaps that inhibit **participation of identified marginalized groups**? How can the safe and equitable participation and benefit of diverse community members be ensured?
- What opportunities can be leveraged within the project's scope to address **root causes of gender inequality** across identified marginalized groups, maximizing sustained achievement of project objectives?
- What prevention and mitigation measures are necessary within the project components to address **gender-specific risks** that may emerge during implementation?
- Which **partners** are critical for advancing this work? Which local organizations should be engaged — particularly those led by women, girls, gender-diverse individuals, or identified marginalized groups and those dedicated to gender-equality programming?

VALIDATING FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The gender analysis team should validate draft findings and recommendations with stakeholders most directly impacted by the project, such as staff, participants, sub-recipients, and partners. Ensure strong participation of your project staff in both the validation and potential revision of recommendations, as they will be responsible for implementing the actions. Take into account the level of representation of the various groups to ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected within the analysis. Due to power dynamics as well as geographic, language, and/or other barriers, holding multiple validation sessions may be necessary to ensure the meaningful participation from diverse stakeholder groups. Refer to Annex 17: Validation Workshops for tips on organizing these sessions.

FORMATTING GENDER ANALYSIS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Annex 1 provides a simplified template for presenting gender analysis findings and recommendations to inform the GAP (as explained in Step 5). Annex 2 is a template for a formal report, which may be helpful for presenting a more rigorous gender analysis to be shared publicly. Reports should be no more than 15 pages, excluding annexes and the GAP. When possible, gender analysis findings should be shared with partners and participants, such as through a two-page summary in local languages.

FIGURE 3: GENDER ANALYSIS TEMPLATES

SUGGESTED SIMPLIFED TEMPLATE (ANNEX 1)

1. [OBJECTIVE OR RESULT 1]

A. FINDINGS	B. RECOMMENDATIONS
Summary of finding #1	• Recommendation to respond to finding • Recommendation to respond to finding
Summary of finding #2	• Recommendation to respond to finding • Recommendation to respond to finding

C. IMPLICATIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

- GAP implication
- GAP implication

SUGGESTED FORMAL REPORT TEMPLATE (ANNEX 2)

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
	Executive Summary (1 page)
	Introduction (including Background and Context) (up to 2 pages)
	Findings and Recommendation by Objective (up to 12 pages)
	Annexes (as applicable) • Gender analysis scope of work • Methodology • References used for secondary data review • Primary data collection tools • List of consulted stakeholders (redacted as needed for confidentiality)

5 DEVELOP AND UPDATE THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

DEVELOPING THE GAP

After finalizing the gender analysis findings and recommendations, it is time to develop the project's GAP. This plan is the project's gender integration strategy for addressing gender gaps and mitigating gender-specific risks. The GAP should also outline how your project will integrate attention to intersectional identities. For plans that respond to a GID analysis, it should outline how your project will further address inclusion constraints across the prioritized marginalized groups.

Whether the gender analysis process was conducted in-house or by an external consultant, the GAP should be collaboratively developed by the project staff, gender focal point, steering committee, and management. Partners, such as subgrantees or subcontractors, can also be engaged in developing the GAP sections of the plan related to their work. Consult Annex 3 for detailed guidance on developing your GAP. The annex includes a downloadable GAP template with a minimum framework and optional additional elements, as illustrated in Figure 4 on the next page. Actions should be organized by Objective and Intermediate Result, as applicable, and the template may be adapted to best suit the results framework of the project.

Once the GAP is finalized, project staff should integrate its contents into the project's work and MEL plan, clearly highlighting the GAP content; alternatively, develop a system for consulting the GAP side by side with the project's work and MEL plans.

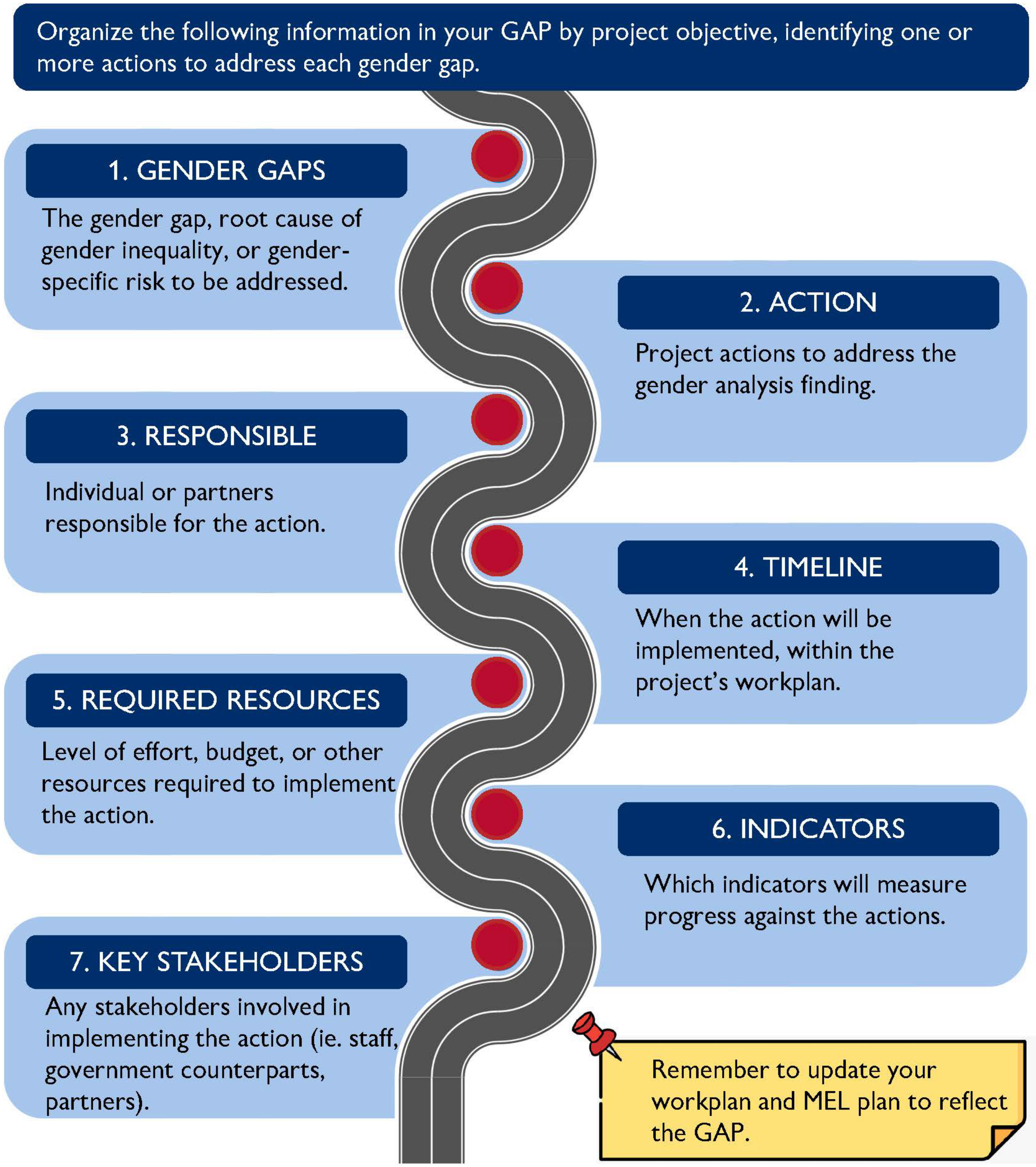
UPDATING THE GAP

The gender analysis and GAP should be updated annually, or whenever significant changes occur in the project's context. Here are recommended steps to ensure these files remain current and relevant:

- **ANNUAL REVIEW.** Conduct a rapid review of the gender analysis when developing the project's annual work plan. This review should identify trends, changes, or advances that might affect gender gaps, the root causes of gender inequalities, opportunities, and risks. Update the GAP to reflect any changes to the gender analysis, and ensure these revisions are incorporated into the project's work and MEL plans.

- **PERIODIC UPDATES TO ANALYSIS.** Undertake rapid reviews of the gender analysis as relevant and when there are significant changes in the project's context, partners, or external factors (such as conflict, health, economic or social crises, or extreme weather events). When Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) identify new learnings, they can also be incorporated into the gender analysis. Adjust the GAP accordingly to reflect these updates and insights.

FIGURE 4: MINIMUM ELEMENTS OF A GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN



Click to download and edit the GAP template for your project. Template guidance is included in Annex 3.