

Partners Experience Sharing - Gender in practice: mainstreaming, not watering it down?

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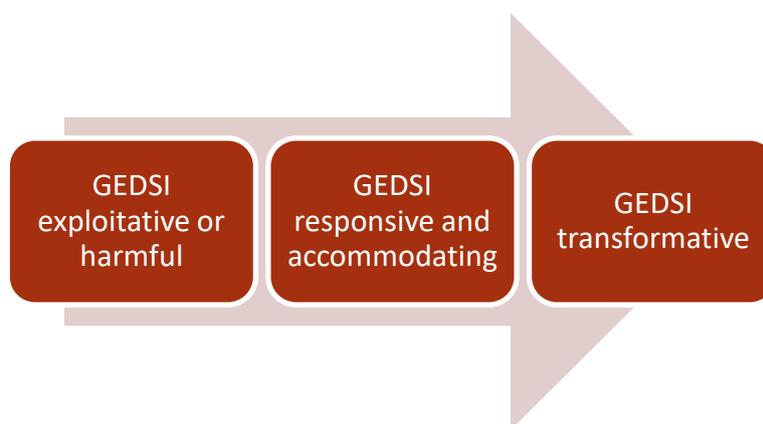


Figure 1. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Continuum

Exploitative or harmful¹: A harmful approach results from the failure to recognise the different roles, responsibilities, needs, interests, ability to enact power, access to resources and capacities of different people and identities. An intervention may be intended to affect all people in the same way and assumes that the impact will be the same for everyone. These projects are likely to maintain the status quo and are certain to perpetuate—and likely to exacerbate—existing social inequalities.

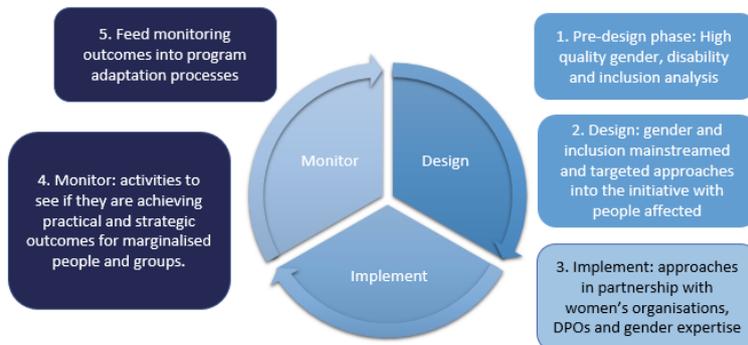
Responsive or accommodating: A responsive or accommodating approach is based on a clear understanding of barriers faced by women in all their diversities, by people with disabilities and different marginalised groups, and there is a strong and well-resourced intention to address these barriers. It will include some recognition of intersectional inequalities. It will recognise barriers at different levels such as household, community, organisations, sectoral and/or structural. It will address both needs and interests, supporting marginalised groups to have increased access and control over water resources and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Transformative: A transformative approach explicitly challenges harmful social norms and power imbalances in order to change the position of women in all their diversities, people with disabilities, and people from other marginalised groups, such as people from sexual and gender minorities. It takes a clear Do No Harm approach, and an iterative approach to building relationships and understanding issues based on lived experience of those affected. It understands the intersections between different oppressions. It aims for genuine and equal representation at all levels. It adequately resources all necessary GEDSI strategies, including supporting local organisations representing the rights of women and marginalised groups. It is alert to and committed to addressing unintended consequences and potential harms. It is committed to protection of all vulnerable people and has articulated channels for referral to services where available. It understands bias, resistance and backlash and has nuanced approaches to address them. It reflects the principle of transformation starting with oneself.

¹ These explanations have been drawn from Water for Women (2021) Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Self-Assessment Tool. Accessed at: <https://sanitationlearninghub.org/resource/gender-equality-and-social-inclusion-self-assessment-tool/>

When should we consider GEDSI?

UTS:ISF 



Answer: at all stages.

In Brief

- In the face of harmful norms, **doing nothing to challenge inequality does harm**. Do No Harm requires a proactive not passive approach.
- A genuine commitment to Doing No Harm demands that we, as development practitioners, **look at our own conscious and unconscious attitudes**, and the way we use our own power.
- It is more constructive to **focus on harmful norms as the problem that needs to be changed** – not the groups harmed by those norms.

Source: Water for Women, Do no Harm for Inclusive WASH, 2019

Resources to support you to design and implement Inclusive WRM projects

Google the title of any of these resources and you will find the corresponding PDF

1. AWP (2020) **Addressing Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion in AWP concepts, proposals, and tenders Guidance for partners**. Canberra: Australian Water Partnership.
2. Grant, M., Willetts, J., and Huggett, C. (2019) **Gender Equality and Goal 6 – The Critical Connection: An Australian Perspective**. Canberra: Australian Water Partnership.
3. CBM and World Vision (2019) **Key actions in inclusive WASH**
4. Pangare, V. (2015) **Guidelines on how to collect sex-disaggregated data**. Paris, UNESCO.
5. Kadel, L. M., et al (2017) **Making Gender Count: Leveraging M&E to mainstream gender**. A project undertaken within the South Asia Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP). CSIRO, Australia.
6. Seager, J. (2015) **Sex-disaggregated indicators for water assessment monitoring and reporting**. Technical Paper. Gender and Water Series. WWAP. Paris, UNESCO.