Tool 10: Project implementation plan and gender equality strategy

The gender equality strategy (GES) outlines the project's overall approach to achieve gender equality outcomes and provides overall guidance on the approach to be used in the activity matrix, work breakdown structure, monitoring and reporting, and management. If not completed at the project design phase, the project team needs to develop a gender equality strategy for the project at the inception phase as part of the process of preparing the project implementation plan (PIP).

The project GES is informed by the project's gender-based analysis and consultations with partners and stakeholders, especially women and girls, on how to achieve gender equality outcomes. The GES is a separate section or an appendix to the PIP but it is expected that all the sections of the PIP, including the rationale, overall project description, LM, theory of change, PMF, work breakdown structure, activity matrix, budget, monitoring, and reporting expand on the information presented in the GES. The annual work plan is also expected to further expand upon the implementation of the GES.

During project implementation, best practices include: significant involvement of gender equality expertise as part of implementation team; collaboration and support from women's organizations, key female and male decision makers, leaders and allies; flexibility and openness to respond to new and innovative methods, and to opportunities for supporting gender equality that present themselves during implementation, and promotion of the equitable participation of women with men, especially in decision-making, throughout implementation.

The gender equality strategy is not meant to be a static document. During implementation, projects need to re-evaluate the context for promoting gender equality and engage in dialogue with partners and stakeholders, especially women and girls, in order to identify challenges and emerging opportunities as well as lessons learned. In this respect, the project local gender equality expert is a key resource. As the project builds gender equality capacity both internally and among stakeholders, new possibilities may emerge and projects are expected to be flexible enough to take advantage of them.

Ideally, the project's gender equality strategy includes the elements presented below.

Outline for Project Gender Equality Strategy

Overview of gender-based analysis: A summary of the gender-based analysis and validation of gender inequalities.

Gender equality outcomes: Description of how gender equality outcomes at the ultimate, intermediate and immediate outcome levels in the LM will address the identified gender

inequalities. This information would be integrated into the theory of change section of the proposal or PIP.

Expected outcomes: A plan of the specific approaches and key interventions that will be taken to achieve each immediate outcome and would inform the outputs, activity matrix and work breakdown structure sections of the PIP.

Specific approaches and key interventions such as:

- involvement of women and girls and women's organizations that advance women's rights.
- Special measures (e.g. incentives for women and for employer/organization, skills/knowledge upgrading and leadership training programs, gender-sensitization of employers/decision-makers, mentoring) to achieve targets for participation by women (or girls)
- criteria that will be used in the selection process for civil society partners or consultants to ensure that they have commitment and experience on gender equality
- development of tools and methodologies to guide staff, partners and stakeholders for the achievement of gender equality outcomes,
- gender equality issues (such as zero tolerance of harassment and sexual and gender-based violence awareness-raising) to be included in information or advocacy activities.

Capacity building: Plan for training and capacity building on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for project staff, partners and implementers. This would be itemized in the budget and activity matrix of the PIP.

Monitoring and reporting: An outline of how the project will use sex-age disaggregated baseline data for indicators to set relevant targets; and how the project will collect data on gender-sensitive indicators in the PMF to monitor progress toward results.

Resources and budget: A statement of the measures or means for implementing the gender equality strategy, including identification of responsibility at the management level; inputs of technical expertise in gender equality; training for project staff and partners; financial resources to adequately cover gender equality expertise, training and project activities that support gender equality. This would be included in the PIP budget and the staffing/technical assistance plan of the PIP.

Contribution to GAC's Feminist International Assistance Policy: Describe how the project will contribute to the three gender equality objectives which underpin GAC's Feminist International Assistance Policy:

- to enhance the protection and promotion of the **human rights** of women and girls;
- to increase the participation of women and girls in equal **decision-making**, particularly when it comes to sustainable development and peace; and

- to give women and girls more equitable **access to and control** over the resources they need to secure ongoing economic and social equality.

Tool 11: Annual work planning and project steering committee

Annual work planning

The project work plan sets out specific interventions and budget to implement the gender equality strategy and reflects the integration of gender equality in order to achieve the expected gender equality outcomes.

Annual work planning

- Involve the project GE advisor in drafting annual work plans so that activities are in line with the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and project gender equality strategy.
- Review the barriers and risks related to gender equality and revise activities so that progress can be made within a changing environment.
- Allocate sufficient resources (human and financial) for activities to implement the project gender equality strategy and to achieve the expected gender equality outputs and outcomes.
- Prioritize activities related to gender equality so that they are carried out and not delayed.

Project steering committee (PSC)

- Invite representatives/experts on gender equality to meetings.
- Report on progress toward gender equality within the project as a standing agenda item for all PSC meetings.
- Ensure Project Progress Reports tabled at the PSC assess the implementation of the project gender equality strategy and achievement of gender equality outcomes.

Project steering committee (PSC) meetings are opportunities to assess and discuss the progress made by a project on gender equality outcomes, to determine whether it is in accordance with the approved work plan and to take any decisions needed to improve performance. PSC meetings present opportunities to raise awareness on gender equality among steering committee members.

Tool 12: Monitoring performance on gender equality

Gender-sensitive monitoring helps project staff, other stakeholders, and beneficiaries to understand how the project is progressing on the achievement of GE outcomes and identifies areas for improvements.

Monitoring progress on gender equality outcomes

- Include the assessment of the implementation of the project gender equality strategy and achievement of gender equality outcomes in the monitor's ToRs.
- Ensure project monitoring includes tracking gender equality performance, challenges, and recommendations for improvement.
- Ensure the monitor has sufficient expertise to assess gender equality outcomes or that a gender equality advisor participates in project monitoring missions.
- Encourage reporting that uses and analyzes sex-age disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information.
- Share monitoring reports and recommendations back to project staff and beneficiaries on a timely basis to allow for project adjustments.
- Promote the active participation of women and girls and gender equality project stakeholders in participatory monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure that the monitor's recommendations for improving gender equality are applied to project work plans.
- Commission, as needed, a gender equality review or gender audit to assess progress on achieving GE results and to make recommendations to revise the gender equality strategy and adjust the logic model and performance measurement framework.
- Carry out capacity-building activities for staff on managing/monitoring gender equality outcomes.