



Gender Transformation for Africa: A Sexual, Reproductive and Maternal Health Research Collaborative

Transformation du genre pour l'Afrique: Une recherche concertée sur la santé sexuelle, reproductive et maternelle

Resource list

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES WITH A FOCUS ON ADOLESCENT HEALTH DEVELOPED

SUNDARI RAVINDRAN

There are many resources on gender transformative approaches across health and other development sectors. We therefore provide an initial resource list of training modules and guidance documents, journal articles, monographs and briefs.

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TRAINING MODULES AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

- 1. Rutgers GTA toolkit: Gender transformative approaches: Knowledge file**
<https://rutgers.international/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Knowledgefile-Gender-transformative-approaches.pdf>

This document provides a framework, outlines concepts and definitions related to GTA, and describes some approaches to gender-transformative programming in SRHR. It is divided into three sections.

The first section introduces the role of the socio-ecological model (individual, relationships, communities, institutions, and political society) in a GTA. Section two describes the linkages between traditional gender norms and sexual scripts with double standards, and the ways in which these together impact adolescent sexual and reproductive health, among other SRHR issues.

Section three then lists some of the most relevant GTA practices for transforming inequitable gender norms. It presents a Theory of Change (TOC) for adolescent SRHR programming, revolving around three key intervention approaches: Interventions focused on improving education and information on SRHR; interventions focused on improving youth friendly SRH services and interventions aimed at creating an enabling environment. A brief description of interventions under each approach follows.

2. Rutgers GTA Toolkit Module 2: Gender transformative approach and comprehensive sexuality education.

<https://rutgers.international/resources/rutgers-gta-toolkit-module-2/>

This is a hands-on tool for enhancing the effectiveness of CSE teaching. The aim of this module is not to offer new content for CSE, but to facilitate critical reflection and useful insights among CSE stakeholders, which can enhance their ability to address these critical themes, thereby contributing to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

This module aims to achieve the following:

- Enhance understanding of Rutgers' gender transformative approach by applying GTA principles to CSE
- Turn the theoretical interpretation of the GTA into tangible comprehensive sexuality education practice and programmes
- Inspire individuals and organisations to adopt a GTA by offering accessible programmes, tools and ideas drawing from examples within and outside of CSE programming

3. Rutgers GTA Toolkit Module 3: Gender transformative approach and youth-friendly services

<https://rutgers.international/resources/rutgers-gta-toolkit-module-3/>

This is a toolkit for facilitators who have a background in gender and youth-friendly services (YFS). The module starts with an introduction to Rutgers definition of GTA and the socio-ecological model. The second section explains the theory underlying the module – what it would mean to apply GTA to YFS. The third section contains 10 training sessions – starting with an introduction to GTA, there are sessions on sexual rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the concept of evolving capacity; gender and sexual norms; and facilitating empowerment, among others. There is a useful annexes section with model pre and post-tests, Handouts and Glossary of terms.

4. WHO-EURO. Evidence for gender responsive actions to prevent and manage adolescent pregnancy.

<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/350017>

This publication summarises current knowledge on gender-responsive interventions that have proven effective in preventing and managing adolescent pregnancy. The evidence is Europe-centred. However, the approaches are amenable to adaptation in other settings.

The document starts with explaining the gender dimensions of pregnancy, abortion and motherhood – emphasizing the ways in which gender-based inequalities in society are reinforced by the lack of appropriate services for adolescents to exercise choice around whether and when to get pregnant and whether to continue with a pregnancy. There is also a gender-critique of maternal health policies and programmes.

Actions are presented to address adolescent pregnancy at multiple levels: family and community; health services; health systems; and across sectors – in the school setting and by taking a health in all policies. Annexes include a description of characteristics of gender-responsive sex and HIV-education programmes; and social and cultural factors shaping young people's sexual behaviour and to be factored-in when planning HIV programmes for young people.

5. UNFPA and UNICEF (2021). Gender transformative accelerator tool. Workshop facilitation guide. New York. UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

The Gender-Transformative Accelerator (GTA) tool is a self-contained, process-oriented, rapid analysis and action planning tool for implementers, advocates and technical staff working on initiatives to prevent and respond to child, early and forced marriages and unions. The tool is designed for the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage (the Global Programme) and is centred within the Global Programme's definitions and core elements of gender-transformative programming, but

can be applied to broader gender equality, adolescent empowerment and sexual and reproductive health programmes with minimal adaptation. The tool presents a detailed 3-day workshop plan with guidance for conducting facilitated discussions designed to provoke reflection.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

6. **Aventin, Á., et al. (2021). Adaptation of a gender-transformative sexual and reproductive health intervention for adolescent boys in South Africa and Lesotho using intervention mapping.** *Global health action*, 14(1), 1927329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2021.1927329>

This article presents the results of a study undertaken to examine whether a GTA programme developed in UK to address HIV/AIDS and unintended pregnancy in adolescents can be successfully adapted for use in South Africa and Lesotho. The findings clarified how the intervention should be adapted, which individual- and environmental-level determinants of condom use to target, and actions for facilitating successful adoption, evaluation, and implementation in the new settings.

7. **Cherewick M, Lebu S, Su C. et al., (2021). Adolescent, caregiver and community experiences with a gender transformative, social emotional learning intervention.** *International Journal of Equity in Health* 20: 55. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-021-01395-5>

This mixed-method study examined the effects of an intervention designed to provide social emotional learning opportunities for very young adolescents (VYA) ages 10–11 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. This was a six-week, after-school intervention designed to introduce positive, social emotional, experiential learning. Both adolescents and parent/caregivers reported positive change towards more equitable gender norms, beliefs and behaviors through participation in experiential learning activities and reflective discussions.

8. **Levy JK, et al., (2020). Characteristics of successful programmes targeting gender inequality and restrictive gender norms for the health and wellbeing of children, adolescents, and young adults: a systematic review.** *Lancet Global Health* 8:e225-36. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(19\)30495-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(19)30495-4)

This is a systematic review of rigorous evaluations of studies published during 2000-2018 of programmes that sought to decrease gender inequalities and transform restrictive gender norms to improve the health and wellbeing of 0–24-year-olds. The review elaborates on the characteristics of the small number of programmes that showed evidence of, or potential for, broader norm change.

9. **Ruane-McAteer E, Gillespie K, Amin A, et al (2020). Gender-transformative programming with men and boys to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights: a systematic review of intervention studies.** *BMJ Global Health* 5:e002997. doi:10.1136/bmjgh-2020-002997

This is a systematic review of articles published between January 2007 and July 2018, which described one or more gender transformative interventions engaging men and boys. Sixty-eight studies: 36 RCTs and 32 quasi-experimental studies were synthesised. Most of the interventions were to prevention of violence against women and girls. The article summarises the programming characteristics of effective gender transformative interventions with men and boys.

10. **Doyle K, Levto V, Barker G et al. (2018) Gender-transformative Bandedereho couples' intervention to promote male engagement in reproductive and maternal health and violence prevention in Rwanda: Findings from a randomized controlled trial.** *PLoS ONE* 13(4): e0192756. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0192756>

This RCT study assessed the impact of the Bandedereho (meaning 'role model' in Kinyarwanda) gender-transformative couples' intervention in Rwanda on impact on multiple behavioral and health-related outcomes influenced by gender norms and power relations. The study showed significant differences between the intervention and control groups in less past year physical and sexual IPV, greater accompaniment of men to ANC visits, greater modern contraceptive use among women and men, greater participation in childcare and household chores and less domination in household decision-making.

11. **Dowrkin SL, Fleming PJ and Colvin CJ (2015). The promises and limitations of gender-transformative health programming with men: critical reflections from the field.** *Culture and Sexuality*, 17 (S2): S128–S143. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2015.1035751>

This article assesses the empirical evidence from gender-transformative health interventions with men and examines some of the challenges and limitations of gender-transformative health programmes. It then makes recommendations for future work in this area.

The article emphasizes the importance of involving both women and men in GT interventions; going beyond addressing individual changes to structural changes; and adopting an intersectional approach to gender when designing gender-transformative interventions engaging men and boys.

MONOGRAPHS, BRIEFS

12. **Baird S, Dutton R, Hamory J et al., (2021). Transforming gender norms through life-skills programming in rural Ethiopia: short-term impacts and emerging lessons for adaptive programming.** Oromia case study. Report. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.

This is a randomized control trial evaluating the Act With Her Ethiopia (AWH-E programme in Oromia, Ethiopia. AWH-E consisted of a life skills education programme for young adolescents with older adolescents as mentors; with additional programming for boys and adolescents' support systems (including parents, community leaders and other community members) and system-strengthening initiatives.

There were five arms to the study (a) Her Spaces programming involving a life skills curriculum with girls only (arm 1); (b) AWH-E programming (including boys + girls life skills curricula, and parents' meetings) (arm 2); (c) AWH-E programming (girls + boys life-skills curricula, parent meetings, plus community level social norms and systems strengthening) (arm 3) (d) AWH-E programming with asset transfers for girls (arm 4); and (e) a control group (no intervention).

Findings on the short-term impacts of the Her Spaces and AWH-E programming in Oromia suggest that it is having some limited but positive impacts on adolescent girls' well-being. There were a range of implementation challenges. To have a more positive impact on the lives of the youth mentors involved, there needed to be more regular supervision and support, especially given high levels of community resistance and, in some cases, backlash, which mentors have not been trained to deal with. Impacts on boys, parents and the wider community remain muted. The study concluded that further investment was needed if the broader environment in which girls interact is to become more adolescent- and gender-friendly.

13. **Both R and Igonya EK (2020). Gender transformative approaches to improving youth SRHR: Improving the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Kenya by training healthcare providers in the GTA.** Newark, Rutgers International.

This report presents the findings of operational research with healthcare providers who offer youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services to young people in six counties in Kenya. The focus of the study was gender transformative training for healthcare providers. The report provides evidence that GTA training contributed to changing unfavourable gender and sexuality-related attitudes and beliefs of healthcare providers into more supportive ones, and of improvements in service delivery that positively impacted on how young people perceived and received SRHR care. These changes were sustained over the period of the study. Self-reflection, achieved in this study through diary writing, was a powerful tool for triggering changes in attitudes.

14. **Simbaya J, Both J, Moonga A and Mwewa T (2020). *Enhancing comprehensive sexuality education through a gender transformative approach: Studying the effects of GTA capacity building on CSE teaching in Zambia***. Rutgers International.

This report examines the effects of a capacity strengthening trajectory with comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) teachers in Eastern Province, Zambia. This region was chosen to pilot the Rutgers' GTA Toolkit, Module 2: Gender Transformative Approach and Comprehensive Sexuality Education. The research showed that teachers' gender biases may be harmful towards women, girls, and boys, but that these can be shifted over the course of a GTA intervention. The research has shown that steps to build GTA capacity among CSE teachers can be very effective in shifting gender attitudes and enhancing critical reflections on social, gender and sexual norms related to adolescent SRHR among teachers.

15. **Rolleri LA (2013). *Gender Transformative Programing in Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health: Definitions, Strategies, and Resources***. New York, ACT for Youth Center of Excellence.
https://actforyouth.net/resources/pm/pm_gender4_0114.pdf

This brief list 12 strategies for ensuring that SRHR curricula for adolescents are gender transformative. The brief also includes a list of further resources related to gender transformative programming.