

Guidance Note: Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Scottish Government Funded International Development Projects and Programmes

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Introduction

In line with the Scottish Government's (SG) commitment to take [a Feminist Approach to International Relations](#), and with its [International Development \(ID\) Principles](#)¹, to support the advancement of gender equality, the SG is committed to adopting a **twin track approach**: of mainstreaming gender equality across its International Development (ID) portfolio; and creating dedicated gender equality focused programmes².

As such, all applications and bids for SG ID projects and/or programmes will be scored against the **minimum criteria** aligned with the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker set out in Table 1.³

The SG's aim is to build more gender responsive (strengthens gender equality) or gender-transformative (changes gender-norms and power relations)⁴ ID programmes, therefore it is expected that all programmes and projects will score at least a 1. This means all ID programmes must ensure that gender equality is an important and deliberate objective. It is important to note that a principal score is not by definition better than a significant score.⁵

The gender equality policy marker is used by DAC members as part of the annual reporting of their development activities to the DAC, to indicate for each aid activity whether it targets gender equality as a policy objective. The OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker has the most impact when it is used as a "live tool" during the early stages of the project design.⁶

Table 1

	Significant (Score 1)	Principle (Score 2)
Analysis	A gender analysis for the project/programme has been conducted.	
	Findings from this gender analysis have informed the design of the project/programme and the intervention adopts a 'do no harm' approach.	
Aims		The top-level ambition of the project/programme is to advance gender equality and/or the rights of women and girls.
	Presence of at least one explicit gender equality objective backed by at least one gender-specific indicator (or a firm commitment to do this if the results framework has not been elaborated at the time of marking the project).	The results framework measures progress towards the project/ programme's gender equality objectives through gender-specific indicators to track outcomes/impact.
MEL	Data and indicators are gender sensitive and/or disaggregated by sex	
	Commitment to monitor and report on the gender equality results achieved by the project in the evaluation phase.	

Further guidance produced by the OECD on application of the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker is available here: [Handbook-OECD-DAC-Gender-Equality-Policy-Marker.pdf](#)

Section 1: Gender Analysis

In line with the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker guidance, all projects/programmes should be informed by a preliminary gender analysis⁷.

What is a gender analysis?

“A gender analysis examines the differences in the roles and responsibilities of people of different genders, daily routines and activities, and access to and control over resources, services and decision-making, including those that lead to social and economic inequalities. It applies this understanding to programme and policy development and to service delivery”.
([OECD Gender DAC Marker Handbook](#))

The purpose of a gender analysis is to better understand the gender equality situation, in order to design projects/programmes that can effectively promote gender equality. It should never be assumed that a proposed project or programme does not have gendered impacts. If a project or programme’s design is not gender sensitive, there is a risk of causing harm, even if unintentional.

Where a project or programme proposal includes an inception/design phase, it is expected that the full gender analysis will be finalised during this phase. The proposed methodology for finalisation of the gender analysis should be detailed in your proposal, then agreed with the SG upon inception.

It is important to note that there is no uniform way of undertaking a gender analysis. Each analysis is context specific and will vary according to the scope of your project or programme. You should use the points below as a guide to ensure your gender analysis is of sufficient **quality** and **scope** to shape the design of your project/programme:

1.1 Quality



Disaggregated
Data

+



Analysis

+



Perspectives

- **Include relevant disaggregated data that is gender-sensitive (considers gender equality) and/or disaggregated by sex.** Where possible this should take an intersectional approach – in order to do this, data will also need to be disaggregated by other characteristics, e.g. age group, disability, race, sexual orientation, class, etc.⁸⁹ In nearly all contexts, good data may be limited so it is important to identify evidence gaps. You should also think about how you can ensure that you are making evidence-based decisions in a way that is practical to the scope of the project.
- **Evidence with citations and references:** This must be balanced with perspectives from a diverse range of people. Ideally, this should be done in a participatory way including those

with lived experience of the issues your intervention is trying to address. This may be expanded upon in inception phase.

- **Use gender expertise where relevant:** Gender analysis requires experts by profession and/or experience, as well as relevant stakeholders.¹⁰ Gender equality expertise is crucial for the successful achievement of gender equality outcomes.¹¹ To be effective, gender equality advisors need to be integral proactive members of the project team, who are involved early in the planning stage and consistently throughout the initiative.¹²

1.2. Scope

- **Be relevant to the focus of the project:** Your gender analysis should focus on the specific challenge or problem that your project is trying to address and should be an integral part of your problem identification and needs analysis.¹³
- **Understand the issues and context:** Your gender analysis should consider the cultural, institutional, and political context in which the project is taking place.¹⁴ This will help to identify the specific gender-related issues and barriers that need to be addressed. Active involvement and participation of relevant stakeholders including those with lived experience of the issues your intervention is trying to address is one of the best ways to ensure that the contextualised analysis is based on the “local realities and linked to the goals, needs and priorities”.¹⁵
- **Examine both gender roles and gender relations:** A gender analysis framework can provide a useful structure.¹⁶ You may find it useful to consider:

- **Access to assets**

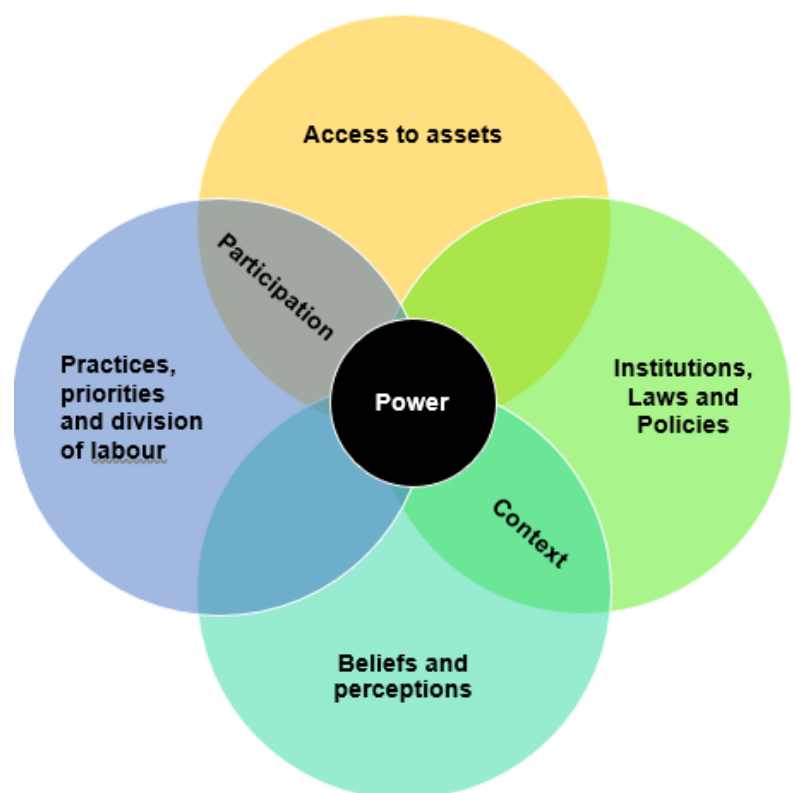
This considers the resources that people have access to, such e.g. tangible (land, capital, tools) or intangible (knowledge, education, and information).¹⁷ These assets can help people to be productive members of their communities and to improve their lives.

- **Practices, priorities and division of labour**¹⁸

This looks at the way that tasks and responsibilities are allocated across genders - the actual activities that people do in their daily lives. It is also what different genders value and see as important.

- **Institutions, laws and policies**¹⁹

This could look at how institutions, laws and policies affect genders differently. This includes things like government, the legal, and education system. It could also consider formal and informal rights.



- **Beliefs and perceptions** ²⁰

This could explore cultural values and norms of the society your project is operating in and how they facilitate or limit access to education, services, and economic opportunities.

- You should also consider **institutional capacity**.²¹²² This includes an analysis of the capacity of the institutions/organisations responsible for project implementation (or that will influence the achievement of results) to work with a gender equality perspective and achieve gender equality results. This may include identification of capacity gaps within individual and organisational assets and approaches to gender equality and women's empowerment to inform capacity strengthening interventions. ²³

Section 2: Aims

As part of the project or programme design, it is mandatory that **at least one explicit gender equality objective, backed by at least one gender equality specific indicator, is developed.**²⁴ This should be clearly outlined in the proposed logic model/logical framework.

The proposal must also demonstrate that this objective has been informed by the preliminary gender analysis.

What is a gender equality objective?

Measurable changes that explicitly aim to **reduce gender inequality**, improve equality between people of different genders and/or tackle discrimination and disadvantage that people face in relation to their gender.

In order for your project to be scored as principle (score 2) the **top-level ambition** of the project must be to advance gender equality and/or women's empowerment.²⁵

Where a project or programme proposal includes an inception/design phase, it is expected that the objectives will be finalised during this phase. Where possible, objectives should be co-developed with key stakeholders, including participants of the project or programme, and those with lived experience of the issues your intervention is trying to address. The proposed methodology for this should be detailed in your proposal, then agreed with the SG upon inception.

Section 3: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

It is important that, where possible, data collected for your results framework is gender sensitive and/or disaggregated by sex.

What is a gender sensitive indicator?

A gender-sensitive indicator is a neutral **quantitative or qualitative** unit to measure gender equality-related changes in a project outcome over time. ([Government of Canada](#))

Where data disaggregation is not possible, it is important to outline the rationale/limitations. Where existing data to support a proposed indicator does not exist, plans to collect the relevant data should be put in place.

Where feasible, data collection and reporting should also **consider intersectionality**. This means further disaggregation by **intersecting identity factors** including, but not limited to, age group, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, race or other relevant social categories.^{26 27}

What is intersectional gender analysis?

[An] analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination. ([European Institute for Gender Equality](#))

It is not always easy to know **why** particular changes have happened. Results need to be defined, monitored and evaluated using frameworks that are both **flexible and learning oriented**.^{28 29} It is important to remember that both **positive and negative, intended and unintended** results provide learning and insights for policy or project improvement and future design.³⁰

Although there is often a temptation to simply apply universal templates and frameworks, it is important to adapt gender indicators so they are **relevant and reflect the gender context** of the environment in which the project is operating.³¹

The OECD gender marker is based on donor intentions at the design stage. Therefore, it is important to note that the provisional score will be **applied by the SG at application stage** of your project or programme, and will be scored on the project or programmes initial proposal. A final score will be applied following the inception/design phase where applicable.

Your final framework **does not have to be fully formed for the initial proposal**, and wherever possible, gender equality results and indicators should be co-developed with key stakeholders, including participants of the project or programme, and those with lived experience of the issues your intervention is trying to address.³² This could be completed during the inception/design phase, then agreed with the SG.

Terms Commonly Used in this Guidance Note

“DAC” means the OECD Development Assistance Committee, which describes itself as “a unique international forum of many of the largest providers of aid, including 32 members”.³³

“Do no harm” is a principle that was developed in “response to the growing recognition of the potential negative effects of aid”³⁴ Applying this principle means putting measures in place to avoid exposing individuals or groups of people to additional risks through an intervention, and giving consideration to how potential negative effects on communities, economies and the environment, can be mitigated.³⁵

“Gender Responsive”: programming that strengthens gender equality.³⁶ Gender responsive programmes systematically integrate the specific needs of different genders, and will include actions that try to reduce gender inequality within communities.³⁷

“Gender Sensitive”: programming that considers gender equality, also known as “gender aware”.³⁸ Gender sensitive programmes recognise the specific needs of different genders and acknowledge gender power dynamics.³⁹ Also, see Section 3 for a further explanation of “What is a gender sensitive indicator?”

“Gender Transformative”: programming which changes gender norms and power relations.⁴⁰ Gender transformative programmes will have specific actions that contribute to long term sustainable changes in societies to address the structural and social root causes of gender inequality.⁴¹

“Intersectionality” is a term that recognises that people can experience compound discrimination, when multiple dimensions and systems of inequality interact with one another and create distinct experiences and outcomes.⁴²

“Mainstreaming” (equality) is the process of embedding equality considerations and practices in all decisions and processes⁴³. Gender mainstreaming is often pursued in international development work as a strategic approach for embedding gender equality considerations across all international development policies, projects, and programmes.

“OECD” means the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which describes itself as “an international organisation that works to build better policies for [better lives](#).” Their goal is to shape policies that “foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all”.⁴⁴

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