

# INTERSECTIONALITY RESOURCE GUIDE AND TOOLKIT

An Intersectional Approach to Leave No One Behind



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# FOREWORD

There is growing recognition that structural barriers and rising inequalities must be addressed in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the pledge to leave no one behind. The COVID-19 crisis has amplified this need as those experiencing intersectional discrimination face disproportionate impacts in terms of access to health care, risk of violence, unemployment and wellbeing.

Intersectionality can go a long way towards addressing these inequalities. With growing recognition that failure to address complex social systems and identities can obscure or deny the human rights protections due to all, it is crucial to design programmes and policies that effectively address not only discrimination based on disability but the situation of those affected by all forms of compounded and intersecting forms of discrimination. This does not require an ‘add and stir’ approach, but rather a full shift in mindset: one that is willing to sit with the discomfort that comes with exploring the relational nature of power and discrimination both within and beyond UN systems.

The Resource Guide and Toolkit has been developed to help both organizations and individual practitioners and experts to address intersectionality in policies and in programmes. It may be used by individuals or teams to assess their own knowledge, attitudes and practice, at a programme level as a supplement to existing design, adaptation and assessment processes or at policy level to better understand and address the different and intersecting effects of policy on marginalised persons.

Hence this Resource Guide and Toolkit will support this journey and prompt the user to inquire into and embrace ‘the messiness of difference’ that exists when all users and practitioners begin to recognise that “there is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives”.



Photo credit

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This Resource Guide and Toolkit is the result of a collaborative effort between UN Women, UNPRPD, Members of Civil Society Advisory Group including the International Disability Alliance and its Community of Practice members, and inter-Agency joint project partners. The content herein has been greatly benefited and enhanced by the expertise and perspectives of diverse persons from the disability movement across the globe. Their experience, insights and comments helped significantly in finalizing the product.

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# ACRONYMS

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<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRPD</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OPD</b>	Organisation of persons with disabilities
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SOGIESC</b>	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNPRPD</b>	United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

# INTRODUCTION

Since their beginnings, human rights frameworks have formed the bedrock of the United Nations system; however, structural forms of inequality continue to pervade and prevent equality for all. In recognition of this, world leaders agreed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; 17 goals and 169 targets that set out to eradicate poverty, end discrimination and commit to an equitable future. The need has become more urgent in the context of COVID-19, as the UN System and Member States respond to a crisis that has brought systemic inequality to the fore and disproportionately impacted the lives of persons with disabilities and others already marginalised by systems of oppression such as patriarchy, ableism, racism, ageism, colonialism and imperialism.

Intersectionality offers a new way of thinking about these complexities. It is not an ‘add and stir’ approach nor does it “provide definitive answers to social problems”; rather, it reframes our understanding of marginalisation and “creates spaces for reflexive consideration and critical engagement.”<sup>1</sup> Applying an intersectional lens helps connect human rights to the multiple forms of discrimination that people experience. It is essential to achieve equal outcomes for all in global efforts to fulfil the pledge to leave no one behind.

This Resource Guide and Toolkit emerged from an identified need to use an intersectional approach that included people with disabilities in all their diversity in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes, advocacy and inter-governmental processes. However, the authors and collaborators realised that an effective intersectionality resource needed to go beyond a focus on specific intersecting identities, such as disability and gender, as this would still exclude those who are most marginalised. Consequently, this toolkit is framed around a set of core intersectionality enablers, including diverse knowledges, power relations and reflexivity, in order to address the “multi-level interacting social locations, forces, factors and power structures that shape and influence human life.”<sup>2</sup>

The Resource Guide and Toolkit is the result of an inter-agency joint project between UN Women, UN DESA, UNICEF, UNFPA and OHCHR and supported by the UNPRPD. A Civil Society Advisory Group (ADD International, CBM Global, Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA), HelpAge International, International Disability Alliance, Sightsavers, Water

Aid, Women’s Refugee Commission, Women Enabled International) was formed to ensure reflection of diverse views throughout the toolkit development process. An intersectional approach was used to steer toolkit development. In particular, we thank the International Disability Alliance and its Community of Practice members for their support in co-designing of the toolkit. The content herein has been greatly benefited and enhanced by the expertise and perspectives of diverse persons from the disability movement across the globe. Their experience, insights and comments informed the ultimate direction and approach of the toolkit. The toolkit was also informed by among key partners, members of diverse groups, and thematic experts and desk review of existing resources and best practices.

## Scope and purpose of the Resource Guide and Toolkit

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.

The Resource Guide and Toolkit:

- Considers intersectionality holistically and highlights examples of what this looks like for people experiencing diverse forms of intersectional discrimination.
- Is designed to be integrated within existing work, processes and tools (including Common Country Analyses and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks).

- Is flexible and should be adapted to suit the local context; the experiences and expertise of local populations should be the starting point for implementing any of these approaches in specific contexts.
- Includes useful resources, a selection of practical tools and good practice examples.

As with any resource, this toolkit should be reviewed and updated over time, based on user feedback and as further gaps and priorities emerge.

## Who is it for?

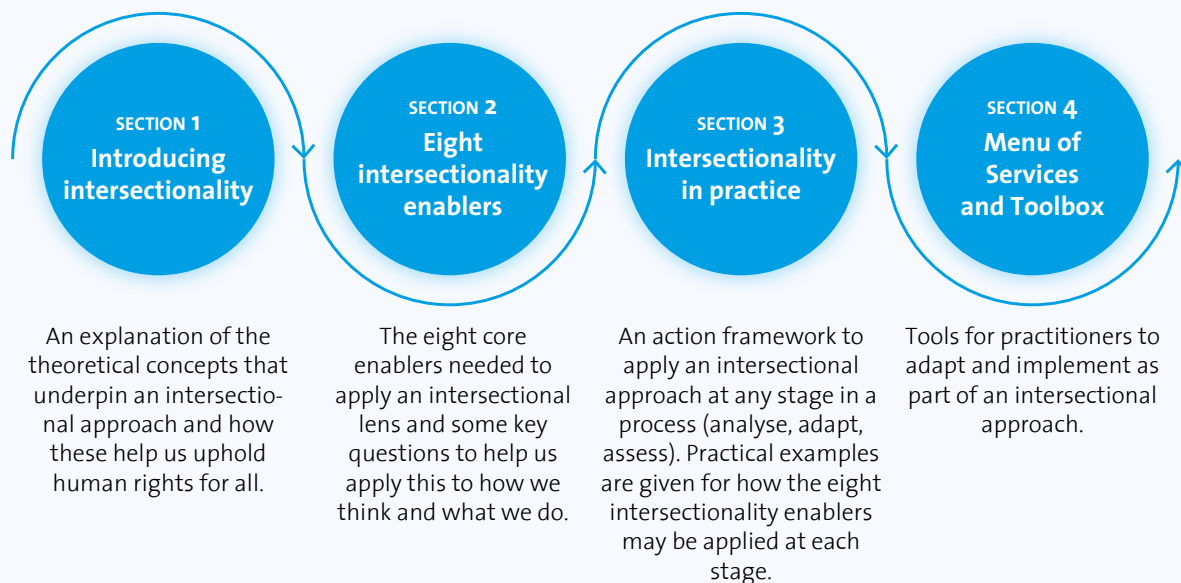
The Resource Guide and Toolkit is for practitioners, policy makers, experts, and advocates. The intended user for the project is UN Country Teams (UNCT) and colleagues across the UN system working to support Member States. However, it is applicable to any individual, civil society, government or private sector entity seeking to apply an intersectional lens to their work.

## How to use this Resource Guide and Toolkit

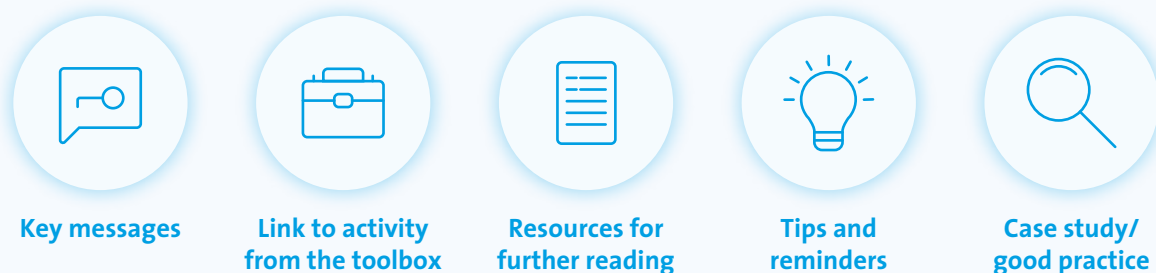
Intersectionality is an approach, a mindset; not a mere toolkit. It is a way of thinking, reflecting and working.

Transformative change begins where ‘the individual and system meet’ and intersectionality must be addressed through a process that focuses on self-reflection, relationships and contexts.<sup>3</sup> The effectiveness of an intersectional approach depends on how willing the user is to challenge themselves and interrogate their own attitudes and ways of working and cannot be achieved via checklists or prescriptive processes. With this mindset the user will be able to then apply the enablers and action framework across their existing work processes, whether this is at policy, programmatic or institutional level.

### Guide to Resource Guide and Toolkit sections



### Guide to icons



# SECTION 1: INTRODUCING INTERSECTIONALITY

This section:

- Introduces the concept of intersectionality
- Underscores the importance and relevance of intersectionality to human rights
- Frames intersectionality within UN Conventions and other normative frameworks

## What is intersectionality?

Originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality has gained popularity and is often discussed as a theory, methodology, paradigm, lens or framework. Many different definitions have been proposed, largely by academics and policymakers, and rarely by those most negatively impacted by it.<sup>4</sup>

It recognises that people’s lives are shaped by their identities, relationships and social factors. These combine to create intersecting forms of privilege and oppression depending on a person’s context and existing power structures such as patriarchy, ableism, colonialism, imperialism, homophobia and racism.<sup>5</sup>

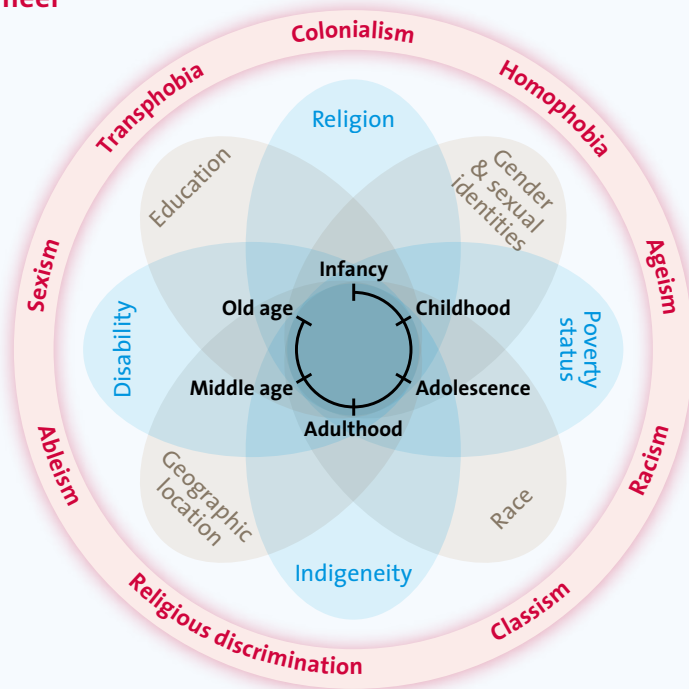
It is important to remember the transformative potential of intersectionality, which extends beyond merely a focus on the impact of intersecting identities. Crenshaw herself admits that she is “amazed at how it gets over- and under-used,” describing many applications as “just multiplying identity categories rather than constituting a structural analysis or a political critique.”<sup>6</sup>



**In essence, however, intersectionality is “a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power.”**

**- Kimberlé Crenshaw, 2015**

## Intersectionality Wheel



The original design is adapted from The Equality Institute’s version of the Intersectionality wheel



**Table 1: What intersectionality is and isn't\***

Focus of intersectionality	What it is...	What it isn't...
Social inequality	Mutually constituted and intersecting social categories	Adding up advantages and subtracting disadvantages
Dynamic nature of inequality	Inequalities as dynamic relationships	A static and siloed examination of inequalities
Contextual dependency	Understanding that power configurations are time- and location-dependent	Assumptions regarding the importance of any one or multiple social categories
Structural and political context	Structural and political factors that shape inequalities	Focus on individual behaviour without consideration of structural and political constraints
Power relations	An exploration on how social inequalities are shaped by power relations	Ignorance of the impact of power relations on social inequalities
Implications for most disadvantaged	Focus on implications for those most marginalised within a group	Focus on implications for those whose status is protected or elevated within a group
Reflexivity	Practitioners' reflection on how their own background identities shape the research process and interpretation of results	Practitioners' attempt to completely remove themselves from the research and analysis process

\* Adapted from Larson, E., et. al, (2016, April). "10 Best resources on...intersectionality with an emphasis on low- and middle-income countries", *Health Policy and Planning*, Oxford University Press, Issue 31.

## Why does it matter?

An intersectional lens is required to reach the furthest behind first and achieve:

- Substantive equality that leaves no one behind
- More inclusive and responsive policy making and service delivery
- Better use of resources: improved stakeholder collaboration builds a better understanding of the context, solution and results in more tailored services

Without an intersectional approach, the global pledge to leave no one behind will remain aspirational. Understanding the importance of intersectionality will lead us to ask ourselves who is left behind, why and under what circumstances.

It identifies hidden structural barriers and supports an understanding of how individual experiences differ, even within already marginalised or underrepresented groups. Failure to examine these elements risks to undermine the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the perpetuation of intersectional inequalities.

Many international human rights instruments treat different forms of discrimination as separate and distinct, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Table 2: Intersectional discrimination and rights violations**

Issue	Intersecting discrimination	Rights violations
Slavery in Mauritania <sup>7</sup>	Women and girls on the basis of birth (caste), ethnicity and gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Nationality (registration as a citizen)</li> <li>• Marry and found a family</li> </ul>
Forced sterilisation and abortion in Czech Republic <sup>8</sup>	Inequalities as dynamic relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inviolability of the person</li> <li>• Legal capacity</li> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Health care including sexual and reproductive health rights</li> <li>• Marry and found a family</li> </ul>
Forced drugging in the United States <sup>9</sup>	Older women and men with disabilities living in nursing homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Health care</li> <li>• Freedom of dignity</li> <li>• Free and informed consent</li> </ul>
Child or forced marriage in India <sup>10</sup>	Indigenous and rural women and girls on the basis of place of residence, ethnicity and gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Access to education</li> <li>• Economic participation</li> <li>• Access to information</li> <li>• Health including sexual and reproductive health</li> </ul>
Sexual violence in Democratic Republic of Congo <sup>11</sup>	Women and girls on the basis of gender, socioeconomic status and ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life</li> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Safety of the person</li> </ul>
Forced separation of indigenous Australian children <sup>12</sup>	Indigenous children on the basis of ethnicity, age, gender, cultural practices, physical and mental health, economic status and place of residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-determination</li> <li>• Family life</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Work</li> <li>• Freedom of religion or belief</li> <li>• Freedom of dignity</li> </ul>
Sexual violence in the Philippines <sup>13</sup>	Girls on the basis of gender, disability, age and socioeconomic status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality before the law including access to justice</li> <li>• Legal capacity</li> <li>• Physical integrity</li> <li>• Safety of the person</li> <li>• Access to education</li> <li>• Freedom of expression</li> </ul>

Below is a selection of just some of them (the nine core international human rights instruments are highlighted in bold).

In recent decades intersectionality has gained significant traction particularly in the context of international human rights law. The Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (2006) was the first human rights treaty to recognise multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and defined this further in General Comment No. 6 on Equality and Non-Discrimination. Increasingly, other non-binding instruments/recommendations are also referring to multiple discrimination.<sup>14</sup>

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**Table 3: Human rights instruments**

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Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - 1948
Convention relating to the Status of Refugees - 1951
Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons - 1954
United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples - 1960
Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages - 1962
International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) -1965
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) - 1966
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) - 1966
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) - 1979
Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief - 1981
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) -1984
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) - 1989
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPMW) - 1990
United Nations Principles for Older Persons -1991
Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities - 1992
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - 2006
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) - 2006
ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (C169) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - 2007
Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas - 2018

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**“Intersectional discrimination” occurs when a person with a disability or associated to disability suffers discrimination of any form on the basis of disability, combined with colour, sex, language, religion, ethnic, gender or other status. Intersectional discrimination can appear as direct or indirect discrimination, denial of reasonable accommodation or harassment. For example, while denial of access to general health-related information due to inaccessible format affects all persons on the basis of disability, the denial to a blind woman of access to family planning services restricts her rights based on the intersection of her gender and disability... States parties must address multiple and intersectional discrimination against persons with disabilities.”**

- General Comment No. 6 (2018) on Equality and Non-Discrimination: Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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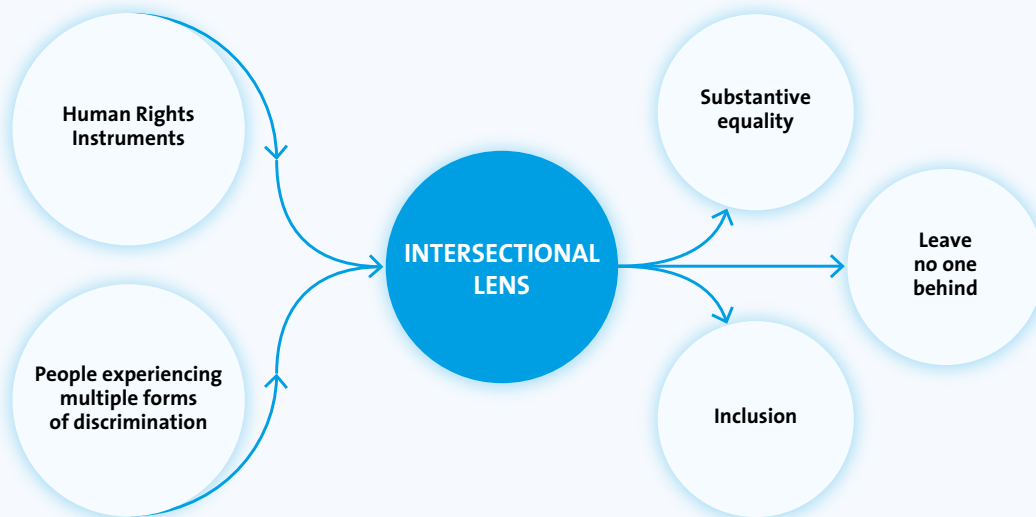
Intersectionality connects these international human rights instruments through one lens, helping us to recognise how experiences of multiple discrimination are not discrete. It is a tool for equity that supports contextual approaches to development and rejects the ‘one-size fits’ all programmatic approach cautioned against by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.<sup>15</sup>

**Intersectionality is not an ‘add and stir’ approach nor does it “provide definitive answers to social problems”; instead, it reframes our understanding of marginalisation and “creates spaces for reflexive consideration and critical engagement.”**



**- Mrs Rashida Manjoo, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences 2012**

**Applying an intersectional lens helps to connect human rights instruments to address the multiple forms of discrimination that people experience. Only by doing this will we be able to achieve equal outcomes for all.**



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# SECTION 2: EIGHT

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# INTERSECTIONALITY

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# ENABLERS

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This section:

- Outlines the key enablers that underpin an intersectional approach for users. Enablers are used to analyze and understand context, adopt corresponding initiatives, etc.
- Informs and influences the key considerations discussed in the next section (section 3) for applying an intersectional approach to each stage of development planning/ processes.

## 1. Reflexivity

Examine your own unconscious biases, beliefs, judgements and practices, as well as those of your organisation, and how these may influence how you work and engage with others. Don't take your assumptions for granted.

*Do I critically reflect on how my biases, attitudes and beliefs influence my opinions and actions? How does my privilege directly or indirectly disadvantage others? What can I do to address this?*

## 2. Dignity, choice and autonomy

Respect and uphold the dignity, choice and autonomy of all people. This cannot be assumed on behalf of others and decision-making cannot be substituted.

*Who has independence and who doesn't? Who shares their perspectives and who doesn't?  
Who has full control over how they live their life and who doesn't?*

## 3. Accessibility and universal design

Take a universal design approach, ensuring accessibility and reasonable accommodation.\*

*Have you asked people what they need to participate? Have you removed physical, transportation, information and communication barriers or provided reasonable alternatives? Have you addressed attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers?*

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**Reasonable accommodation** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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**Universal design** means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

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\*Source: UNCRPD. Also, CBM Global Disability Inclusion, Al Jubeh, K., Dard, B., Zayed Y., (2020, November). Accessibility GO! A Guide to Action, Delivering on 7 accessibility commitments.

## 4. Diverse knowledges

Prioritise and learn from people with diverse forms of knowledge who are typically excluded from 'expert' roles. There is a relationship between power and knowledge production and design.

*How do we know what we think we know? Who told us? Who has not been consulted?*

## 5. Intersecting identities

Consider how diverse identities interact to create unique social effects that vary according to time and place. Identities are not singular and distinct, nor are they additive.

*What are the intersecting identities of the people we engage with? Who is missing?*

## 6. Relational power

Be aware of and challenge relational power, including our own. People may experience power in one context/ time and oppression in another.

*Who holds power and in what circumstances? Who makes decisions? How are they accountable?*

## 7. Time and space

Recognise the influence of time and space. Nothing is static, privilege and disadvantage are fluid and influenced by our social positioning and location.

*Does privilege look different in this location? Across different generations?*

*Does discrimination look different in this location? Across different generations?*

## 8. Transformative and rights-based

Promote human rights and address inequalities by transforming social structures and changing the way resources and relationships are produced and allocated.

*Are we changing the way that resources are produced and/or distributed? Are we changing the way relationships are produced and/or distributed?*



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# SECTION 3:

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# INTERSECTIONALITY

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# IN PRACTICE

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This section:

- Provides key considerations for applying an intersectional approach to each stage of development planning/processes
- Should be adapted as needed for different contexts
- Does not have to be used in a linear way – you may want to revisit steps as your understanding increases
- Includes key questions, case studies and good practice examples to support more practical guidance
- Links to relevant tools from the toolbox in Section 4, as well as further resources to support you

## A framework for action

To apply an intersectional lens to policies and programmes and operational support we need to think holistically about what we are trying to change and how we are trying to change it. The below framework helps us to support the empowerment of those experiencing intersectional discrimination, realise rights and challenge unequal power relations.<sup>16</sup> It expresses how change happens across two primary dimensions. The first is across individual through to collective or systemic levels, at all levels of society. The second is across all visible and invisible forms of power; from social norms and exclusionary practices through to formal laws and policies.

The top two domains map the individual, family and community level elements, while the bottom two are systemic. The domains on the right map the formal and tangible while the left domains cover the informal, intangible elements. An effective – and intersectional – policy or programme will interrogate the relationships between each of the four domains.

The top left domain considers **agency, commitment, knowledge and skills** needed for equality. The top right domain is about **access to and control over resources and opportunities**. The bottom right domain considers **laws, policies, programmes, resource allocation and accountability mechanisms**; these are the visible rules that

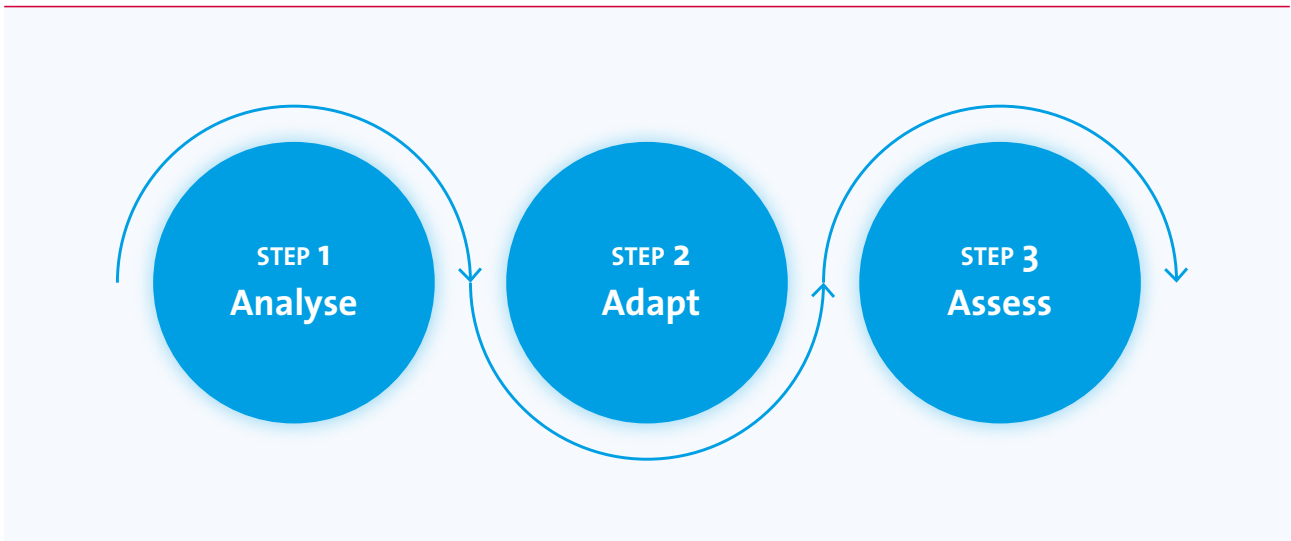
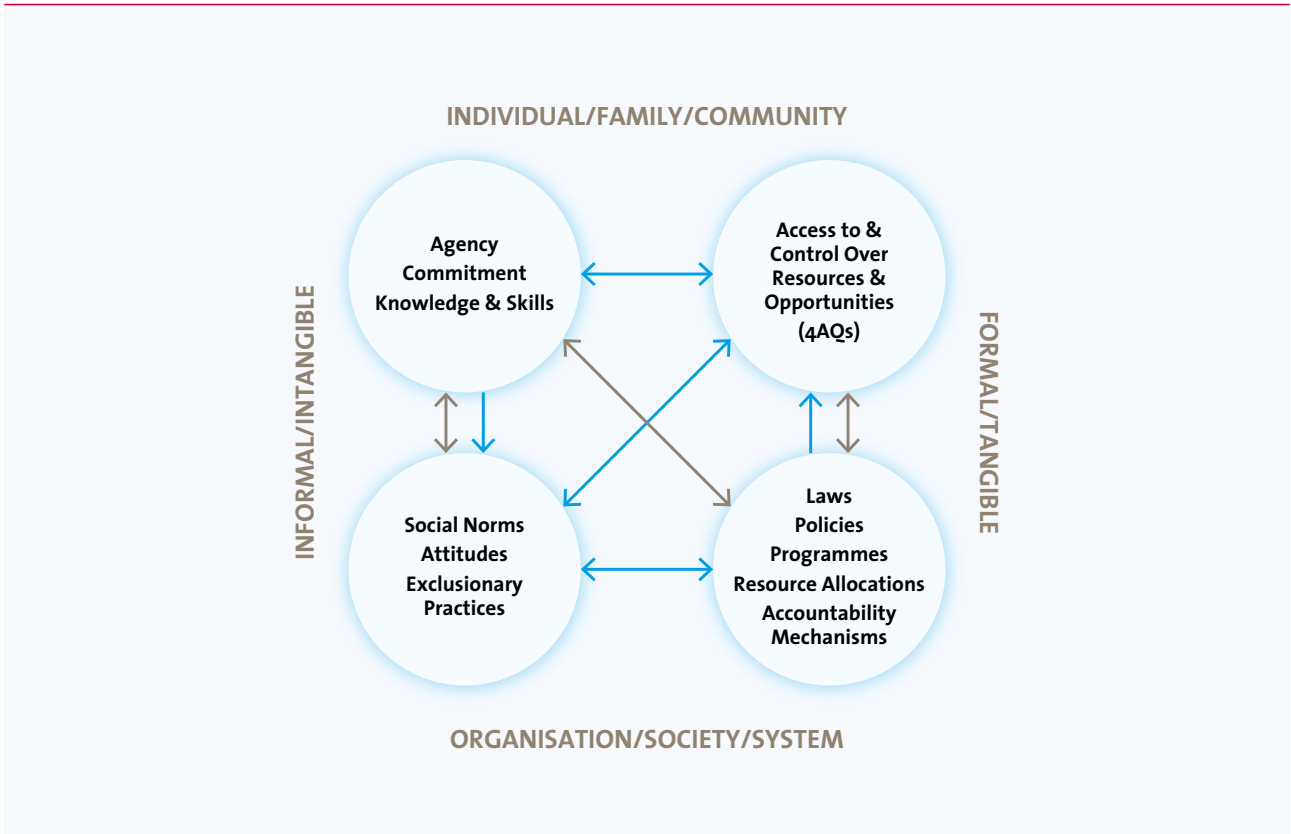
govern changes in terms of equality. The bottom left domain is often least considered (with the exception of some gender equality-focused programming) and considers the impact of **social norms, attitudes, exclusionary practices** on progress towards intersectional equality.

Sometimes working in one domain will lead to change in others, for example:

- Individuals supported to start up small businesses via village savings and loans groups (access to resources) might report increased self-confidence (agency).
- Organisations advocate to change the law so people with disabilities have equal recognition (laws) might lead to increased political participation (agency).
- Collective action promoting sexual and reproductive health rights (agency) might reduce stigma around women and girls' menstrual cycles (social norms).

But this doesn't always happen:

- Women might report increased self-confidence (agency) because of economic empowerment but if social norms do not change then still there may be gender based violence.
- Laws may be changed so people with disabilities have equal recognition (laws), but these may not be implemented and so access to resources is still an issue.



This framework should be applied dynamically, according to context and never as a checklist. This framework can be used to integrate an intersectional approach within existing tools and at various stages of a process.

- **Analysis:** identifying the gaps and determining a pathway for change specific to the context
- **Adaptation:** designing and implementing interventions that follow the determined pathway
- **Assessment:** understanding what changes have happened and what still needs to be done



## Analyse

**How will the policy, programme or action affect those experiencing intersectional discrimination? How will it promote equality and address discrimination?**

The first step of an intersectional approach is to analyse and explore the root causes of intersectional discrimination.

**Table 4: Analysing initiatives using the intersectionality enablers**

Issue	Actions
Reflexivity	Uncover and interrupt your own unconscious biases and proactively seek the feedback of those experiencing intersectional discrimination. Listen to others and be conscious of how your position/status may inhibit others from speaking up.
Dignity, choice and autonomy	Be sensitive to people's situations and right to inherent dignity. Respect all opinions, be careful not to make assumptions or rely on proxies.
Accessibility and universal design	Allocate resources (including budget) to ensure meaningful participation of all marginalised persons with disabilities including spoken, local and sign language interpretation, captioning, audio description, braille language, plain language, easy read formats.
Diverse knowledges	Actively engage with people who have intersecting experiences of discrimination at all stages of analysis. Determine an analysis framework that privileges and learns from diverse forms of knowledge. Dedicate resources (including time and budget) to seek out diverse knowledges, recognising different cultures and ways of communicating.
Intersecting identities	Explore how identities interact to create unique social effects and inequalities.
Relational power	Identify how power varies from one person to another and in what circumstances. Explore how systems and attitudes influence power dynamics.
Time and space	Consider how inequality and discrimination vary according to time (e.g., intergenerational change) and location (e.g., rural to urban, coastal, migrant, between countries).
Transformative/rights-based	Identify gaps in broader formal and informal systems based on analysis of impacts on intersecting identities. Analyse how social norms, roles and relations impact on those with intersecting experiences of discrimination.

## a) Check yourself

Intersectionality recognises that we all bring personal values, interests and beliefs based on our own unique lived experiences. The first step in any intersectional approach then is to explicitly reflect on and address our own power and subjectivity. You should consider:

- The different areas of your life and work where you hold power and areas where you experience disadvantage.
- Your personal values, experiences, interests, beliefs and political commitments.
- How these might influence the knowledge, values and biases that you bring to this policy, programme or action specifically.
- How these personal elements relate to your disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, etc. and inform your views and experiences of patriarchy, ableism, colonialism, racism and heterosexism through the life cycle.



### Tool 1: Power Flower

This activity will help you to reflect on your own subjectivity and assumptions in this process.



### Further resources

To learn more about unconscious bias, view the University of California, San Francisco's Office of Diversity & Research Unconscious Bias Resources: <https://tinyurl.com/y5bjazb7>

For an in-depth discussion on power and its central role in intersectional analysis, see Hankivsky, O., & Cormier, R. Intersectionality: Moving Women's Health Research and Policy Forward: <https://tinyurl.com/y47827xl21>



**TIP – this is not a one-off exercise – keep checking yourself and challenging your assumptions at every step!**

## b) Understand who is affected, and how

**“Intersectionality serves as a cautionary reminder not to speak for those who cannot, or ask others to share our agenda while they wait for their own”**

**- Kathryn Henne, 2013**



The next phase of analysis is to begin to define the problem or issue your intervention seeks to address, and explore who is affected by this issue, in what ways. By using a reflective, participatory and collaborative process you can begin to develop a more robust picture of the issue and uncover any assumptions, missing target populations or inequalities that are being reinforced.

- What is the issue or problem that the policy, programme or action is aiming to address?
- What assumptions or beliefs about what causes the problem and who is most affected underlie this representation of the problem?
- What role have individuals and/or communities that experience intersectional discrimination had in intervention in defining the problem, need or intervention?
- Who and what was involved in framing the problem this way?
- What types of evidence were used?
- How has the framing of the problem changed over time or across different places?
- Are any specific populations targeted and if so, are intersections identified or are they seen as homogenous?
- How were these identified? By whom? What actions are proposed?
- Are any unequal power dynamics identified? For example, what is the relationship between implementer and end-users?
- Who has responded to the problem and how? For example, how have governments and affected populations/communities responded?
- What are current responses trying to achieve? Do they focus on specific target groups? Who is part of the proposed intervention?
- Who is positioned to influence and implement the intervention?

What role can diverse communities play in these interventions? How will they be meaningfully engaged and supported to provide input into the design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions and policies?<sup>17</sup>



**Tool 2:**  
**Key considerations for creating safe spaces**



**REMINDER to consider who is defining the problem and who is answering these questions. Who is not answering these questions but should be?**

### c) Understand the root causes of intersectional discrimination



**“The way I try to understand the interconnection of all forms of subordination is through a method I call ‘the other question’. When I see something that looks racist I ask ‘Where is the patriarchy in this?’ When I see something sexist I ask ‘Where is the heterosexism in this?’ When I see something homophobic I ask ‘Where are the class interests in this?’”**

**- Mary Matsuda, 1991**

The final phase of analysis is to deepen your understanding of the root causes of intersectional discriminations and inequalities that may be raised in relation to the issue.



**Tool 3:**  
**Intersectional context analysis**

This tool provides a list of questions that you may need to consider to understand intersectionality in any given policy or programme setting. The questions should be contextualised, adapted and added to. They may also be used to supplement existing frameworks (see, for example, PRPD Country Situational Analysis Guidance) and ensure that analysis – and subsequent adaptation – really explores the specific intersecting forms of discrimination experienced in a particular context. You may not be able to answer all the questions; cover what is possible in each context and note where further investigation or analysis is required.

#### Further resources

For practical disability and gender analysis tools that help inform planning, practice and systems see CBM International’s Disability and Gender Analysis Toolkit: [https://www.cbm.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/CBM\\_disability\\_and\\_gender\\_analysis\\_toolkit\\_accessible.pdf](https://www.cbm.org/fileadmin/user_upload/CBM_disability_and_gender_analysis_toolkit_accessible.pdf)



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**Table 5: Examples of how to apply intersectional enablers at the Analysis step:**

Enabler	Applied	Not applied
Reflexivity	The lead consultant in an analysis of the situation of indigenous peoples in Australia considers their own individual connection to colonisation.	Two white men conduct a report on police violence against people with disabilities in the United States, even though police violence occurs disproportionately against people of colour in the United States. <sup>18</sup>
Dignity, choice and autonomy	Protection and anonymity are provided for community members so they can participate in analysis consultations but are worried about identification as they are a member of a stigmatised minority group e.g., albinism, LGBTIQ+, HIV-positive status.	Feedback is sought from young adults with intellectual disabilities via their parents regarding their access to sexual and reproductive health care services.
Accessibility and universal design	A diverse range of people with disabilities is consulted to identify the physical, communication, information and transportation barriers that can prevent people from engaging in the project.	Women with intellectual disabilities from remote areas are not consulted due to a failure to provide reasonable accommodation.
Diverse knowledges	Muslim women of all ages are consulted to understand their perspectives on women's empowerment.	An analysis of women's empowerment in Morocco assumes that women are coerced into wearing the hijab.
Intersecting identities	Analysis explicitly acknowledges that identities are not singular and seeks out the least represented within already marginalised groups and how intersectional discrimination impacts them (SEE CASE STUDY 2).	People with disabilities are considered as a homogenous group and consultation with the leadership of a national level OPD is considered sufficient for analysis.
Relational power	A power analysis of internal and external stakeholders is undertaken and used to frame the problem and its root causes.	An analysis identifies intersecting forms of oppression but does not connect this to who holds power and how the solution can be addressed.
Time and space	Analysis shows that younger generations of women and men in urban Papua New Guinea are more supportive of men's equal role in unpaid care work.	A situation analysis of Roma women living in the United Kingdom fails to consider the generational differences in responding to intimate partner violence.
Transformative/ rights-based	Analysis of the situation of indigenous populations considers the impact of systemic violence and intergenerational trauma.	Analysis looks at availability of health services without consideration of cultural norms.

## Case study 1: Constant reflection to avoid perpetuating unconscious bias is essential, even for development practitioners

Social norms and gender biases are present in everybody, consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, it is relevant to work to deconstruct these biases in everyone involved in the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities, including themselves.

In Ethiopia, although an established and recognised organisation had developed an in-depth gender assessment with some disability-sensitive dimension, it turned out only six men and one boy with disabilities had participated in activities. The study mentioned the general perception people hold on disability, exclusion and stigma, and how women and girls with disabilities faced obstacles to marriage or lacked companionship. Bridging the Gap-II (BtG-II) has supported this organisation in designing adequate terms of reference and activities for the given project, to strengthen the inclusion of women with disabilities, presenting them as active members of society.

In Sudan, one of the localities in North Kordofan did not let any representative of women with disabilities participate in the trainings because the community belonged to an ethnic minority which does not allow women to participate in public activities. To minimise the impact of social and gender biases, BtG-II has organised trainings and consultative workshops in Sudan for government officials, OPDs and other stakeholders on inclusion of disability rights and a gender perspective in legal and policy frameworks, together with awareness-raising sessions to change the negative attitudes and social norms towards women and girls with disabilities.

In Burkina Faso, thanks to a training about menstruation and the preparation of suitable sanitary napkins, women with disabilities felt free to talk about the management of their periods, and were then able to make their own reusable sanitary napkins, a subject which was previously seen as taboo.

“The society of Burkina Faso tends to think that we, the disabled, do not have the right to be part of this society. We (the disabled) are not trusted because they think we do not have skills.” President of UNAFEHB, Burkina Faso.

Source: Mayher, Cristina Lopez, (2021, April). *Bridging the Gap II. The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities*. Brussels: European Union.



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## Case study 2: Acknowledging people with disabilities are not a homogenous group improves intervention results

Through a UNPRPD joint programme, national guidelines and a toolkit for GBV prevention were developed in **Timor-Leste**, and ADTL (umbrella OPD), the Community Based Rehabilitation Network (CBRN) and 10 lead facilitators including facilitators with disabilities held training on the toolkit for prevention of GBV to service providers in Dili in the justice, health, and social services sectors. Recognising the inter-sectional dimensions of disability and gender, OPDs (ADTL and CBRN-TL) participated in the national Gender Coordination Group meeting facilitated by the Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion and UN Women in February 2020.

Two OPD members are also representatives of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative National Civil Society Reference Group, which was established in 2020 and ensures OPD voices are included in national mainstream efforts to address GBV.

Towards ensuring the sustainability of engagement of women with disabilities, the UN has included support to OPDs in advancing disability-inclusive services for survivors of violence and capacity strengthening of OPDs in joint UN projects, such as the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative (involving UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and ILO), and the UN-KOICA Together for Equality Project (led by UN Women, with UNDP, UNFPA and IOM). OPDs have been involved in the design and governance mechanisms of these initiatives, reaffirming the investment in engagement and capacity of persons with disabilities in development efforts.

Source: UNPRPD, *Empower for Change – Reducing violence and discrimination against women and children with disabilities in Timor-Leste*. Programme Report available at <http://www.unprpd.org/our-programmes/76>



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## Adapt

### How will you design or change the policy, programme or action to better meet the priorities of those most marginalised?

The second step is to take the understanding gained in the analysis step and **adapt** the policy, programme or action. This is a vital step in turning the understanding gained via the first step into collective action. Many issues may have been identified in the first step and this second step aims to determine if and how action is to be taken on any of these issues.

This should be decided based on the priorities of those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination.

#### Tool 4: Analysis to adaptation



Use this tool to explore examples of good practice across these four areas and consider the specific adaptations that you may need to take according to the initial analysis conducted using the Intersectional Analysis tool (Tool 3).

**Table 6: Adapting initiatives using the intersectionality enablers**

Issue	Actions
Reflexivity	Recognise limitations and that your perspective is only one reality.
Dignity, choice and autonomy	Create safe and accessible spaces for all to participate equally including separate spaces where necessary.
Accessibility and universal design	Information and feedback mechanisms are provided in a range of accessible formats, including local languages.
Diverse knowledges	Define and design programme objectives and activities collaboratively with people with experience of intersectional discrimination. Local staff are diverse, and the programme undertakes a proactive approach to inclusive recruitment.
Intersecting identities	Process, output and outcome indicators use qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure progress towards equality for the most marginalised.
Relational power	Activities challenge attitudes, stigma, stereotypes and discrimination faced by the most marginalised.
Time and space	Flexible and regular monitoring systems that can analyse the influence of external factors.
Transformative/ rights-based	Adopt specific measures to address equality and non-discrimination and promote the participation and empowerment of the most marginalised.

### TIP/GUIDANCE ON INCLUSIVE BUDGETING

“The budget is the government’s most important economic policy document. A carefully developed, implemented and evaluated budget is central to the realisation of all rights.”

Participatory budgeting has often been successful when Civil Society Organisations have been active in pushing for representation of marginalised groups.



During the Workers’ Party administration between 2001 and 2004, the government of São Paulo introduced ‘segment’ delegates to participatory budget councils, in addition to territorial and thematic representatives. These delegates represented nine target groups: Afro-Brazilians, elderly people, children and adolescents, youth, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, women, indigenous groups, homeless people and people with disabilities. Most of the proposals and decisions made in the participatory budgeting forums and council meetings were implemented.<sup>19</sup>

### Further resources

To learn more about developing intersectional indicators via a human rights-based approach to data management see Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)’s Guidance Note: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf>

A guide to measurement and implementation of human rights indicators is also available at: [Human\\_rights\\_indicators\\_en.pdf](#) (ohchr.org)



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**Table 7: Examples of how to apply intersectional enablers at the Adaptation step:**

Enabler	Applied	Not applied
Reflexivity	A human resource team recognises its current recruitment processes limit opportunities for people from marginalised backgrounds and introduces methods to interrupt bias.	Traditional recruitment and promotion processes do not recognise the subjectivity implicit in merit-based approaches and lead to teams and work cultures that lack diversity.
Dignity, choice and autonomy	Establish a project steering committee with decision-making power that includes underrepresented people from already marginalised groups.	Awareness-raising materials to promote the project reinforce stereotypes and images are used without consent.
Accessibility and universal design	Sufficient resources and funding are provided to ensure full accessibility and reasonable accommodation (CASE STUDY 1).	Access to justice programme for survivors with psychosocial and learning disabilities consider courtroom accessibility and reasonable accommodations.
Diverse knowledges	Support unplanned activities requested or organised by women with disabilities (CASE STUDY 2).	Interventions to support access to menstrual hygiene products for women with disabilities in rural Nepal are designed by international disability experts who do not take cultural and gender norms into account.
Intersecting identities	Priorities of those experiencing intersectional discrimination are mainstreamed within a gender-responsive budgeting initiative.	Disability-specific surveys limit data collection of and disaggregation by disability.
Relational power	The programme intervention is designed and led by the women who are the primary beneficiaries of the project (CASE STUDY 3).	Women with disabilities are invited to participate in a women's economic empowerment programme but there is no engagement with or attempt to address concerns of husbands and mothers-in-law.
Time and space	Context specific data is consistently collected and disaggregated to understand barriers faced by those most marginalised in rural areas.	Measures for participation and empowerment targeting people with disabilities do not address barriers faced by people in rural areas, including barriers due to sexism and colonialism.
Transformative/ rights-based	Strengthen capacity building and coordination between movements (SEE CASE STUDY 4).	Gender stereotypes are reinforced in education curriculum and training developed to support access to education for children with disabilities.

### Case study 1: Resourcing for full accessibility is essential for addressing intersectionality

Implementation usually requires adapting or adding actions to the original design scheme, as there are unexpected events and elements to take into consideration. To achieve this, activities must offer space, both in terms of resources and timing, to implement such modifications and really offer valuable interventions for women and girls with disabilities.

In Ethiopia, training for women with disabilities was provided taking into consideration the diversity of the group. Two deaf trainees were assigned a sign language interpreter, and facilitators paced themselves to give time for interpretation. The venue was made accessible to those with physical disability. The trainings didn't have PowerPoint or other written materials accommodating people with low literacy. When videos were played, facilitators narrated what was shown to make it relatable to all participants. A woman from Somalia spoke a different language than those of the facilitators. Thanks to the available resources, organisers brought in a Somali interpreter the second day and have been availing that service to the participant in all other trainings.

Similarly, in Burkina Faso, BtG-II ensured that the diversity of women and girls with disabilities could participate in the activities, by providing assistants for those who needed it, and offering translation into sign language. The translation of documents into Braille was in progress at the time of the elaboration

Source: Mayher, Cristina Lopez, (2021, April). *Bridging the Gap II. The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities*. Brussels: European Union.

### Case study 2: Supporting unplanned activities requested or organised by women with disabilities strengthens their leadership and intervention outcomes

In **Zimbabwe**, the UNPRPD supported joint UN programme-generated knowledge and evidence on *Interface of Disability Culture and Gender in Zimbabwe: Perspectives from communities* to assess discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities and mapped "*Aspirations of Women and Girls with Disabilities*". These have become key tools for raising awareness on the CRPD and an entry point for dialogue on the status of women and girls with disabilities in Zimbabwe. This resource material was used to inform the Zimbabwe CCA development processes and was noted as a key reference document. Deaf Women Included – an OPD that seeks to represent deaf women and promote gender-responsive approaches – was selected to be the main contractor to undertake the UNPRPD activity on development of a Sign Language Manual of Court Usage.

Source: UNPRPD, *Advancing the Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Zimbabwe*, <http://www.unprpd.org/our-programmes/79>

### Case study 3: Positioning beneficiaries as programme leaders

When evaluators were investigating the working conditions and experiences of women in domestic service in Asia, they found that the intervention was designed and led by the women who were the primary beneficiaries. However, this situation had to be fought for by the programme designer who was working with certain stakeholder groups who saw themselves as the most appropriate spokespersons for the women (e.g., employment agents). Working with care, the programme manager persuaded these stakeholders of the importance of hearing the voices of the beneficiaries and the possible gains to be made by positioning them as leaders. Once convinced, these gatekeepers became very supportive and became advocates of the process in other intervention sites.

Source: Stephens, A., Lewis, E.D., Reddy, S., (2018). *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalised Voices (ISE4GEMs): A new approach for the SDG era*. New York: UN Women Headquarters.

### Case study 4: Two-way capacity building supports intersectionality and coordination between movements

One organisation, Pinoy Deaf Rainbow, focuses on capacity building for diverse SOGIESC people who are deaf by providing leadership skills training and human rights advocacy. Pinoy Deaf Rainbow also partners with organisations to increase the organisation's ability to provide accessible HIV-awareness workshops and be inclusive of deaf people with diverse SOGIESC.

Respondents shared how two-way capacity building and being invited, or inviting others, to join meetings alongside people or organisations who were at the intersection, such as HIV-oriented organisations, were good entry points to explore how people with disabilities with diverse SOGIESC could be better supported by organisations. Being invited to the table to discuss anti-discrimination laws and policies was described as a good opportunity to increase awareness of people at the intersection.

One respondent shared how there had been opportunities for joint advocacy with a DPO and a diverse SOGIESC organisation moderated through a civil society network, which might suggest that an external party is sometimes needed to help broker the start of a working partnership.

One interviewee who is a person with disability and diverse SOGIESC described how their confidence was built when they were involved in training and capacity-building activities or observed others nominated to positions of leadership. This enabled them to have more of a voice, and led to peer-development opportunities. It was noted that when staff at organisations were open as being a person with disability with diverse SOGIESC the organisation itself became more accepting and understanding of people at this intersection. The feminist movement was described as a model that was drawn upon to help facilitate this inclusion of people at the intersection.

In particular, a mandate from funders for the specific inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC in disability-inclusive development projects was identified as a key entry point of this report.

Source: Edge Effect, CBM-Nossal Institute, (2020, May). *Out of the Margins: An intersectional analysis of disability and diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics in humanitarian and development contexts*. Canberra.

## Assess

### How will you evaluate whether the policy, programme or action has met the needs and priorities of those most marginalised?

The third step considers how to assess the level of change that has been achieved; whether a policy, programme or action has adequately addressed all eight intersectionality enablers.

### a) Check yourself, and your relationship to the context

As at all stages, critical self-reflection is essential to achieving the goals of an intersectional approach. Before embarking on a learning or evaluative process it is important that the evaluator/practitioner again considers their own personal history, characteristics and experiences of discrimination and academic training and how these relate to the process at hand.

**Table 8: Assessing initiatives using the intersectionality enablers**

Issue	Actions
Reflexivity	Consistently and critically check your own attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and interpretations of results and outcomes. Recognise that all learning and evaluation represents the position or viewpoint of the evaluator.
Dignity, choice and autonomy	Create safe spaces in which those most marginalised can be their true selves, without having to filter what they share or express but also, without causing further harm and oppression to others in that space.
Accessibility and universal design	Ensure diverse, creative, respectful and accessible methods (e.g., sign language, spoken, written, tactile sign, images, etc.) are used to consult with people who are most marginalised in monitoring and evaluation processes. Share back learning and evaluation findings to communities and a wide range of stakeholders using local languages and accessible formats.
Diverse knowledges	Regularly take time to listen to those experiencing intersectional discrimination and adjust implementation accordingly. Be led by the diverse knowledges of others and use this as the starting point for reflection and evaluation.
Intersecting identities	Consistently collect and analyse disaggregated data following OHCHR principles of participation, self-identification, transparency, privacy and accountability. Rely on the leadership of people who are most marginalised in evaluation teams.
Relational power	Frame learning and evaluation questions according to the priorities of people most marginalised in the programme context.
Time and space	Clearly explain the specific context in which the learning or evaluation has taken place and recognise the impact that external factors have on findings/results.
Transformative/ rights-based	Learning and evaluation questions focus on how programmes perpetuate or challenge existing power and social structures as well as inequalities. Disseminate findings in ways that encourage the use of results to enhance human rights and systemic change.

Questions to reflect on could include, for example:

- How is your involvement, knowledge and expertise perceived by others?
- How is knowledge shared if knowledge is viewed as an imposition?

### **TIP/GUIDANCE – Learning from diverse knowledges – indigenous research scholars insights to respectful engagement**

Consider how indigenous knowledge in the specific context of a policy, programme or initiative may be centred in the assessment process.

Maori people emphasise the need to learn the basic principles of interacting in a trustworthy way within their culture.

- Whakapapa learning begins with revealing where you come from and who your family is; what are your family connections?
- Telling it like it is, to the right people. Practitioners must identify people in the community to engage in the learning process and be honest throughout.
- The importance of *kanohi kit e kanohi* (being present) and *kanohi kitea* (the seen face). Practitioners must be present and face to face with the people.
- Being knowledgeable about the history of research in this community. Practitioners need to be aware of the history of legislation, policy, discrimination and oppression, as well as the community's cultural legacy.
- Whakaiti means being humble, not standing out from the crowd. Practitioners should acknowledge that their knowledge is limited, and they are eager to learn from the community members.
- Whakahihi is the opposite, being boastful or bragging. Practitioners should not appear boastful or self-praising.

These Maori scholars provide us with a way of upholding the central intersectionality principle of diverse knowledges and help us think through ways of addressing power differentials that may help with open sharing of life experiences.<sup>21</sup>

- What else do you need to take responsibility for? What are your interpretations and understanding of your role in this (complex) setting?<sup>20</sup>
- Do you know the community or context 'well enough' to link this learning with positive action?

### **b) Collect data and identify emerging themes**

An intersectional approach to data collection again requires acknowledgement of the power dynamics and need for building trust between those collecting data, doing the learning/evaluating and those most marginalised. While the specific methods for data collection are familiar and include observation, key informant interviews, focus groups as well as quantitative and disaggregated data, the difference lies in how you design and collate that information, in collaboration with the people you are collecting the data from.

#### **Refer to Tool 2: Creating safe spaces**



- How will you measure policy implementation and outcomes?
- How will you know if inequalities have been reduced?
- What intersectional factors will be measured in the evaluation process? Will they be measured using both qualitative and quantitative methods?
- How will affected communities be meaningfully engaged in assessing the reduction of inequalities?
- What are other ways of knowing (e.g., experiential, practical, symbolic) and how can you ensure these are part of the assessment?
- What will be the measure of success?
- What are the major areas of discrimination and disadvantage?
- What are the inequalities and barriers that may prevent those most marginalised from participating or benefiting from the policy, programme or action?
- What are the specific initiatives or actions needed to a) remove these barriers; and b) empower those most marginalised?
- What are the results that go beyond practical needs and contribute to transformative change, addressing e.g., social norms?
- What is known of the aspirations of those most marginalised?

- Is there evidence of any made worse off by the policy, programme or action?
- Is there evidence of any who did not participate in the evaluation itself?<sup>22</sup>

**TIP/REMINDER – Be careful not to assume positive outcomes based only on your own perspective or reality.**

To illustrate this, consider the popular European fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood”. A little girl visits her grandmother in the woods. A wolf comes and eats the grandmother, but a hunter comes and chops the wolf open, and the grandmother emerges ‘unharméd’. The story ends with “They all lived happily ever after”. Whose reality is this? Does the wolf agree? Would forest dwellers or proponents of reforestation agree? Has the incident left all those involved without trauma? Who has de ined happy in this instance?<sup>23</sup>



#### Further resources

For further guidance on a systemic evaluation approach that integrates intersectional analysis see Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Environments and Marginalised Voices (ISE4GEM) framework: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/9/ise4gems-a-new-approach-for-the-sdg-era>



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**Table 9: Examples of how to apply intersectional principles at the Assessment step:**

Enabler	Applied	Not applied
Reflexivity	An evaluator builds in self-checks for reflection as part of evaluation plans.	An evaluator draws conclusions about the success of a project based on their own beliefs and attitudes.
Dignity, choice and autonomy	An assessment of an education project for indigenous communities in Mexico considers educational outcomes and quality according to their values of self-determination.	The assessment measures educational outcomes based on the curriculum set by historical and current colonial powers.
Accessibility and universal design	Evaluation findings are shared in local languages and accessible formats.	Evaluation findings are contained in a final report that is written in English only.
Diverse knowledges	Indigenous women and girls with disabilities are actively engaged as experts and leaders in evaluation teams.	Evaluation relies on technical expert evaluators.
Intersecting identities	An economic empowerment programme evaluates impact on women with children with disabilities.	Findings assume that the economic empowerment programme benefitted all women equally, without considering differing unpaid care roles.
Relational power	Evaluation questions are framed to look at the root causes of an issue and are asked of a wide range of people (CASE STUDY 1).	Evaluation questions are informed solely by the perspectives of programme management.
Time and space	An evaluation of a women's political participation programme identifies specific factors linking gender and the environment and how they vary depending on country and individual contexts (CASE STUDY 2).	An evaluation of an eye health project across different locations is based on a standard set of indicators with no assessment of differences in transportation, infrastructure and environment, fees and subsidies, timing of services.
Transformative/ rights-based	Evaluation of a fistula programme in Nigeria considers the broader issues of gendered social norms including early marriage.	A fistula programme is evaluated as successful because the target number of reconstructive surgeries was met.

## Case study 1: Recognising power in the framing of evaluation questions

A study of sexual abuse in a residential school for deaf people provides one poignant example of the misuse of power (Mertens, 1996). “I was contacted by a consulting firm to collect data for a contract they had received from a state’s Department of Education. The consulting firm did not mention sexual abuse in our initial communications; however, I discovered allegations when I asked for a copy of the request for proposals (RFP) and the proposal. The first line of the RFP stated: ‘Because of serious allegations of sexual abuse at the residential school for the deaf, an external evaluator should be brought into the school to systematically study the context of the school.’ When I mentioned this serious issue to the consulting firm contact person they acknowledged it was a problem but suggested we could address it by asking if the curriculum included sex education and if the students could lock their doors at night. I indicated that I thought the problem was more complex than that, but I was willing to go to the school and discuss the evaluation project with the school officials.

“Upon my arrival, I met with the four men who constituted the upper management of the school. For about 30 minutes they talked about the need to look at the curriculum and the administrative structure. They did not mention the topic of sexual abuse. So, I raised the topic, saying, ‘I’m a bit confused. I have been here for about a half hour, and no one has yet mentioned the issue of sexual abuse, which is the basis for the Department of Education’s requirement of an external evaluation.’ After some chair scraping and coughing, one school administrator said, ‘That happened last year, and I am sure if you ask people, they will say that they just want to move on.’ The administrators were correct that the incidents resulting in the termination of the superintendent’s contract and the jailing of two staff members had happened in the spring of the year, and I was there in the fall. I assured them that it was indeed quite possible that some people would say that they would prefer to move on, but it was important for me to ask a wide range of people two questions: What were the factors that allowed the sexual abuse to happen? What would need to be changed in order to reduce the probability that it would recur? I found that there were many answers to these questions, one of which was a desire to not talk about it and move on. However, allowing those with power to frame the questions would have resulted in a continuation of an overall context that had permitted many young deaf people to be seriously psychologically and physically hurt. A different approach to research and evaluation is needed to address the needs of those who have not been adequately represented in these contexts.”

Source: Mertens, D., (2009). *Transformative Research and Evaluation*. New York: Guilford Press.





## Case study 2: Identifying links in different contexts

Applying the ISE4GEM approach in an evaluation of women’s political participation, we were able to identify interesting linkages and inter-relationships between environments and the other gender environments and marginalised voices (GEMs) dimensions. For example, in one country, women participating in an agricultural initiative exercised their political participation when they engaged local authorities on climate change issues that were negatively affecting them. In another country, women were supported to increase their participation in disaster risk management groups, an area where women’s participation in decision making is limited but of increasing importance. In a third country, supporting women to engage and participate in climate change legislation at the local level was identified as an area that required attention. In a fourth country, the enhanced environmental issues that indigenous groups may face were highlighted. An overall finding of the evaluation was that more learning and capacity is needed to understand and address the intersectionality between gender and environments. The simple process of asking informants if they saw a connection between the GEMs dimensions in the context of women’s political participation led to reflection and more explicit awareness of a connection, even if what that connection was or meant for their work was not yet clear.

Source: Stephens, A., Lewis, E.D., Reddy, S., (2018). *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalised Voices (ISE4GEMs): A new approach for the SDG era*. New York: UN Women Headquarters.



# SECTION 4: MENU OF SERVICES AND TOOLBOX

Tool	Purpose	When to use	Who to use	Time needed
<b>1. Power Flower</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces basic intersectionality concepts</li> <li>Contextualises intersectionality in different places and spaces</li> <li>Explores the role of self in relation to power</li> </ul>	Anytime, but ideally at the start of any new policy or programme design process.	Anyone new or in need of refresher training on intersectionality basics. Policy makers, practitioners, workshop facilitators and all those wishing to learn more about intersectionality and relational power.	1.5-2 hours
<b>2. Creating Safe Spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines key considerations for designing and maintaining safe and accessible spaces for all</li> <li>Supports a 'Do No Harm' approach that incorporates effective accountability mechanisms and risk mitigation</li> <li>Promotes self-reflection and active listening skills as core to creating safe spaces</li> </ul>	When preparing for consultations, meetings, interviews, workshops and other forms of engagement. It should also guide how you interact with colleagues within your workplaces.	Practitioners and workshop facilitators.	N/A
<b>3. Intersectionality Context Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An exercise that informs an intersectional approach to country analyses, strategies, stakeholder mapping and other planning processes</li> <li>Can be applied at local, national or international levels</li> </ul>	Anytime, but ideally at the start of any new policy or programme design process.	Policy makers, practitioners and workshop facilitators	3-4 hours
<b>4. Analysis to Adaptation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical integrity</li> <li>Access to education</li> <li>Economic participation</li> <li>Access to information</li> <li>Health including sexual and reproductive health</li> </ul>	After the context analysis is complete (Tool 3).	Policy makers, practitioners and workshop facilitators.	2-3 hours

# TOOL 1: POWER FLOWER - EXPLORING YOUR IDENTITY AND PRIVILEGE

## When to use this tool

This is a tool for self-reflection which has been designed for workshop and group meeting settings. It can be used at any point in time but ideally, it should be used at the start of any new initiative as a way to positively influence our approaches and actions from the outset.

## Overview

Every one of us has multiple, nuanced identities that form our lives. Just as our own identities are complex, so too are those of the people we work with and encounter. Gender, race, disability, ethnicity, age, education – among others – intersect and interact to shape who we are and what challenges and contradictions we confront. Exploring our multiple characteristics in a group setting helps build personal and collective awareness of our respective circumstances.

## Purpose

- To introduce the basic concept of intersectionality, highlighting how diverse identities coexist within each of us and change throughout our lives from infancy to maturity.
- To explore the ways in which our own intersecting identities contribute to both oppression and privilege, illustrating how power is relational and always dynamic.
- To reflect on how these forces operate in people's lives, deepening our understanding of how identity, power, subordination, and exclusion affect our organisations, ourselves as individuals, and our social change strategies.

## Time

90-120 minutes depending on size of group

## Participants

No more than 25 people

## Facilitator competencies

- In order to initiate meaningful discussions with critical self-reflection, it is imperative that a person with lived experience of intersectional discrimination leads or co-facilitates the session.
- This activity can bring up sensitive issues and therefore requires at least one of the facilitators to be very experienced, especially at constructively navigating the direction of discussions.

## Accessibility considerations

- Since this is a visual-based activity, the facilitator(s) will need to pay attention to ensuring that all visual references are described clearly for any blind and partially-sighted participants. For completing the personal identity exercise (step 4), provide the participant(s) with a sheet of card each suitable for their Braille slate.
- Provide a short break halfway through the session to allow any participants requiring a sensory break to have a brief rest.
- Have some support assistants on hand for any participants who may request them.

## Materials and space needed

- Sheets of paper in a variety of colours with flower outline – 1 per participant (see below)
- Flipchart sheets and metacards
- Scissors
- Markers and pens
- Tape/blue tack or sticky wall
- Empty wall or floor space
- Braille slate, stylus and card for blind participants if needed

## Process

1. Facilitator preparation:
  - a. Cut out 12 large petal shapes and a medium-sized circle from flipchart paper and place them on the wall or floor, sticking them together so they are arranged in the shape of a flower.

- b. Photocopy for each person an A4 sheet of paper with a pre-drawn flower with 12 petals.
  - c. Each petal will represent one category, which can include classifications such as: gender, race, ethnicity, language, faith, age group, socioeconomic status, education level, disability, location (e.g., urban, sub-urban, rural, remote), relationship status (e.g., married, divorced, partnered, single), sexual orientation, citizenship status, housing (e.g., owned, rented, subsidised, shelter, camp, none) etc. Therefore, prepare each category on a metacard ready to place on each petal. With the group you will narrow this down to 12 categories, but it is a good idea to prepare a few more than you need and have some spare cards ready for relevant suggestions from the group.
  - d. The central part of the flower will represent the group's context for which they will reflect. This is typically the country that the group is based in but can be adapted to suit the scope of the exercise and make-up of the group to reflect other contexts such as a province, community or even a global organisation.
2. Seat the group in a circle or semi-circle depending on whether you have used the floor or wall to place the large flower. Introduce participants to the purpose of the activity, highlighting that this is a safe space for us all to reflect on who we are and how certain characteristics/identities we possess may enable or hinder not only our everyday lives, but also the lives of others.
  3. Begin the activity by agreeing with the group the context that the activity will focus on (e.g., XX country) and write this on the centre circle of the flower. Then agree with the participants the different social characteristics/identities that they would like to explore with regard to the agreed context. The facilitator can kickstart this by suggesting some ideas from the cards already prepared. By the end, each of the 12 petals will have a category stuck to it.
  4. Hand out the A4 sheet/card with the 12 flower petals to each participant and ask them to note both the agreed categories and their own personal characteristics/identities corresponding to each category.
  5. After completing the individual flowers, reflect as a group on questions such as:
    - a. Have any aspects of your identity changed over the years? If so, what factors influenced those changes?
    - b. Which identities do you feel you have choice over and which do you feel are decided for you?
    - c. How have the intersection of your identities affected who you are today?
    - d. What aspects of your identity do you think have influenced your relationship with others?
  6. By now the facilitator(s) should have created a safe space for participants to openly share their opinions and ideas. Next, go back to the main flower on the wall/floor and go through each category asking the group who they consider as having the most power within the context. (*For example, which age group in XX country typically holds the most power?*) Once there is consensus, write in these dominant characteristics one by one inside each corresponding petal.
  7. When finished, ask the group to return to their individual flowers and count the number of petals in



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which their personal characteristics/identities match those noted as dominant characteristics in the big flower. Participants will possess anything from zero to 12 matches.

8. Ask the group to stand up and reorganise themselves in the chairs according to their number of matches. One end of the circle will represent the highest number and the other the lowest.
9. Once the participants have found their new seats, ask them to sit down and take a look at the new arrangement. What patterns do they notice?
10. Facilitate a discussion around questions such as:
  - a. How does it feel to be where you are placed? Did you expect it? Why/why not?
  - b. Do you think where you are sitting now provides a realistic reflection of your power status within your context? Why/why not?
  - c. Are you surprised by where some other people are sitting in relation to you? If so, why?
  - d. Were you ever conscious of your power and privilege in relation to others before?
  - e. In the future do you think that you are likely to stay where you are, or move up or down the power ladder? Which characteristics are likely to influence your answer?
  - f. If you were to change the context, say to your organisation, how different do you think the flower and your position would be?
  - g. What does this activity tell you about your own power or potential for exercising power? If you now knowingly hold power and privilege over others, how might this influence your everyday life and work? How might you be able to redress the imbalance?

### Notes for the facilitator(s) during this deeper discussion:

- For some people, this activity can be uncomfortable, so be prepared to step in when needed while also being sensitive to the existing power dynamics in the room.
- Highlight any observations you make that help to illustrate issues around intersectionality such as intersecting identities, relational power and time and space – for example:
  - Because each individual has many identities, individuals can be dominant in one relationship and subordinate in another.
  - Power is often least visible to the powerful. Those with more power are often comfortable giving an opinion based on ‘gut feeling’ alone. The less

power you have the less likely you are to speak without back-up evidence e.g., gender dynamics mean that women are more likely to feel the need to substantiate their opinions than men.

- Those with more power can easily fall into the trap of looking at their power in relation to those more powerful than them (i.e., those not in the room) rather than those less powerful than them. Conversely, people with less power typically acknowledge that there are many more with less power than them.

### Debriefing notes

- We are members of more than one community at the same time and so can experience oppression and privilege simultaneously. We have, for example, professional identities and identities as wife or mother. How does this work? A doctor is respected in her profession but may suffer domestic violence at home in her private life. She experiences both privilege and domination at the same time. Intersectionality is an analytical tool for studying, understanding, and responding to the ways in which our identities can intersect and contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege. Just as programming that doesn’t specifically address gender or disability inclusion is likely to fail, so too are blunt instruments that slot people into simple categories like ‘poor’, ‘young’, ‘rural’, etc. By reflecting on how these multiple aspects operate in our own lives, we can gain a better sense of ourselves and our relationship to power, and understand how these factors influence others.
- Since everyone is made up of different characteristics, we need to find points of connection and action with people across these differences so that we can tackle the multiple forms of discrimination we face whether they be due to disability, class, race, gender, age etc.
- This is intended to be a thought-provoking exercise which we encourage participants to continue to contemplate beyond the session. Everyone is urged to constantly check themselves – their beliefs, their judgements, their actions – as they go about their daily lives, and think about what they could do differently or give more consideration to from this point onwards. Reflexivity is a key enabler for addressing intersectionality.

# TOOL 2: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR CREATING SAFE SPACES

## When to use this tool

This is a guidance tool for practitioners and facilitators to refer to, especially when preparing for consultations, meetings, interviews, workshops and other forms of engagement. It should also guide how you interact with colleagues within your workplaces.

## Overview

A safe space is collectively defined by the people in it as somewhere they can be their true selves, without having to 'filter' what they share or express but also, without causing further harm and oppression to others in that space. Many people who have suffered discrimination, harassment, abuse or other harms fear the repercussions of speaking out and sharing their experiences due to the power dynamics that have enabled and perpetuated their situation. These experiences and the impact they have on people's lives often come with pain and deep emotion. Preserving a safe space is therefore critical while working on addressing intersectionality to ensure genuine mutual learning and to mitigate any potential risks.

## Purpose

- To know and understand the key considerations for designing and maintaining safe and accessible spaces for all.
- To promote self-reflection and active listening skills as core to creating safe spaces, where people can think about how their own deeply held beliefs and positions of power and privilege can influence the way others express and deal with their oppression.
- To support programmes, adopt a Do No Harm approach and incorporate effective mechanisms for accountability and mitigating risks.

## 1. Be aware of your own power, privilege, attitudes and beliefs

- Think about the factors that influence your personal values, experiences, interests, beliefs, and political commitment and how they relate to social and structural identities (e.g., gender identity, race, ethnicity, indigeneity, socioeconomic status, sexuality, disability, age, sexual orientation, immigrant status, faith, etc.) as well as processes of oppression (e.g., patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, racism, heterosexism, ableism, etc.) in your context. [see *TOOL 1: Power Flower*]
- Take time to reflect honestly and critically on how your own beliefs and attitudes can cause you to pass judgement on others. This may manifest in different ways such as having preconceived opinions about particular groups of people, victim blaming/shaming or assuming things about people's situations without reason or actual experience of that exact same form of oppression.
- If you believe that you are free from any responsibility and accountability in the role you may play in someone else's oppression, check yourself again. Self-awareness is the ability to see yourself clearly and as objectively as possible through reflection and introspection. Actively try to step out of your comfort zone and see things from the perspective of people who are directly experiencing forms of oppression. Some truths may be hard to take in, but it is important to switch from an instinctively defensive response mode to a reflective one. Question how you may be associated with the problem, be it directly or indirectly. Also ask yourself how you are actively using your own power and privilege to challenge the situation.
- Be aware that in reality, the personal is political. Respond to individual stories and ensure that people experiencing discrimination and marginalisation are not perceived as victims or at fault for something that is systemic. This means also being clear on your own politics and privilege as a practitioner – what does having an intersectional lens mean for you in your context? For instance, you cannot promote equality for other people experiencing discrimination without truly taking account of your own privilege and relational power.

## 2. Promote safe and meaningful dialogue

- Set a goal to make sure all your working spaces are safe, welcoming and accessible; allowing people to feel comfortable and with the space to disconnect from the challenges of their daily life.
  - Are all forms of dialogue and communication used (e.g., sign language, spoken, written, tactile sign, images, etc.) respectful? Use appropriate language that does not reinforce negative stereotypes or stigma.
  - Pay attention to what others are expressing and don't be afraid to ask questions to clarify your understanding of another person's ideas, feelings and points of view. Avoid misunderstandings by checking the intended meaning with the person, do not rely on your inferred meaning.
  - Be sensitive and empathetic and prioritise this over extracting information from a person or interaction. If someone openly shares a difficult issue or experience, then don't dismiss if it makes you feel uncomfortable but support that person by acknowledging their situation.
  - Put aside your world view and explore the diversity in opinions and ideas. Interjecting or cutting someone off while they are communicating is not only frustrating for that person and disempowering, but it also limits your opportunity to learn from diverse knowledges.
  - Pay attention to your words. Could your statements be alienating, oppressive or offensive to others? Do you hold power that may mean what you say goes unquestioned or unchallenged? Do you actively encourage others to challenge you and call you out?
  - Be flexible and willing to try different methods to enable equal participation. Take into account gender, accessibility, cultural and religious considerations. For instance, for sensitive issues or certain cultural settings you may need to consider using separate spaces for dialogue.
  - When facilitating, be clear on the political basis for decisions; from the safe space, to content, to logic/order, to who speaks when. These measures must have a clear purpose i.e., redressing power imbalances and challenging the status quo. If you are working with external consultants, discuss the content and rationale for your politics beforehand so they can follow the same approach.
  - Remember that creating safe spaces in dialogue should also include fun, enthusiasm and good humour at appropriate times, which can contribute to establishing a space of trust, community and mutual inquiry.
- Once you have set up the safe space, it is the responsibility of the facilitators to preserve it – this includes addressing tricky issues that arise; ensuring the use of inclusive and respectful language; holding participants to the principles agreed to; and responding to the deep emotion in the room by recognising and dealing with it appropriately.

## 3. Factor in accessibility and reasonable accommodation

- Be aware that you have a duty to take appropriate measures to ensure people with disabilities can access your venues, communications and any information on an equal basis with others. (CRPD Article 9).
- While the provision of accessibility measures may take time to achieve, your duty to provide individuals with reasonable accommodations is immediately applicable. Failure to do so is considered discrimination (CRPD Article 2). Examples of reasonable accommodations include making existing facilities and information accessible to the individual with a disability; modifying equipment; reorganising activities; rescheduling work; or adjusting learning materials and educational strategies.
- Put in place systems and mechanisms to know what accessibility, reasonable accommodation and individual supports people with disabilities in your workspace and projects require in order for you to facilitate their participation on an equal basis with others. This could include adding questions to job applications, meeting registration forms and participant surveys.
- Ensure that budgeting for accessibility and reasonable accommodations are not an afterthought but an integral part of the budgeting process. This must cover all areas of the programme including expenditure on recruitment, consultations, activities, procured assets, materials, evaluations and feedback mechanisms.
- Remember that accessibility goes beyond the built environment, so make sure that all your information and communications comply with relevant accessibility standards and best practices, such as alternative formats, sign language interpretation through accredited interpreters, captioning, audio description, translation, copy editing for plain language, etc. Also make sure that all electronic documents you produce (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, etc.) are accessible.
- Familiarise yourself with national and international legislation and guidelines. Local OPDs and

accessibility professionals can help you understand your legal obligations, applicable standards and ensure these are in line with the CRPD.

- Always make sure safety and accessibility are considered together. Safety measures should not compromise accessibility and likewise, accessibility features should not compromise safety.
- Remember, an accessible solution is never one where people with disabilities are segregated from others.

#### 4. Be sensitive to time and space

- When planning and implementing programmes be aware that your selection of venues, times and locations impacts different people in different ways. Take time during the initial design stage to learn from people who are marginalised about what issues and potential risks there are in your context, and how they can be avoided.
- If you're selecting a venue for a meeting, conference or consultation, consider the following questions:
  - **Who is running the venue?** Do they understand that the workshop is meant to offer a safe space for participants? Are they welcoming of people who are typically stigmatised in their context? Do the owners have political or powerful connections that may make participants uncomfortable?
  - **Who else is sharing the venue?** If it is a shared space, will participants feel comfortable in their rooms and communal areas.
  - **How safe is the area?** The venue must be located in a geographical area that is appropriate and safe for all participants. Can participants travel to the venue or move around the area during the day and in the evening without any fear or threat of harm? Are the organisers and facilitators aware of potential security concerns and do they have accessible contingency plans in place?
  - **Is the venue in a high-density location?** Where possible, try to select a venue that is well connected to accessible transportation but with some natural settings to encourage wellbeing and reduce stress levels.
  - **Does the venue offer smaller rooms for hire?** It is good practice to hire out a small room as a designated quiet/safe space for anyone who may need to take a break away from the group. To increase diverse participation, especially from marginalised populations, consider hiring a room for daytime childminding as well as accommodation for people travelling long or difficult routes to the venue.

- **Has everyone been oriented on accessible evacuation plans in the event of an emergency?** A key selection criterion for your venue must be its safety policy and procedures for guests. Discuss this in advance with the management and ensure it includes accessible routes for attendees with disabilities. This safety information must be clearly communicated to everyone at the start of an event.

- Even the arrangement of space in an office or meeting room can reinforce or dispel power dynamics. Take a look at your office layout and how people typically congregate – do colleagues with positions of power tend to cluster together? Does the director have an open-door policy? Are there areas where some people do not feel welcome?
- Consider ways to make the space feel safe for diverse genders. Do surveys collect information beyond male/female binary e.g., 'self-described' as well as 'prefer not to say'? Is all language gender neutral? Are participants welcomed to share their pronouns and do staff proactively share their pronouns at events, in email signatures and meetings? If a space does not have specific gender-neutral bathrooms a temporary label can be made to signpost gender neutrality.
- In many traditional workshops, participants are seated behind tables with facilitators at the front, also behind a table. This layout can create a disconnection between people and limit the ability for participants to bring themselves fully into the space and engage authentically. To overcome this, seat participants comfortably in a circle – without any desks or tables in front of them. Facilitators must also be seated in the same circle. This is a very deliberate form of seating that challenges the power relations between facilitators and participants; and between participants who may hold different roles in a hierarchy – by putting us all on the same level. Don't worry if the new seating arrangement throws some people off at first as they may not be used to this kind of open space, but it doesn't take long for people to forget and engage.

#### 5. Consent must be free and informed

- Building trust and safe spaces is contingent upon respecting people's choices and autonomy which is why free and informed consent must be integral to your programmes and operations.
- Obtaining people's agreement or permission to do something requires you to provide them with full information about the possible effects or results, in a format that is accessible to them.



- Legally, informed consent can only be given by adults as they are considered to have the capacity and maturity to know about and understand the situation. It is important to know that legal capacity is a fundamental right afforded to all people. Despite this, there are some countries where this right is being violated for certain people on the basis of indigeneity, disability, statelessness, etc., but it is your duty to ensure you do not discriminate.
- Never speak on behalf of people without their free and informed consent. Likewise, do not take decisions on behalf of adults without their authorisation.
- Be aware that some people with disabilities may have support provisions in place to assist them at times with their decision-making, but this must always respect their rights, will and preferences and not be subject to undue influences or coercion. If you see any violations of this then do not overlook it, as consent has not been granted.
- When seeking consent to use people's testimonies, images, recordings, etc., make sure it is gathered in an accessible way, in the language used by the person. Remember that while sharing stories and images can be powerful tools for awareness raising and advocating for equality, it is critical your actions do not pose any harm or risk to the people involved, even if they have provided consent.

## 6. Maintain confidentiality and privacy at all times

- Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to everyone, so it is important you make yourself aware of your organisational policies and local statutory requirements that safeguard the privacy and security of people's personal data, and ensure these are applied in your programmes and systems.
- People are unlikely to disclose information to you if they do not feel safe with the knowledge that you will maintain their confidentiality and privacy, so it may take some time to build their trust first.
- It is critical that anyone in your programme who has access to private data is aware that people who are discriminated on the basis of their identity and personal characteristics can be placed in great harm if any data disclosed to you is made public.
- Organisations need to ensure robust data management systems that are in line with statutory data protection requirements, to uphold the integrity of individuals and groups. For example, if data is released in the public domain in images or quotes, formal

documented consent of the individual concerned is required. Additionally, appropriate considerations need to be undertaken to ensure that public disclosure does not put any child or adult at risk.

## 7. Ensure safe feedback mechanisms

- Feedback mechanisms – which can process issues from general feedback to complaints and whistleblowing – have become commonplace as a tool for learning, accountability and transparency. However, to be effective, they must be trusted by people as genuine channels for processing and fairly acting on feedback otherwise, they can fall into the trap of being perceived as tokenistic systems established by people with power and privilege.
- Good feedback mechanisms are diverse and consider user acceptability as well as accessibility, so that everyone is comfortable to share and feels safe to raise concerns. Different people have different preferences, so it is important to adapt to this and always ensure that mechanisms are available in local languages.
- Offer more than one feedback channel for people to provide feedback over serious concerns such as abuse, exploitation, violence, bullying, harassment, fraud, etc. and make sure people are aware of all the available options.
- Where people's safety is concerned it is essential to quickly address issues to ensure that you and your team are in a position to respond to and answer such complaints in an appropriate and timely manner.
- Effective feedback mechanisms also require proactively seeking feedback. Many people experiencing oppression will not necessarily be confident to complain or may be too fearful of the repercussions of their complaint, especially if it is towards someone with power over them. Involving representative organisations of marginalised and discriminated people can help create safer, more inclusive feedback mechanisms. This can encourage more people, especially from under-represented groups, to share their concerns and issues.
- Throughout your meetings and events use a variety of feedback mechanisms and ask people how they like to give feedback. Finding out what makes people more comfortable is important, as not everyone is accustomed to traditional surveys. There are many other ways to ask for feedback, such as having an anonymous feedback board where people can draw or write comments, a suggestion box, or an exit poll. You can also ask participants to volunteer to gather feedback for your event or meeting. This way people

may feel more comfortable to share critical feedback with a fellow participant than with the event facilitators or organisers. Remember, different styles of approaches that recognise different preferences are important to increase participation and learning, especially when working with under-represented groups, or hosting events that involve people from different cultures.

## 8. Be equipped to refer people on to support services

- Depending on the person and their circumstances, oppression and discrimination can result in trauma and being in a situation of risk. It is important you and your team are not only sensitive to this, but also

prepared to know what action to take if needed. Make sure everyone is aware of who your safeguarding focal person is and what their responsibilities are.

- If your meetings or workshops cover sensitive or triggering topics, it is important that the facilitators have planned strategies to respond to deep emotion if it emerges among participants. Facilitators must acknowledge the value of safe space and inevitability of emotion and be ready to talk individually to participants affected, offering them support in seeking further professional help if needed.
- Keep an updated list of local contacts ready in case you need to make referrals to psycho-social support services, medical centres, shelters, relevant police departments, etc. Consult local representative organisations of marginalised and discriminated people to prepare this list.



# TOOL 3: INTERSECTIONALITY CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## Overview

Understanding the context in which we are located and its power dynamics is vital for practitioners and policy makers. The following activity leads participants through a process called contextual analysis that creates an overview of power dynamics in a specific time and place. It will yield important insights for any process.

## Purpose

This is a tool for many purposes: informing country analyses, strategies, stakeholder and power mapping and supplementing risk assessments and planning. For this process, we will be focusing on analysing the forces and dynamics present in the current political moment, a time period that reflects the situation today through the upcoming 6 - 12 months. Depending on your focus, this analysis can be done at a national or local level and can be adapted for an international context as well.

## Time

3-4 hours

## Accessibility

- Provide a short break halfway through the session to allow any participants requiring a sensory break to have a brief rest.
- Have some support assistants on hand for any participants who may request them.
- Ensure presentations and materials are provided e.g., alternative formats, sign language interpretation through accredited interpreters, captioning, audio description, translation, copy editing for plain language, easy to read formats etc. Also make sure that all electronic documents you produce (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, etc.) are accessible.

## Materials and Space needed

- Markers
- Flip charts
- Masking tape
- Question Guide: Intersectional Analysis (on next page)

## Process

- Introduce session and the activity, explaining that an intersectional lens requires thinking holistically about what we are trying to change and how we are trying to change it. This means thinking about how intersectional discrimination and unequal power relations are present at a) all levels of society, from the personal realm of the individual and family as well as those within the wider public realm of the community, the organisation, the government, and the business sector; and b) across visible and invisible forms of power – from social norms and exclusionary practices through to formal laws and policies.
- Review the following question guide, provide a copy to everyone and divide into groups of four to five people. Explain that while the forces and dynamics we are going to analyse are presented under separate realms for clarity, they obviously overlap and interact with one another across people's lives. Although, of course, these dynamics are constantly shifting and changing, it is important for our own clarity to understand them at this moment in time.
- Divide into small groups:
  - a. Each group will use the question guide and capture their key points on flip chart paper.
  - b. Tell the group that they will be presenting their analysis to the plenary so they should capture key points on paper for presentation.
- Return to plenary:
  - a. Groups report back on overall analysis questions. After each presentation ask for comments from other groups regarding points of clarification, questions, doubts, additions etc.

- b. Ask full group -- What insights or questions does this overall analysis raise for you about the current challenges and opportunities you face in your work over the next 6 to 12 months? What more information is needed?
- Wrap-up: Synthesise the group reflections, clarifying any misunderstandings or doubts, and summarising the points you feel are relevant and important.

## Question guide

In this analysis, you will look at the dynamics and forces operating in different sectors of society and how these affect those most marginalised and cause intersectional discrimination in a given policy or programme setting. The questions should be contextualised and adapted, and added to. They may also be used to supplement existing frameworks. You may not be able to answer all the questions; cover what is possible in each context and note where further investigation or analysis is required.

### 1. Agency, commitment, knowledge and skills

Name two to three major aspects of individual and family life and expectations that currently affect the wellbeing and rights of those most marginalised. Ensure you reflect on intra-household differences e.g., people with disabilities, women, girls and gender-diverse persons, older and younger persons.

Consider, for example:

- How much control do different household members have over their own e.g., health care including sexual and reproductive health care and family planning, education, paid work, unpaid care work, leisure time?
- How much do the above experiences meet the needs and aspirations of household members?
- What are the key areas for supporting the engagement of those most marginalised in economic activities (e.g., access to finance, training, infrastructure, access to childcare)? Are there additional areas/considerations in relation to support for those experiencing multiple forms of discrimination?
- What have different marginalised groups done collectively to promote equality in the division of labour, access to education, employment and social protection? Are there opportunities for collaboration across these groups?

- What choices do individuals have when faced with violence (as a survivor, or faced with pressure to behave violently)? Do these choices change depending on the intersecting identities of an individual?
- How do women, girls, boys or men negotiate to avoid violence, or seek protection? With whom? Is this different for women, girls, boys or men with disabilities?
- How do family and other extended networks prevent or support violent behaviour in the household, family, community?

Name two to three aspects that describe the state of CSOs representing those most marginalised. Consider, for example:

- What are the key CSOs representing different marginalised groups? To what extent are the representatives of those CSOs experiencing intersectional discrimination?
- What is their level of independence, capacity and experience?
- What are the goals and priorities of CSOs?
- How well do CSOs including OPDs promote and advocate for access to opportunities and resources?
- Collectively what are CSOs doing to prevent and respond to violence in the project area?
- How well and in what ways do different groups coordinate?

### 2. Access to and control over resources and opportunities

Name two to three major dynamics and actors that impact access and control over resources and opportunities for those most marginalised. Consider, for example:

- What are the main economic activities in the country and what roles do women and men play in these activities? What are the barriers that further prevent women, men and gender-diverse people with intersecting experiences of discrimination from participating and benefiting?
- How well are the most marginalised in your context able to access different livelihood options (formal, informal) compared to their peers?
- Are provisions in place for them to participate in the workforce (including reasonable accommodations)?
- If any are available, how well are the most marginalised able to access government social protection schemes?



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- How well are those facing intersectional discrimination able to access different types of formal education systems (primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational, technical) compared to their peers?
- How well does the system meet their needs? Did they receive reasonable accommodations? What were the main barriers they faced in accessing their education? What were the enabling factors for them?
- How accessible is physical and non-physical infrastructure of local buildings?
- How accessible is it for people to typically get to local schools, workplaces, shops? (local built environment & transportation)
- If there is a national literacy/numeracy programme, how well is it accessed by people with disability?
- How does access differ in emergency/conflict situations?
- When violence is experienced, how well may those facing intersectional discrimination access justice? On what grounds do these differ?

### 3. Laws, policies, programmes, resource allocation, accountability mechanisms

Name two to three major government policies, laws, institutions or decision-makers that are currently affecting those most marginalised in your context. Consider, for example:

- What laws are there relating to workplace equality: equal pay, parental leave, reasonable accommodations, etc., and laws against discrimination, rape, sexual harassment?
- What laws/policies/plans are there relating to social protection? How well are these implemented? What is the expenditure (as % of GDP)?
- Are social protection schemes available to all persons facing intersectional discrimination? Is there equity in terms of gender, age and other criteria?
- Do the national/federal and local budgets have dedicated resources for any policies or programmes noted above?
- Are rights-holders, especially those experiencing intersectional discrimination, consulted in the process of developing the above laws, policies and programmes?
- If applicable, have there been any relevant observations in CRPD/CRC/UPR/Special Procedures/public enquiries?
- Is primary education compulsory and free for all by law (and in practice)? What about secondary education?

- Are there any policies that promote equitable measures for marginalised groups? E.g., provision of support systems for children with disability, assessment adaptations for specific learners, reasonable accommodations, scholarships, subsidies, programmes to encourage girls or indigenous children to access education.
- Are public facilities generally mandated to be accessible?
- Are private facilities/workplaces/schools monitored to apply the same standards?
- What laws are there relating to violence: rape, sexual abuse, free and informed consent?
- Are there response mechanisms in place such as identifying local and international organisations and government services (including police) who can provide related services? Can the project contribute to render these services more accessible and sensitive to those facing intersectional discrimination, to improve support for survivors?
- If there is a disaster risk-reduction strategy at national/district levels, have those facing intersectional discrimination been involved in this?

#### 4. Social norms, attitudes, exclusionary practices

Name two to three major ideological and cultural forces and beliefs that are currently affecting key marginalised groups in your setting. What forms of exclusion, stigma and discrimination are present? What are the main factors behind the prevailing attitudes/behaviours? Think about the most marginalised within those marginalised groups (e.g., indigenous persons with disabilities, older women in rural areas etc.) Consider, for example:

- Are there any social norms surrounding positions of political power and decision making?
- Are general societal perceptions/attitudes different for those most marginalised in terms of the right to work?
- Are general societal perceptions/attitudes different for those most marginalised in terms of children's right to education? Do attitudes differ when thinking about mainstream schools vs special schools for children with disabilities?
- How likely is it that a person who is marginalised graduates from tertiary education?
- How well does messaging in school curricula reinforce positive messaging on disability, gender equality, diversity, etc.?

- Does going to school put anyone in greater risk of danger? (safety to access school, increased risk of abuse (all kinds))
- What are men's and women's attitudes or beliefs toward violence, and what is considered 'normal' in this context?
  - Intimate partner violence
  - Family, community violence
  - Family planning, sterilisation
  - Harmful Traditional Practices

#### Debriefing notes

- This exercise allows us look at very specific power dynamics – both transformative and oppressive – that are present in the context we are in. We encourage participants to continue to adapt and add to these questions beyond the session and think about how these might be integrated with another analyses exercises they undertake.
- It's particularly important to remember diverse knowledges as you undertake this exercise – the information you generate is only as good as who is in the room and contributing.
- It's also important to continue to check yourselves and each other through this process – do you really know what you think you know? What assumptions might you be making? Have you asked others with experience of intersectional discrimination to challenge you on your assumptions?
- Remind participants that analysis is an important step, but only a first step, and the next exercise will look more holistically at how to apply this information to a framework for transformative – and intersectional – change.

# TOOL 4: ANALYSIS TO ADAPTATION

## When to use this tool

This tool should be used after the contextual analysis is complete [see *TOOL 3: Intersectionality Context Analysis*]. It is designed to be used as a way of identifying key actions and adaptations that need to be made.

## Overview

To apply an intersectional lens to policies and programmes we need to think holistically about what we are trying to change and how we are trying to change it. This activity uses the framework shown below to consider the focus of our policies, programmes and actions and identify gaps:

- Across all levels of society; individual through to collective or systemic levels.
- Across all visible and invisible forms of power; from social norms and exclusionary practices through to formal laws and policies.

## Purpose

Once the context has been thoroughly explored using Tool 3, this tool may be used to identify key actions and adaptations that need to be made to ensure a holistic and intersectional approach to programming.

## Time

2-3 hours

## Accessibility considerations

- Provide a short break halfway through the session to allow any participants requiring a sensory break to have a brief rest.
- Have some support assistants on hand for any participants who may request them.
- Ensure presentations and materials are provided e.g., alternative formats, sign language interpretation through accredited interpreters, captioning, audio description, translation, copy-editing for plain language, easy to read formats etc. Also make sure that

all electronic documents you produce (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, etc.) are accessible.

## Materials and space necessary

- Copies of the economic empowerment example provided on the next page
- Markers
- Flip chart marked out with the framework – one per group
- A/several larger sheet/s of paper located on a wall and marked out with the framework
- Metacards

## Process

1. Introduce the session and the activity, explaining that the four interconnecting quadrants shown on the flip chart/paper are the same four areas considered in Tool 3 and that now we will look at how they interconnect and either reinforce the status quo or promote positive change, depending on what actions we take.
2. Ask participants to review the example provided.
3. Divide into small groups (these can be the same as for Tool 3):
  - a. Each group will use framework and capture their key points on flip chart paper.
  - b. Tell the group that they will be presenting their recommendations to the plenary so they should capture key points on paper for presentation.
4. Return to plenary:
  - a. Groups report back on key recommended adaptations they would make to the programme. After each presentation ask for comments from other groups regarding points of clarification, questions, doubts, additions etc.
  - b. Ask full group -- What key actions or recommendations do you plan to take forward into the programme? Are there any areas or actions still missing, if we look at the four parts of the framework?
5. Wrap up: Synthesise the group reflections, clarifying any misunderstandings or doubts, and summarising the points you feel are relevant and important.

## Debriefing notes

- Make the point to participants that there is an interdependence of themes present in all theories of how change happens e.g., there are links between economic empowerment and violence and education/literacy.
- It is important to map out the big picture and make note of connections at this stage, even if this is going beyond the remit of your specific intervention or

potential resourcing. While, for example, you may not focus on law or policy you should still make a note of what is being done by whom, or what should be done, so supporting linkages can be made.

- As with the previous exercise, the quality of your proposed adaptations is only as good as the people you have in this session. Make sure people experiencing intersectional discrimination are there and actively part of the decision-making process when determining solutions.

### Example

**Agency; Commitment;  
Knowledge & Skills**

**Access To and Control Over  
Resources & Opportunities  
(4AQs)**

**Social Norms; Attitudes;  
Exclusionary Practices**

**Laws; Policies; Programmes;  
Resource Allocation;  
Accountability Mechanisms**



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Access and control of resources** is a concept emerging from gender analysis methods that considers who has what within the household, community, workplace or society, and who makes decisions over that resource.

- **Access** to a resource means that someone can use that resource
- **Control** is the power to decide how a resource is used and who can use it

The differences in access to and control of resources are a potential indicator of power imbalances between different people or groups. Ownership of a resource does not automatically guarantee control or decision-making power over that resource. For example, women may have access to land or even own land in her own name but have no or limited control over how it is used. It is also important to consider who benefits from the use of these resources.<sup>24</sup>

**Accessibility** ...is a precondition for persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and equally in society.<sup>25</sup> It means that people with disabilities are able to have access to the environment around them, to transportation, to information, communication technology and systems on an equal basis with others. It is not only about physical access and people with disabilities have different access requirements and preferences.<sup>26</sup>

**Disability** Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines persons with disabilities as including 'those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'. The full inclusion of people with impairments in society can be inhibited by attitudinal and/or societal barriers (such as prejudice or discrimination), physical and/or environmental barriers (such as stairs), and policy and/or systemic barriers, which can create a disabling effect.<sup>27</sup>

## Discrimination

- **Direct discrimination** occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another because of their background or certain personal characteristics.
- **Indirect discrimination** refers to laws, policies and practices that apply to everyone in the same way and may appear neutral, however have a worse effect on some people than others.
- **Intersectional discrimination** recognises the complex, multi-faceted dimensions of discrimination on

the grounds of intersecting social categories or personal characteristics.

## Equality

- **Formal equality** is the concept that all people should be treated the same regardless of difference. However, this approach does not take systemic discrimination and individual difference into account and can result in indirect discrimination (see below).
- **Substantive/de-facto equality** refers to equality of outcomes and takes the effects of discrimination and difference into consideration. It recognises that rights, entitlements, opportunities and access are not equally distributed throughout society and a one size fits all approach will not achieve equality. It demands the redistribution of resources, power and structures and increased access to resources and participation for those marginalised.
- **Inclusive equality** is defined as 'a substantive model of equality' that incorporates 'a) a fair redistributive dimension to address socioeconomic disadvantages; b) a recognition dimension to combat stigma, stereotyping, prejudice and violence and to recognise the dignity of human beings and their intersectionality; c) a participative dimension to reaffirm the social nature of people as members of social groups and the full recognition of humanity through inclusion in society; and d) an accommodating dimension to make space for difference as a matter of human dignity.'<sup>28</sup>

**Gender based violence (GBV)** is violence that is directed against a person on the basis of their sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. Violence against women is any act of gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women in public or private life. This includes all forms of violence including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others that are experienced on the basis of gender.<sup>29,30</sup>

**Gender roles and relations** are the functions and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled in any society and usually determined by underlying gender and social norms. This includes reproductive (caregiving and household), community and productive (breadwinning) roles.

**Gender transformative approaches** seek to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and challenge unequal power relations. It moves away from a focus on a deficit

model that focuses entirely on individual ‘empowerment’ and towards transforming the structures that reinforce gender inequality.<sup>31</sup>

**Intersectionality** recognises that people’s lives are shaped by their identities, relationships and social factors. These combine to create intersecting forms of privilege and oppression depending on a person’s context and existing power structures such as patriarchy, ableism, colonialism, imperialism, homophobia and racism.<sup>32</sup> It is important to remember the transformative potential of intersectionality, which extends beyond merely a focus on the impact of intersecting identities.

**Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)** are organisations of persons with disabilities that ‘should be rooted, committed to and fully respect the principles and rights recognised in the Convention. They can only be those that are led, directed and governed by persons with disabilities. A clear majority of their membership should be recruited among persons with disabilities themselves.’<sup>33</sup>

**Power relations** recognise that processes and systems of power interact to shape experiences of privilege and disadvantage between and within groups. A person can experience power in some contexts and oppression in others.<sup>34</sup>

**Reasonable accommodation** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>35</sup>

**Reflexivity** acknowledges the importance of power at the micro level of self and our relationships with others, as well as at macro levels of society. It is a transformative process as it brings critical self-awareness, role-awareness, interrogation of power and privilege and the questioning of assumptions in policy and programming processes.<sup>36</sup>

### **Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics**

- **Sexual orientation** refers to a person’s ‘emotional, affectional and/or sexual attraction towards other people of the same gender, a different gender or more than one gender. Sexual orientation is not related to gender identity and sex characteristics.’<sup>37</sup>

- **Gender identity** reflects a person’s deeply felt and experienced sense of their gender, which may or may not align with the sex assigned to them at birth.
- **Gender expression** is the way in which we express our gender through actions and appearance and may be a combination of male, female and androgynous
- **Sex characteristics** include both primary sex characteristics (e.g., genitalia, hormonal structure) and secondary sex characteristics (e.g., muscles mass, hair distribution, stature).<sup>38</sup>

**Social norms** are the unwritten rules about how people are expected to behave in a given situation or social group. They are different from individually held beliefs or attitudes. Social norms are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time and vary across organisations, countries and cultures. They are maintained by social influence and those who challenge may face backlash such as losing power or status in a community. Social norms usually advantage those in the majority and keep the status quo that allows some groups to dominate. They may also act as a brake or accelerator in a behaviour change process; hence they should be a critical consideration in inclusive development.<sup>39</sup>

**Unconscious biases** also known as implicit biases, are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs and prejudice about various social and identity groups, and these are often incompatible with one’s conscious values. We all apply these biases to all aspects of our lives, including our behaviour and decision making. Common biases that impact decision making include affinity bias which is a tendency to favour people who are similar to us, often resulting in group think; confirmation bias when we seek to confirm our beliefs, preferences or judgements with those like us; halo effect when we like someone or share similar traits with someone and therefore are biased to think everything about that person is good; and social or likeability bias when we tend to agree with the majority or someone more senior than us to maintain harmony.<sup>40</sup>

**Universal design** means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.<sup>41</sup>

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