



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

ASSESSING AND MEASURING GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE
(IN HEALTH PROGRAMMES)

RESOURCE LIST

The first four resources address broad issues such as the dimensions of gender transformative change that are to be measured and principles and modalities for measuring change, and critique of existing practices, frameworks, and tools.

1. Hillenbrand E, Karim N, Mohanraj P and Wu D. 2015. **Measuring gender transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices.** CARE USA. Working Paper. <https://gender.cgiar.org/publications-data/measuring-gender-transformative-change-review-literature-and-promising-0>

This is a comprehensive review of approaches to measure gender transformative change. Although the focus is on the agriculture sector, several chapters are applicable across sectors.

The first chapter lays out the conceptual understanding guiding the review. Transformative change is to be measured across three dimensions: agency, relationships, and structures. Within this framing, the document suggests measuring changes in empowerment through an examination of the multiple manifestations of power. These include *power over*-defined as control over people, resources, and others' lives; *power to* - act and to realize one's aspirations; *power within* - a person's or group's sense of self-worth; and *power with* - collaborative and collective power with others.

Chapter 2 reviews various methods and processes through which gender-transformative changes may be measured. The review is based on the premise that the systems used for monitoring, evaluating and learning about gender-transformative change are as important as the indicators themselves. Who decides who and what is to be measured, and by whom, and using what metrics can either reinforce the prevailing power inequalities or challenge them.

Chapter 3 of this report examines existing indicators of gender-transformative change in agriculture and aquaculture systems from the lens of these four critical dimensions of power and across the domains of agency, relations and structures. Such an assessment brings back into focus the understanding of gender equality as a political project, drawing renewed attention to the importance of consciousness-raising and women's collective action as indispensable ingredients of sustainable, meaningful social change.

2. Morgan M. 2014. **Measuring gender transformative change.** Penang, Malaysia: CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems. Program Brief: AAS-2014-41. <https://gender.cgiar.org/publications-data/measuring-gender-transformative-change>

This paper examines sexual and reproductive health and violence against women programs that have been identified as 'gender transformative' and/or attempted to use less conventional measures of women's empowerment or gender equality – measures that attempted to go beyond the individual or household level, beyond the tangible and beyond women.

Section one reviews indicators used for measuring gender-transformative change across three dimensions – individual, relationships, and norms and structures, giving many examples of the indicators used.

Section two critiques the indicators of gender-transformative changes in the programs reviewed in the previous section. The critique analyses 'what' is measured, 'how' it is measured, 'when' it is measured and 'who' is reporting the changes (e.g., self-reported versus reports from others). This section draws attention to the power dynamics involved in the measurement process itself and emphasizes the need to design the measurement process to be empowering and transformative.

The concluding section makes a series of recommendations for future efforts at assessing and measuring gender-transformative change.

3. Batliwala S and Pittman A. 2010. **Capturing change in women's realities: A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring & Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches.** Toronto, Mexico City and Cape Town. Association for Women in Development (AWID). https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/capturing_change_in_womens_realities.pdf

This is a comprehensive critical review of current practices in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the context of women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment work. According to the authors, many tools measure performance, rather than impact or change, and often confuse short-term change with sustainable change. Methods such as the Logical Framework flatten change processes into cause-effect relationships that cannot capture and measure complex social changes and may even mislead about how these occur. Most importantly, many of the measurement tools do not enable the tracking of negative change or of how power structures are responding to women's rights interventions.

The authors then provide a set of assessment principles emerging from practitioners' insights. Some of the key principles include the use of tools that can track and appropriately interpret backlashes and resistance to change, not as failures of the strategy, but evidence of its impact; privileging the perspectives of local women to develop indicators of changes in gender relations; and measuring change not only in the formal domain of law, policy and resources but also in relation to cultural norms and practices.

4. Demetriades, J. 2007. Gender Indicators: What, Why and How? Sussex: BRIDGE, Institute of Development Studies. Brief.

This Brief focuses on the use of indicators for measuring changes in gender equality – termed 'gender indicators' by the authors. It explains the need to develop gender indicators and provides some broad principles for making decisions on what we should be measuring. The Brief emphasizes the importance of adapting gender indicators to be relevant to local contexts, and consulting with the local community to derive indicators that reflect a specific gender context.

The Brief offers examples of existing indicators used at the international, regional, and country levels as well as indicators for measuring internal organizational changes, even while emphasizing the need to adapt indicators to be appropriate to specific contexts. It includes a useful list of databases of gender indicators and statistics.

The following seven resources introduce specific tools being used by different international organizations, including a tool for assessing the gender-responsiveness of health facilities, and more generic tools that may be adapted for use by the health sector.

5. Lombardini S, Bowman K and Garwood R. 2017. A 'how to' guide to measuring women's empowerment. Sharing experience from Oxfam's impact evaluations. Oxford, Oxfam. <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620271/gt-measuring-womens-empowerment-250517-en.pdf?sequence=4>

Oxfam has developed a measurement tool based on a composite index – the Women's Empowerment Index (WEI) to measure progress in the many projects supported by the organisations. This report describes how one goes about developing the WEI to assess projects.

Section one of this report presents the framework that has been developed to measure women's empowerment, consisting of three dimensions: Individual, relational and environmental. While the framework itself remains constant, its characteristics and the indicators it contains are tailored to each individual context.

Section two presents the characteristics of the index and provides suggestions as to how it might be applied. Section three presents the five steps involved in defining and constructing the Women's Empowerment Index and provides practical examples.

Section four discusses future evolution of the measurement tool. The index has been continually changing, regularly incorporating lessons from the field. The appendices provide additional practical tools.

Written in a reader-friendly language, this is a valuable resource for researchers as well as programme managers.

6. **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. 2018. What gets measured matters. A methods-note for measuring women and girls' empowerment.** https://www.gatesgenderequalitytoolbox.org/wp-content/uploads/BMGF_Methods-Note-Measuring-Empowerment-1.pdf

This methods-note intended primarily to guide grant-makers across the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in making grants for gender-transformative investments is also useful for those concerned with understanding, operationalizing, and measuring gender-transformative changes. The first two sections lay out how this methods-note will help the reader and why it is important to measure the empowerment of women and girls.

Section three starts out with how to integrate empowerment into the results framework, as a primary or an intermediary outcome, or both. It then provides guidance on outcomes and indicators of empowerment of women and girls, presented by the three elements of the Foundation's empowerment model: agency, institutional structures, and resources. The section ends with examples of conventional as well as innovative indicators for each element of the empowerment model for various sectors, including family planning and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The focus of Section four is on methods to use to measure empowerment. It recommends the use of a mixed-methods approach as the most effective way to capture changes in power dynamics and advances in women's and girls' empowerment. It also provides guidance on the strengths and limitations of quantitative and qualitative methods for measuring empowerment. The section closes with a discussion on measurement bias and methods to avoid it.

A brief Section five provides tips on best practices to improve the measurement of empowerment at each stage of the grant: a) developing the monitoring and evaluation design, b) implementing research, c) analyzing data and sharing results, and d) feeding evaluation findings back into program design.

The document includes several useful annexes with additional results frameworks and indicators, and guidance for the measurement of empowerment.

7. **Rachel Marcus with Sophie Brodbeck (2015). Changing gender norms: monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects.** London, Overseas Development Institute. <https://odi.org/en/publications/changing-gender-norms-monitoring-and-evaluating-programmes-and-projects/>

This Research and Practice Note by Oxfam draws on lessons from programmes for changing gender norms pertaining to adolescents in Ethiopia, Uganda, Nepal, and Vietnam. The document gives some pointers on how to monitor and evaluate programmes and projects that set out to change gender norms.

The note describes four types of indicators on which they collected primary data to assess changes in gender norms: attitude data, data on intentions, measures of outcomes or practices, and measures of what people perceive prevailing norms to be. A range of very useful practical tips are provided on how to develop indicators and collect primary data for assessing gender norm changes. The note also includes a list of each of the four types indicator that have been used in other programmes and studies.

8. **Barakat S, Pretari A and Vonk J. Centring gender and power in evaluation and research. Sharing experiences from Oxfam GB's quantitative impact evaluations.** Oxford, Oxfam, 2021. Oxfam Discussion Papers. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621204/dp-centring-gender-power-impact-evals-190721-en.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>

This paper shares Oxfam Great Britain (GB)'s experience in bringing a feminist intent to quantitative research methodologies and centring gender and power in impact evaluations. It aims to provide practical guidance on methodologies and tools, and to provoke further reflections and changes in practices. It describes technical choices and ethical considerations, and presents lessons learned and questions raised along the way. While the paper shares experiences from impact evaluations, many aspects are more broadly relevant and will be of interest to other monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) and research practitioners, as well as to programme managers.

Putting gender and power at the centre leads to questioning whose voices are heard, whose experiences are reflected in the data, and whose worldviews are reinforced.

This paper details the following technical considerations, and related ethical ones:

- Paying attention to who is represented in the data – in other words, sampling strategies;
- Deciding which topics are prioritized in measurement tools;
- Systematically highlighting gender differences and differential impacts in the analysis.
- Bringing intersectionality to the fore and the specific experiences of trans and non-binary people

The paper emphasizes that for impact evaluations to be gender transformative, they need to go beyond methodological adjustments and drive action for change and intersectional gender justice, which requires putting this wealth of valuable evidence into use. For evaluation and research to be tools towards transformation means making use of the findings; it requires activism alongside accountability.

Being gender transformative also entails bringing attention to and addressing knowledge hierarchies and the power dynamics in knowledge production processes, so that all the contributors to the process are made visible and acknowledged.

9. FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2022. Guide to formulating gendered social norms indicators in the context of food security and nutrition. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0673en>

This guide, focused on how to formulate gendered social norms indicators for food security and nutrition programmes, provides valuable generic information on how to develop indicators to measure gendered social norms applicable to all sectors.

Following the introductory section, section two provides an overview of social norms concepts. Gender norms are a subset of social norms and refer to informal rules and shared social expectations that distinguish expected behaviour based on gender. Changing gendered social norms, rather than only individual attitudes and behaviour to gender, is expected to be more sustainable by affecting social change at a systemic level: changing social rules within a whole group, community or society.

The next section offers guidance on how to develop social norms indicators, and outlines four key messages on how to write social norms indicators. Section four provides examples of generic social norms indicators that can be adapted to measure any social norm that may be identified in a social norms-assessment. Three outcome indicators and one intermediate outcome indicator are provided, with notes on methods of computation, data sources, limitations, and validation. Examples of gendered social norms indicators used in different programs are also provided.

The final section provides a set of indicators for selected gendered social norms relevant to food security and nutrition programmes.

10. PLAN International Canada's Architecture for Gender transformative programming and measurement: A primer. 2018.

<http://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/EmrulHasan.pdf>

This brief presents three tools which constitute PLAN International Canada's architecture for gender-transformative programming. Although developed specifically for their own use, these tools have the potential to be adapted for other purposes and settings. The three tools include:

A rights-based theory of change: a detailed and shared understanding of the organization's approach to transformative programming, specifically its core components, what the approach aims to achieve and how

A women and girls empowerment index: this tool seeks evidence to assess PLAN International Canada's transformative impact effectively and consistently within and across projects on the condition and position of women and girls, on thematic outcomes and the causal relationship between women's and girls' empowerment and thematic outcomes

Gender equality project scoring: This is an automated tool that ranks all of the projects of PLAN International Canada to systematically evaluate what proportion of its programs are gender transformative. The scoring tool assesses

- a. the integration of gender equality goals in project design
- b. type and intensity of change expected in five gender equality domains, viz., gender roles and responsibilities; access to and control over resources participation and decision-making; social norms; and duty-bearers and institutions
- c. resources allocated to the project

11. Irani, L, Hardee K, Bishop M. 2015. A Tool to Assess the Gender Sensitivity of a Health Facility: Pilot Tested in Afghanistan. Washington, DC: Futures Group, Health Policy Project.

This document presents a tool for assessing the 'gender-sensitivity' of health facilities in Afghanistan, but it can be adapted and used across countries and facilities. The questions included in the tool are divided into six categories:

- a. gender-sensitive policies and guidelines
- b. structural characteristics of facilities
- c. distribution of human resources
- d. in-service training of providers
- e. the quality of service provision, and
- f. the use of client data.

The tool aims to assess whether policies and guidelines exist to ensure gender equity within the workforce and whether there is a system for addressing concerns. It highlights the structural characteristics that make the facility appropriate for both men and women to access. It also notes the distribution of health workers by cadre and sex and in-service training given to providers, especially on gender-related issues. Types and methods of service provision to clients are also assessed. Finally, the tool aims to capture how client data disaggregated by sex are used for health facility planning.