Intersectional gender integration in research for development: Principles and phases

**Principles**

1. **Avoid being gender-blind and go beyond binary: apply an intersectional gender lens**

2. **Integrate gender and intersectionality from the earliest stage to the end of the project cycle with the involvement of the whole team**

3. **Tailor for transformation change: bat at a minimum take a gender-accommodating approach**

4. **Compare more and less powerful gender-social groups and elucidate equity within**

5. **Communicate of research insights and recommendations**

6. **Recapitulate the research process itself as empowering or disempowering and the researchers’ own role in that**

**Phases**

1. **Problem identification and design**
   - Include a gender scientist in the R4D team and establish equitable partnerships, with gender balance and diversity in both.
   - Apply an intersectional gender lens in identifying and framing the R4D problem, engaging diverse actors as needed. Critically assess scales, surface how different genders and social groups perceive and are affected by the issue.
   - Identify key social and gender groups to prioritize and define project goals. Identify specific gender outcomes using the Reach-Benefit-Transform (RBET) Framework. Align these with larger development goals.
   - Compare more and less powerful gender-social groups and elucidate equity within research questions, with inquiries such as: (a) needs and preferences; (b) mechanisms and factors that enable or constrain gender outcomes and equity; and (c) what are the positive and negative effects of innovations or policies and how are these distributed?
   - Generate intersectional gender background information through literature and/or scoping studies, and use this to refine problems, questions, goals and groups of interest as well as design. This may happen before the ToC or iteratively.

2. **Planning including setting up MEL**
   - Develop a gender strategy with a gender-integrated research implementation plan.
   - Use the four pillars of gender-responsive MEL to design the MEL plan (Section 3, Figure 9): i. indicators for baselines/endline and routine monitoring aligned with gender outcomes (RBET); ii. mechanisms to track unintended consequences; iii. mechanisms to track unintended consequences; iv. gathering explanatory information.
   - Develop or repackage the budget to it has enough funding for expertise and activities for gender outcomes (as per ToC).
   - Assess gender and intersectional analysis capacities of the team and develop a capacity-building plan to address gaps. Include reflection on biases or blind spots and how to address them.
   - Conduct intersectional gender capacity building early and over time for research and implementing partners and ancillary service providers, using building blocks (Section 4) and ToC.

3. **Implementation, monitoring and adapting**
   - Collect disaggregated data, at relevant units of analysis, using quantitative and qualitative sampling design and enough power to show the intended and effective intersectional gender analysis (Step 6).
   - Use gender-responsive and inclusive data collection processes, designed to be empowering and meet in building trust between local participants/co-researchers and external researchers.
   - Monitor with intentional considerations (e.g.) and risks on an ongoing basis (as part of MEL) to inform adaptive programming and avoid harm.
   - As appropriate, carry out participatory ongoing MEL processes, including tracking locally-developed equity-related indicators, assessment of emerging outcomes both intended and unintended.
   - Engage team and partners in regular ongoing MEL reflections, with gender and socially-balanced participation, gender-informed design (building pathways).

4. **Analysis of data, interpretation of findings, evaluation of project**
   - Start with descriptive analysis of gender and intersectional disaggregated data to identify differences in outcomes between different groups or populations.
   - Deepen analysis and generate insights by applying the intersectional gender analysis building blocks (Section 4).
   - Sense make, validate and share findings with their interpretation with participants, including less powerful ones. Enable gender and socially-inclusive participation, with equitable access, ability to feedback or criticize, to use the information and co-generate implications for action if any.
   - Sense makes, validate and identify implications for action with partners, strategizing for scaling evidence and gender outcomes.
   - If there is a final evaluation or impact assessment, follow through in applying the RBET framing. Debrief and share explanatory insights about how the project influenced gender outcomes.

5. **Communications of impact and recommended actions**
   - Check that participants and partners have, understand and can use the findings, and follow through with bespoke communications products so that they can use and scale the findings to advance equity and equality.
   - In translating the findings and recommendations for use in the project reporting and wider outputs, ensure the language around gender is consistent and accurate. Choose the building blocks for intersectional gender analysis (Section 4) and other concepts in this Guidance Note for support.
   - Make explicit how findings and recommendations address externally identified gender challenges, needs and commitments, including up to national, regional or global scales. Share with relevant bodies and networks and do so in the relevant languages.
   - Be appropriate, carry out participatory ongoing MEL processes, including tracking locally-developed equity-related indicators, assessment of emerging outcomes both intended and unintended.
   - As appropriate, and any other communications are gender-aware and follow best practices, including avoiding language and images that reinforce gender stereotypes.