



**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

APPLYING AN INTERSECTIONALITY LENS TO SEXUAL,  
REPRODUCTIVE AND MATERNAL HEALTH RESEARCH

## RESOURCE LIST

### Introduction and basic concepts

1. Larson E, George A, Morgan R, Poteat T (2016). 10 Best resources on... intersectionality with an emphasis on low- and middle-income countries, *Health Policy and Planning*, Volume 31, Issue 8, October 2016, Pages 964 -969, <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czw020>

This article provides an excellent introduction to intersectionality theory and research. It starts with a definition of the term and describes in simple words the main features of intersectionality. A useful table summarises what intersectionality is and what it is not.

The article then introduces the ten best resources on intersectionality. Four of these resources explain intersectionality as a methodology and include a 101 providing a basic introduction, two that explain the application of this approach to quantitative and qualitative studies, and one that engages with how to analyse and interpret intersectionality data. Six subsequent articles are examples of the application of intersectionality to quantitative and qualitative health research in LMICs.

2. UN Women Intersectionality resource guide and toolkit (2022)

This Resource Guide and Toolkit offers a starting point for those wishing to deepen their understanding and apply an intersectional approach to their work. It aims to provide conceptual clarity, a practical framework and tools for reducing compounded and intersecting inequalities faced by people experiencing diverse and compounded forms of discrimination. Its purpose is to:

1. Contribute to an understanding of intersectionality that bridges the gap between theory and practice.
2. Help practitioners, policymakers, and advocates mobilise efforts to address the 2030 Agenda and its goals by embedding an intersectional mindset as part of their policies, programmes and services.

This Resource Guide and Toolkit is comprised of eight enablers and a framework for action that helps the user to reflect and identify actions that can be taken to address intersectionality.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/01/intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit>

Easy to read version:

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-easy-to-read-en.pdf>

### Research methodology

3. Office of Human Services Policy (2022). Advancing equity by incorporating intersectionality in research and analysis. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/80123172bbe4458a06259535dc3fcfc3/Intresectionality-Resrch-Anlysis.pdf>

This 16-page guide provides practical guidance on how to go about incorporating intersectionality in research. The document explains the rationale for incorporating intersectionality into health research to generate evidence to promote health equity. It then goes over strategies for incorporating intersectionality in quantitative and qualitative research, from formulating the research question to identifying the relevant intersecting axes of power to be examined, sample selection, data collection and analysis. The guide emphasises the importance of starting with an intersectionality framework right from the outset of study design and engaging people with lived experiences as co-developers throughout the study process. It also suggests that a combination of quantitative and qualitative data would best capture the experiences of persons in varied social locations.

**4. Gendered Innovations (Stanford University). *Intersectional approaches.***

<http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods/intersect.html>

This is a page on the website of Gendered Innovations, a Stanford University project to promote sex and gender analysis in science, health and medicine, engineering, and the environment. Arguing that an intersectional approach enhances all phases of research, the page explains in simple and reader-friendly language what it means to adopt an intersectional approach when identifying a research problem; designing the study; collecting, analysing, and disseminating data. It is a useful first resource to understand the layers in intersectionality-informed research.

**5. Rouhani S. (2014). *Intersectionality-informed quantitative research: a primer.* Vancouver, Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy. <https://studylib.net/doc/10714284/intersectionality-informed-quantitative-research--a-primer>**

This publication illustrates the potential of intersectionality-informed quantitative research to transform traditional quantitative research methods to more effectively capture social and health inequities. The primer illustrates with examples how intersectionality may be incorporated into all phases of quantitative research: preparation, research instruments, recruitment, sampling, data collection, data processing, data analysis, reporting and knowledge translation/ implementation.

**6. Hunting G (2014). *Intersectionality-informed qualitative research: a primer.* Vancouver, Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy. [https://nanopdf.com/download/intersectionality-informed-qualitative-research-a-primer-gemma-hunting\\_pdf](https://nanopdf.com/download/intersectionality-informed-qualitative-research-a-primer-gemma-hunting_pdf)**

This primer guides how to go about intersectionality-informed qualitative research, from framing the research questions to data collection, measurement, analysis and interpretation. The primer illustrates the value-added of intersectionality at each stage using case examples from mental health, family violence and boys' and men's health.

**7. Grace D (2014). *Intersectionality-informed mixed-method research: a primer.* Vancouver, Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy. [https://www.ktpathways.ca/system/files/resources/2019-09/Intersectionality-informed\\_Mixed\\_Method.pdf](https://www.ktpathways.ca/system/files/resources/2019-09/Intersectionality-informed_Mixed_Method.pdf)**

Unlike its two companion primers on intersectionality-informed quantitative and qualitative research, this primer does not spell out how to conduct intersectionality-informed mixed methods research. Rather, it identifies and discusses some key questions around the nature of the 'mixing' of the two methods across the lifecycle of intersectionality research.

These include *timing*- whether the methods are used sequentially or concurrently; *weighting* – the relative importance of the two methods in the study design; *mixing* – when and how the quantitative and qualitative data are mixed; and *theorising* – the extent to which a theoretical perspective informs the overall study design.

The examples reviewed in this primer illustrate the possibility of mixing qualitative and quantitative data in multiple ways within this emerging research paradigm. The discussion also underscores the potential offered by drawing on qualitative, quantitative and/or mixed methods intersectionality research when analysing complex policy questions.

### Health interventions

**8. Ghasemi, E., Majdzadeh, R., Rajabi, F. et al. "Applying Intersectionality in designing and implementing health interventions: a scoping review". *BMC Public Health* 21, 1407 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11449-6>**

This scoping review examines the application of intersectionality in designing and implementing health interventions during an intervention's problem identification, design & implementation, and evaluation stages. The studies were limited to those conducted between 2013-16 in the United States.

## Violence prevention examples

### 9. Learning from practice: Exploring intersectional approaches to prevent violence against women and girls

UN Women (2021)

This synthesis review addresses a gap in the literature on how to apply intersectionality in practice in relation to programmes to prevent violence against women and girls. Drawing on the experiences of 10 civil society organizations operating in various countries and contexts, the review:

- showcases the unique contributions of different types and sizes of organizations, from small grassroots organizations to large international human rights and development organizations;
- looks at the various partnerships between these organizations;
- highlights diverse forms of intersectional approaches in different social contexts; and
- provides practical recommendations for those directly engaging with intersectional vulnerabilities in their interventions, for researchers and for donors.

<https://unf.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/08/learning-from-practice-exploring-intersectional-approaches-to-prevent-violence-against-women-and-girls>

## Examples of research using an intersectionality lens

### 10. Gillespie A, Seff I, Caron C et al. (2022). "The pandemic made us stop and think about who we are and what we want:" Using intersectionality to understand migrant and refugee women's experiences of gender-based violence during COVID-19. *BMC Public Health* 22:1469, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13866-7>

This is a qualitative study of the experiences of gender-based violence of migrant and refugee women in Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study adopts a combination of 'group-centred', 'process-centred' and 'systems-centred' approaches to operationalise the intersectionality framework in this study. This study speaks to all three approaches: the study is group-centred in that it centres the lived experiences of refugee and migrant women during COVID-19, process-centred in that it also examines the role and perspectives of institutional service providers who hold positions of power in relation to refugee and migrant women, and systems-centred in that it analyses the socially-constructed context and its interlocking, macro-level factors in influencing the range of migrant women's experiences and needs.

The study found that refugee and migrant women in Italy faced distinct risks and compromised access to GBV services during the COVID-19 pandemic; and that intersection of their female and refugee/migrant status with economic status, race and religion accentuated these vulnerabilities.

### 11. Veenstra, G.(2011) Race, gender, class and sexual orientation: Intersecting axes of inequality and self-rated health in Canada. *International Journal of Equity and Health* 10(1): 3. <http://www.equityhealthj.com/content/10/1/3>

This is a quantitative study using data from the Canadian Community Health Survey. Four axes of inequality were considered: race, gender, class and sexual orientation. The study found that all four intersectionality axes of inequality were operative for better or for worse in many of the social situations encountered by survey respondents in their everyday lives. It concludes that the principles of simultaneity and multiplicativity founded upon the inequality foursome of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation appear to be relevant for disparities in health in Canada.

## FURTHER READING

12. Sabik NJ (2021). The intersectionality toolbox. A resource for teaching and applying an intersectional lens in public health. *Frontiers in Public Health* 9:772301. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.772301
13. Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) (2013). Intersectionality in HIV and other health-related research. Rapid Response Services. <https://www.ohtn.on.ca/rapid-response-68-intersectionality-in-hiv-and-other-health-related-research/>
14. Public Health Agency of Canada (2022). How to integrate intersectionality theory in quantitative health equity analysis? A rapid review and checklist of Public Health Agency of Canada. How to integrate intersectionality theory in quantitative health equity analysis? A rapid review and checklist of promising practices. Ottawa, Ontario. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/science-research-data/how-integrate-intersectionality-theory-quantitative-health-equity-analysis/intersectionality-report.pdf>
15. Scott N and Siltanen J. (2012). Gender and intersectionality – a quantitative toolkit for analysing complex inequalities. Ottawa, Employment and Social Development Canada. <https://janetsiltanen.ca/toolkitenglish.pdf>
16. Abrams J, Tabaacc A, Jungd S, Else-Queste N (2020). Considerations for employing intersectionality in qualitative health research. *Social Science and Medicine* 258: 113138. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113138. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32574889/>
17. Kebede Y, Teshome F, Binu W, Kebede A, Seid A, Kasaye HK, et al. (2023) Structural, programmatic, and sociocultural intersectionality of gender influencing access-uptake of reproductive, maternal, and child health services in developing regions of Ethiopia: A qualitative study. *PLoS ONE* 18(3): e0282711. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0282711>
18. **Incorporating intersectional gender analysis into research on infectious diseases of poverty: a toolkit for health researchers**

World Health Organization (2020) ISBN 978-92-4-000845-8 (electronic version)

This toolkit aims to strengthen the capacity of researchers working on infectious diseases of poverty by incorporating an intersectional gender approach.

The objectives of this document are to:

1. strengthen the research capacity of disease-affected countries in intersectional gender approaches;
2. understand and address barriers to effective and quality implementation of health interventions oriented to prevent and control infectious diseases; and
3. explore solutions for enhancing equality in access to quality health care.

While this toolkit includes a focus on research that prioritizes the prevention and control of infectious diseases of poverty, it is equally relevant to other health research and interventions.

<https://tdr.who.int/publications/i/item/2020-09-23-incorporating-intersectional-gender-analysis-into-research-on-infectious-diseases-of-poverty-a-toolkit-for-health-researchers>