

# 9 gender questions

This document is designed to help you and your team think about gender in your work. It's not exhaustive, but will hopefully help guide you as a first step.

## 1. Do we know who we're talking about?

Language like children, youth, people, and communities doesn't provide clarity on who we're actually talking about. We need to refer specifically to girls, boys, young women, young men etc as much as possible.

## 2. Do we know how girls and boys are affected (differently) by poverty?

Have you got a clear picture of the specific problems facing girls and young women and some of the underlying causes? Girls, women, boys and men all experience poverty and discrimination differently in different contexts.

## 3. Do we get the bigger picture?

Is the social, economic, political context clear? We need to go beyond the individuals and understand the situation better. What laws and policies exist which affect girls and women and what customary practices and norms? Is there some sort of analysis not just on the symptoms of differences (like fewer girls attend school) but about the root causes taking place within communities, schools, markets etc (like parents not valuing girls' education because of girls' roles as wives/mothers and not breadwinners)

## 4. Does it reflect the actual experiences of girls and women?

Can you tell if girls have been listened to or does it sound like we're speaking for them? Is their situation clear in the way that they would have expressed it?

## 5. How are girls depicted?

Are we portraying them in stereotypical ways (as wives, mothers, carers, only feminine) or are we portraying some of the nuance? We don't want to exacerbate the historical notion that girls and women are victims that need protecting.

## 6. How are we working with boys and men to challenge gender inequality?

Is it clear that those with men and boys (often those with more power) eg religious leaders, traditional leaders, local government officials have been consulted with to understand their position and concerns? How will we work with them to understand the needs and concerns of women and girls and seek their support for changing the position and status of women and girls?

## 7. Is the ultimate goal clear?

Are we addressing the immediate or practical needs of girls and women or are we thinking about addressing long term inequalities? Use the gender criteria checklist below:

	DESCRIPTION
0	<b>Gender 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	<p><b>Gender 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. This is also known as the welfare/efficiency approach.</p>
3	<p><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, addressing women and girl’s strategic needs. Gender is built into the response and the causes of inequality are addressed head on. This is also known as the empowerment approach.</p>

## 8. Are we working with like-minded partners?

Who will be involved (partner organisations, businesses, research institutions, media groups etc)? Do they share our understanding and commitment to gender equality? Could we undermine our work by being associated with them?

## 9. Do we walk the talk?

Are we doing everything possible in our own internal practice to ensure that girls, women, boys and men are treated fairly and respected? Do we put our money where our mouth is? What sorts of resourcing are allocated for work on gender equality?