

Quick Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators



What are gender-sensitive indicators and why do we use them?

Oxfam is committed to putting women's rights at the heart of all we do. We believe that promoting gender equality is both a question of justice and a way of addressing poverty and suffering more effectively. At the outset of a programme, conducting a gender analysis helps us to identify inequalities and formulate strategies to address these. During implementation we then need to know whether we are achieving the changes in poor women's lives that we intended.

All of Oxfam's programmes should carry out systematic monitoring to assess our performance over time. Monitoring helps us to learn about what does and doesn't work and to adapt our programmes in light of what we find. This, in turn, helps us to use our resources wisely and maximise our effectiveness. For more information and guidance see Sections 3 and 4 of Oxfam's Programme Framework.

To successfully monitor our work we need to know our starting point or baseline, against which to measure progress. We must also decide what we want to measure, what kind of data we need and how that data should be collected and analysed. Indicators are statements of the key factors or variables that we can measure in order to see whether we are bringing about change.

A gender-sensitive indicator is simply an indicator that measures gender-related changes in society over time. By identifying the changes in the status and roles of women and men that we want to achieve and knowing how we will measure these, we can analyse our programme outcomes and see whether we are contributing to gender equality. Using gender-sensitive indicators can also help us to understand how changes in gender relations happen which enables more effective planning and delivery of future work.

Gender-sensitive indicators at a glance

- Measure the gap between men and women;
- Measure the different roles, responsibilities and access to resources of different members of society;
- Gauge progress towards achieving gender equality goals;
- Require data to be disaggregated by sex, age and other variables;
- Require a gender analysis of data;
- Encourage the integration of gender equality issues from the planning of a policy, programme or project right through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Demonstrate the impact of changes in power relations between women and men.

Different types of indicators

We use different types of indicators at different stages of the programme or project cycle, to judge the progress we have made at a certain point in time. All are important but our ultimate focus should be on outcome indicators:

- **Process indicators** measure the delivery of activities and demonstrate that we are on track with doing what we said we would do, for example the number of training sessions on women's rights held in our target community;
- **Output indicators** measure the direct results of our activities and show that they are having the intended effect, for example the number of women who show increased awareness of their rights after attending a training session;
- **Outcome indicators** measure the longer-term results of our work and provide evidence that it will have a lasting effect on poor women's lives, for example a decrease in the incidence of violence against women as a result of more men and women knowing that violence violates women's rights.

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Developing gender-sensitive indicators

Indicators are closely linked to objectives, so the first step towards developing gender-sensitive indicators is to ensure that your programme or project objectives have clearly defined gender goals, based on your gender analysis. These might be measures to raise the status of women or an explicit statement of how the programme will ensure that it benefits women and men equally.

To develop your indicators, look at each of your key objectives and ask what success would look like. For example, if your programme goal is to increase women's political leadership and participation, what can you measure to know that the situation has changed?

You will need to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures to get a full picture of the changes that are happening.

- **Quantitative indicators** are measures of quantity, for example the number of women parliamentarians elected.
- **Qualitative indicators** refer to judgements and perceptions, for example the number of women parliamentarians who believe that they are having an impact on decision-making.



Over time, you should collect data for each of your indicators and analyse it to see what progress is being made. The relationship between the different factors is also important. In this example, if the programme has brought about an increase in the number of women parliamentarians, has this impacted on the number of times that women's issues are raised in parliament, or on the legislation related to gender equality that is passed and enforced? By doing this, you will be able to check that your work is progressing to plan and identify ways to strengthen your programme, for example, you might see that women parliamentarians need greater support to influence policy initiatives.

Selecting appropriate indicators

- Develop indicators in a participatory fashion;
- Make indicators relevant to the needs of the user, and at a level that the user can understand;
- Disaggregate indicators by sex;
- Use both qualitative and quantitative indicators;
- Make indicators easy to use;
- Make sure indicators are clear and unambiguous;
- Choose a small number;
- Indicators should measure trends over time.



Tools and resources

- Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators, CIDA: [http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/inet/images.nsf/vLUIImages/Policy/\\$file/WID-GUID-E.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/inet/images.nsf/vLUIImages/Policy/$file/WID-GUID-E.pdf)

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For further information on the issues raised in this paper please go to www.oxfam.org.uk/policyandpractice

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Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK.

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