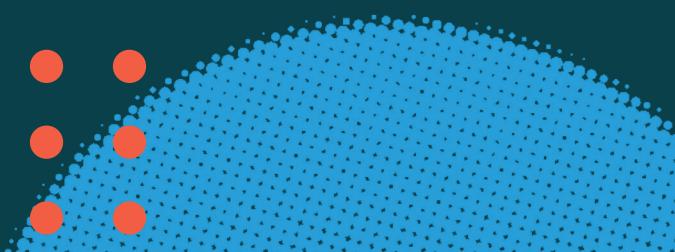




Funded by
the European Union



Gender & Conflict Resolution in Lebanon



**A Toolkit for Local Actors
Advancing Inclusive
Peacebuilding**

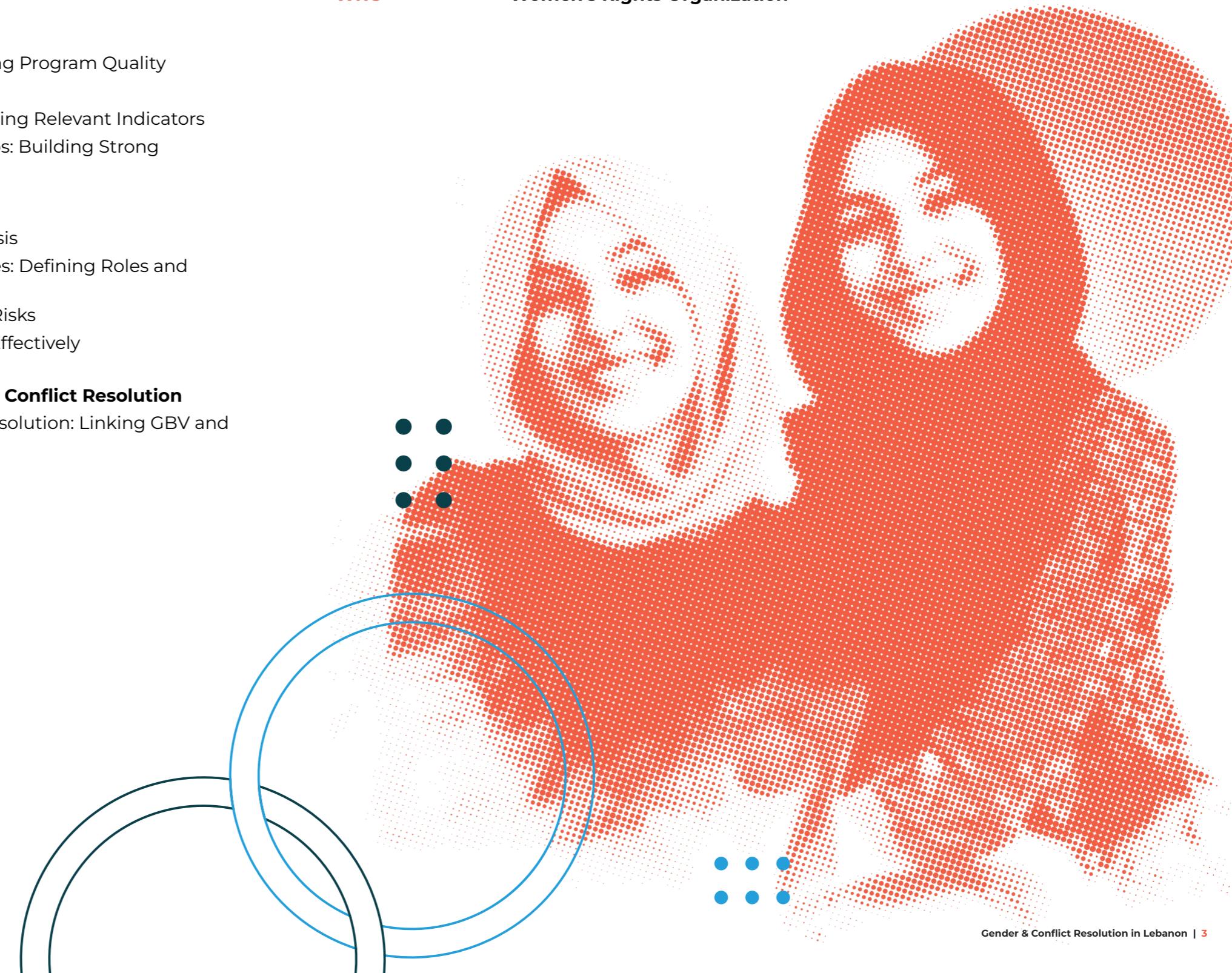
July 2025

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List of Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GSB	Gender-Sensitive Budgeting
IO	International Organization
KII	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
WRO	Women's Rights Organization



Introduction



The Lebanese Context

Lebanon's history of conflict and instability has deepened gender inequalities, restricting women's participation in politics, the economy, and peacebuilding. From the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) to ongoing crises and recent Israeli war, women have borne a disproportionate burden. Despite high educational attainment¹, they face rising unemployment, structural barriers, and restrictive personal status laws limiting their rights. Gender inequality in Lebanon is deeply rooted in cultural, social, and legal structures, reinforced by patriarchal norms that dictate gender roles and contribute to widespread discrimination. The country's fragmented legal framework further disadvantages women, particularly in matters of marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.

These challenges, compounded by the 2019 financial collapse and the 2020 Beirut port explosion, further exclude women from security and governance structures. Post-explosion recovery efforts largely overlooked women's participation in decision-making and failed to address their specific needs. SEEDS' 2021 study, *In the Shadow of a State*, assessed how inclusive and gender-responsive the recovery programs were and showed that they failed to meaningfully include women—especially minorities—in decision-making or address their specific needs².

Women remain largely absent from national and local peace and security processes, including the 1991 Ta'if Accords and subsequent national dialogues.³ Their underrepresentation in security institutions is stark, with women comprising only 6.25% of parliamentarians and remaining largely absent from police forces, despite public support for greater women representation in security roles.⁴ This exclusion weakens the prospects for sustainable peace, as global evidence shows that women's participation in conflict resolution leads to more enduring and inclusive outcomes.⁵ However, Lebanon has a strong and active civil society, with international and national organizations and local institutions stepping up to push for positive change in the absence of sufficient state intervention.

Project Context

This toolkit is part of the WE'AM project (Working for Engagement, Acceptance, and Mediation: A Community-Based Approach to Social Cohesion in Lebanon), a European Union-funded initiative implemented by Oxfam in partnership with Right to Play, SHIFT, and ALEF. WE'AM aims to foster social cohesion by addressing drivers of tensions at the community level, promoting gender-responsive conflict resolution tools, and integrating

social cohesion approaches into local and international programming.

An essential component of the WE'AM project is the development of the Gender Transformative Toolkit tailored to Lebanon's unique context. Existing frameworks often fail to capture the nuanced realities of Lebanon's socio-political landscape or provide actionable guidance for practitioners working on the ground. Therefore, a tailored toolkit is necessary to effectively address the gender dimensions of conflict.

The toolkit is based on the findings of SEEDS' report, *Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon*, which assessed the gender sensitivity of municipalities and organizations active in conflict resolution across the country. A qualitative, and context-driven research approach was used to capture diverse perspectives on gender and conflict resolution in Lebanon. Data was gathered through key informant interviews (KIs) with women's right organizations, organizations working on social cohesion and municipalities alongside with-focus group discussions (FGDs) with women involved in peacebuilding initiatives and WE'AM partners. This research highlights both the challenges and opportunities for integrating gender-responsive strategies into peacebuilding efforts. Organizations working on social cohesion and women's rights have the potential to drive meaningful change. If coordinated effectively, their interventions can help reshape Lebanon's conflict resolution frameworks, ensuring that women's perspectives and leadership are recognized as essential to lasting social cohesion and stability.

Rationale: The Identified Gaps

The research findings highlight significant gaps in gender-sensitive conflict resolution efforts in Lebanon, demonstrating the urgent need for a standardized toolkit. SEEDS' report showed that while some organizations recognize the structural exclusion of women and the economic and psychological toll of conflict, others focus on immediate concerns, failing to address systemic issues. Many municipalities continue to frame women's contributions within traditional gender roles, limiting their decision-making power and reinforcing existing inequalities.

Cultural norms and patriarchal structures remain deeply entrenched, with resistance from men, religious leaders, and even other women in the community. While some organizations engage communities to challenge these norms, many lack the depth of intervention necessary for lasting impact. Efforts to empower women often pri-

oritize skills development, advocacy training, and legal awareness, yet practical barriers such as transportation and childcare frequently go unaddressed. Psychological support is widely recognized as essential but remains inconsistently integrated into programs. Even when organizations prioritize women's safety, gaps in legal protection measures persist, leaving many without adequate security provisions.

Internally, organizations struggle with implementing gender-sensitive policies in a consistent and meaningful way. Gender mainstreaming is often donor-driven rather than embedded into core strategies, and gender-sensitive budgeting is frequently misunderstood. Monitoring and evaluation practices rely heavily on quantitative participation metrics, failing to capture the depth of women's empowerment and the qualitative impact of interventions.

Additionally, engagement with men and youth remains sporadic. While some organizations acknowledge the importance of men's allies in shifting community attitudes, cultural resistance or a lack of interest on the men's side often prevents meaningful involvement. Similarly, youth engagement is inconsistent, missing a key opportunity to instill long-term change. Structural challenges such as the underrepresentation of women in municipal councils, political resistance to gender initiatives, and Lebanon's weak implementation of UNSCR 1325 further restrict women's empowerment and participation in peacebuilding.

These findings underscore the necessity of a standardized Gender Transformative Toolkit, designed to provide organizations with practical guidance, training programs, and evaluation mechanisms for more effective gender-sensitive programming.

Objectives

This toolkit is a part of the broader WE'AM project's commitment to fostering social cohesion and equipping local communities with effective tools to prevent and resolve social tensions. Developed under the EU-funded WE'AM project, this toolkit builds on a nationwide study "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon - WE'AM: A Feminist Exploration of Conflict and Peacebuilding Practices in Lebanon" that examined how organizations working on social cohesion in Leba-

non engage with women and integrate gender considerations into their approaches. The study explored the effects of conflict on women, the interventions supporting them, and the mechanisms in place to enhance their participation in peacebuilding processes.

In doing so, the toolkit strengthens the capacities of CSOs, WROs, and municipalities to advocate for and implement gender-responsive peacebuilding initiatives. It also fosters collaboration and coordination among stakeholders by facilitating knowledge sharing and joint action. Finally, the toolkit ensures practical implementation by offering clear, actionable steps to integrate gender perspectives into policies, programs, and institutional frameworks.

Selected WROs will be trained on the use of the toolkit. The WE'AM project will provide training to eight selected WROs, ensuring that each organization has at least two members trained. This training will span 2.5 days and will cover the use of the toolkit, strategies for effective advocacy, and methods for promoting gender-sensitive approaches within their communities. By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among WROs, the project aims to strengthen the collective impact of these organizations and empower them to drive positive change at community, national, and international levels. These WROs will also be supported to cascade this knowledge to the existing local women and youth structures engaged under WE'AM. By fostering collaboration and peer learning among WROs, the project aims to amplify their collective impact and empower them to drive positive change at the community, national, and international levels.

By addressing the above-named gaps, the toolkit equips organizations with the tools to mainstream gender considerations into conflict resolution efforts, ensuring that interventions are both impactful and sustainable. Investing in internal capacity-building and standardized approaches will enable stakeholders to implement more inclusive, effective strategies for fostering social cohesion and sustainable peace in Lebanon.

The toolkit will be published in both Arabic and English. The WE'AM consortium, along with Seeds For Legal Initiatives, will actively disseminate the toolkit across local communities and stakeholders to ensure its accessibility, relevance, and long-term use.

1 American University of Beirut (AUB), "Congratulations, you graduated! Now what? Uncovering the high education vs. low employment paradox of women in Lebanon", 2013 <https://aub.edu/usb/news/Pages/Congratulations-you-graduated.-Now-what.-uncovering-the-High-Education-Low-Employment-Paradox-of-women-in-Lebanon.aspx>

2 Seeds for Legal Initiatives - "In the Shadow of a State" - Executive summary 2021

3 UN Women Lebanon, "In Brief - Women, Peace and Security," 1.

4 UN Women Lebanon, "In Brief - Women, Peace and Security," 1.

5 "We need more women leaders to sustain peace and development," United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed February 14, 2025, <https://www.un.org/fr/desa/we-need-more-women-leaders-sustain-peace-and-development>.

Overview of the Toolkit

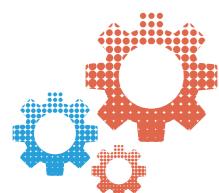
The toolkit is structured into four modules, each addressing key gaps identified in the research conducted by SEEDS. It provides practical guidance, training programs, and evaluation mechanisms to ensure effective gender-sensitive programming in conflict-affected areas.



Module 1

Strengthening Internal Structures

This module addresses the internal capacity of organizations, recognizing that gender-sensitive programming begins with strong internal policies. The 3 tools in this module help organizations establish gender-responsive policy frameworks, create safe environments for both staff and beneficiaries, and build leadership capacity. The need for this module stems from our findings that many organizations acknowledge the importance of gender-sensitive policies but struggle with consistent implementation. Gender mainstreaming is often donor-driven rather than embedded into organizational strategies, safety mechanisms often remain underdeveloped, and internal leadership remains dominated by men. This module provides practical steps for overcoming these challenges.



Module 2

Ensuring Quality Programming

Ensuring that programs are effective and impactful requires robust design, monitoring, and partnership strategies. This module provides 4 tools to help organizations integrate gender-sensitive planning, develop relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation, and establish strong partnerships. SEEDS' report shows that many organizations rely on quantitative participation metrics rather than assessing the depth of women's empowerment. Additionally, gender-sensitive budgeting remains underdeveloped, often limited to funding women-specific programs rather than addressing systemic inequalities. This module offers solutions to these gaps, supporting organizations in embedding gender considerations into their programmatic frameworks.



Module 3

Strengthening Project Design

This module helps organizations improve their approach to project design. It includes 4 tools on ideation and contextualization, gender equality expertise, risk mitigation, and resource allocation. Our findings indicate that many organizations lack expertise in gender-sensitive conflict analysis, leading to interventions that fail to address structural inequalities or account for regional differences. Risk assessments often overlook gender-specific vulnerabilities, and resource allocation does not always prioritize gender equality. This module ensures that organizations are better equipped to design impactful, sustainable projects that address gender disparities at their root.

Module 4

Understanding the Linkage Between GBV and Conflict Resolution

This module focuses on the intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict dynamics, with 1 tool addressing this critical yet often overlooked aspect of peacebuilding. Our research reveals that while many organizations recognize the importance of addressing GBV, they often fail to systematically integrate GBV considerations into their conflict resolution efforts. Some stakeholders prioritize immediate causes of violence but neglect systemic gender inequalities that fuel conflict and insecurity. This module provides a framework to deepen understanding of how conflict exacerbates GBV risks and how GBV itself contributes to instability, ensuring that gender-sensitive conflict analysis is systematically applied.

This toolkit is designed to equip organizations with the knowledge and strategies needed to develop holistic, effective, and sustainable interventions. By addressing gender disparities at every level of conflict resolution, it promotes inclusive peacebuilding and long-term social cohesion in Lebanon.

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed as a practical and user-friendly resource for organizations and institutions working on gender-sensitive conflict resolution in Lebanon. It provides structured guidance, tools, and methodologies to help integrate gender considerations into peacebuilding efforts. Below are key steps on how to effectively use this toolkit:

Step 1 Understanding the Toolkit

Begin by reviewing the introduction to understand the purpose, key themes, and overarching objectives of the toolkit.

Familiarize yourself with the different sections, which cover research findings, essential concepts, and practical tools, as well as the annexes.

Identify the most relevant sections for your work, whether you are a CSO, WRO, municipality or/and any institution working to transform their practices into more gender sensitive ones.

Familiarize yourself with the terms used by consulting the **"Definitions and Key Concepts"** chapter below.

Step 2

Applying the Tools

Select the tools and methodologies that best fit your needs, whether for internal structuring, program design and monitoring, or theoretical understanding.

Read the entire tool at least once before you begin the implementation, including the introduction.

Follow the step-by-step instructions provided for each tool, ensuring alignment with your organization's goals.

Consider adapting the examples and case studies to your local context while maintaining the core principles of gender-sensitive peacebuilding.

Definitions and Key Concepts



Conflict

Addressing Lebanon's conflicts requires more than managing surface-level disputes; it demands gender-transformative change targeting the root causes of gender inequality.⁶ This approach involves inclusive, holistic strategies tailored to Lebanon's unique context, fostering equitable communities and reducing tensions across society.⁷

For the purposes of this toolkit, conflict is defined as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing armed violence, political unrest, and tensions resulting from socio-economic struggles, as well as inter-communal and interpersonal tensions within cities, communities, and institutions, as long as they are externalized to a detectable extent. It arises from competing interests, identities, and resource distribution, often exacerbated by historical grievances, corruption, and structural inequalities.⁸

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming refers to the consistent consideration of the different experiences, needs, and situations of women, men, and different gender identities, as well as age, disability, nationality/status and other factors of marginalization in all policies and actions. It involves adjusting how policies are developed, implemented, and evaluated to ensure a gender perspective is included at every level and stage. The goal is to make sure that both women's and men's concerns, with all their diversity and different and unique perspectives and experiences, are a core part of decision-making processes across political, economic, and social areas so that they benefit fairly, helping to prevent injustice. Importantly, gender mainstreaming works alongside - not instead of - targeted policies and actions that specifically promote gender justice and address existing gaps.⁹

Gender Perspective

A gender perspective examines how gender-based differences influence social phenomena, policies, and processes, with a particular focus on disparities in status and power. It considers how discrimination shapes both the immediate needs and long-term interests that may be correlated with one's gender. In policymaking, adopting a gender perspective ensures that the experiences and concerns of both women and men are fully integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs across all sectors. This approach aims to promote fair benefits and prevent the reinforcement of inequalities.¹⁰

Gender Sensitive Budgeting

Gender-sensitive budgeting is an approach that ensures public resources are allocated in a way that addresses the different needs and priorities of women and men. Rather than setting aside separate budgets for women, this approach incorporates a gender perspective throughout the entire budget cycle—planning, allocation, implementation, and evaluation—to ensure that financial decisions contribute to advancing gender equality.¹¹ This process helps identify gaps, reallocate funds where necessary, and ensure that budget commitments align with policies aimed at advancing women's rights and addressing structural inequalities.¹²

Gender Sensitivity

Gender sensitivity involves recognizing and addressing the societal and cultural factors that contribute to gender-based exclusion and discrimination. It primarily highlights structural disadvantages that affect women's roles and status, aiming to foster greater awareness and more equitable practices.¹³

Gender Transformative Change

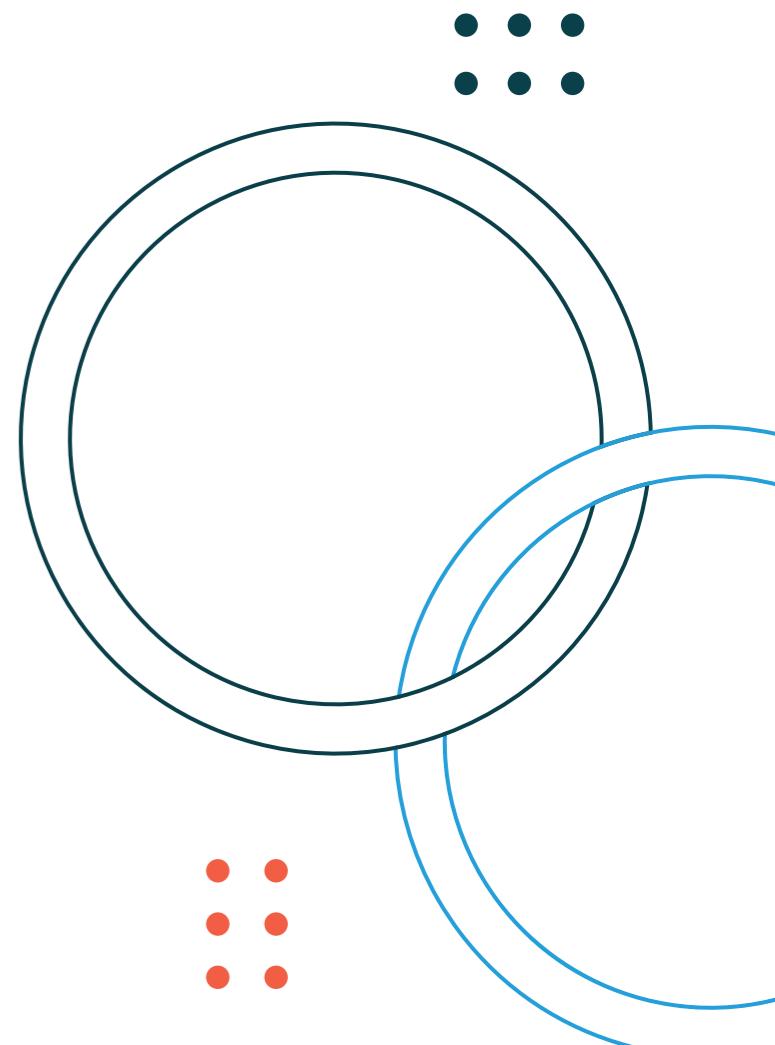
Gender-transformative change refers to a deep and lasting shift in societal structures, norms, and power dynamics to eliminate gender inequality. It goes beyond surface-level interventions by tackling the root causes of discrimination, redistributing power and resources, and fostering shared decision-making.¹⁴ This change requires adapting strategies to specific contexts and engaging a broad network of stakeholders committed to a common agenda for gender equality.¹⁵

In the context of this toolkit, gender-transformative change means integrating strategies that challenge and reshape the societal norms and institutional barriers that limit women's participation in conflict resolution. It involves strengthening women's decision-making power, ensuring equal access to resources, and addressing structural inequalities that perpetuate exclusion. By providing tools for organizations to implement gender-responsive policies, foster inclusive dialogue, and advocate for systemic reform, this toolkit supports long-term, sustainable progress towards gender justice in Lebanon's conflict-affected areas.

Sex and Gender

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics that typically categorize people as female or male. These traits - like reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormones - are not always strictly indicative of one specific sex, as some individuals may have a combination of both characteristics¹⁶ and are referred to as intersex.

Gender, on the other hand, relates to the social roles, behaviours, and expectations associated with being female or male. In this toolkit it is expressed through terms like "man" or "woman" instead of "male" or "female." It shapes how people are perceived, how they interact, and the opportunities they have, and it varies across cultures and over time. Unlike sex, gender is socially constructed and can change depending on the context. It also influences how power and resources are distributed, often placing women at a disadvantage in many societies.¹⁶



⁶ "Gender Transformative Change," ESCWA, July 16, 2024, <https://de.slideshare.net/slideshow/4-gender-transformative-change-escwa-pdf/270272296>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Gender Mainstreaming," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed February 23, 2025, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1070>.

⁹ "Gender Perspective," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed February 23, 2025, https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1257?language_content_entity=en

¹⁰ "Gender Equality Glossary," UN Women Training Centre eLearning Campus, UN Women, accessed February 24, 2025, <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode=letter&hook=G&sortkey=&sortorder=&fullsearch=0&page=-1>.

¹¹ International Organization for Migration, "Understanding Gender Sensitive Budgeting," 6.

¹² "Gender Sensitivity," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed February 23, 2025, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1107>.

¹³ "Gender Equality Glossary," UN Women Training Centre eLearning Campus, UN Women, accessed February 24, 2025, <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode=letter&hook=G&sortkey=&sortorder=&fullsearch=0&page=-1>.

¹⁴ UNECWA, "Gender Transformative Change - Exploring its Dimensions," slide 6.

¹⁵ "Sex," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed February 23, 2025, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1048>.

¹⁶ "Gender," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed February 23, 2025, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1046>.

Module 1

Internal Structures

Tool 1

Policy Frameworks – Identifying Gaps and Challenges

Tool 2

Safety, Security, and Protection – Establishing Safe Environments

Tool 3

Leadership Development on Gender Equity – Building Leadership Skills



A strong internal foundation is essential for any organization seeking to implement gender-sensitive conflict resolution strategies effectively and support women in diverse conflict settings. The way an organization structures its policies, leadership, and safety mechanisms directly impacts its ability to foster meaningful change. Many organizations express a commitment to gender equality, yet gaps remain in how these commitments are translated into action.¹⁷ Recognizing these challenges, this module focuses on strengthening internal structures by addressing key areas that shape how organizations approach gender and conflict.

This module consists of three tools that target fundamental internal frameworks:

Tool 1:
Policy Frameworks – Identifying Gaps and Challenges

Tool 2:
Safety, Security, and Protection – Establishing Safe Environments

Tool 3:
Leadership Development on Gender Equity – Building Leadership Skills

The tools in this module were selected based on key gaps identified during the KIIs and FGDs. Many organizations acknowledge the importance of gender-sensitive policies, but these policies are often inconsistent, informal, or narrowly focused on quotas rather than structural change. Similarly, while organizations recognize the importance of safe spaces and leadership development, there is a lack of concrete strategies to institutionalize these efforts. The tools in this module aim to bridge these gaps by providing structured approaches to strengthening internal policies, ensuring women's safety, and fostering leadership.

This module aims to equip organizations with the necessary frameworks to:

- 1. Advance Gender-Transformative Policies and Practices:** Adopt comprehensive, actionable policies that promote gender justice and inclusion to challenge unequal power dynamics. Ensure these policies can be effectively implemented.
- 2. Enhance Safety and Protection Measures:** Establish proactive mechanisms to create environments where all women, particularly those facing intersecting forms of discrimination, can fully participate without fear of harassment, violence, or exclusion.

- 3. Foster Inclusive Leadership and Meaningful Representation:** Move beyond token inclusion and actively build pathways for women's leadership in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
- 4. Promote Institutional Accountability and Equity:** Encourage organizations to assess their internal structures through an intersectional and feminist lens, identify areas for improvement, and implement sustainable, equity-driven reforms.

Organizations working in conflict resolution and peacebuilding must ensure that their internal structures align with the gender-sensitive approaches they promote externally. However, many organizations face gaps in policy frameworks that hinder their ability to implement gender-responsive programming effectively. These gaps include a lack of structured mechanisms to address systemic gender inequalities, inconsistent integration of gender-sensitive budgeting, and insufficient internal training on gender equity. Additionally, while some organizations acknowledge barriers faced by women, they often lack concrete policies to help women overcome these barriers and ensure their meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making.¹⁸

Similarly, without robust safety measures, organizations risk failing to provide secure environments for women's active participation. While many organizations claim to prioritize women's safety, few have structured policies or proactive measures to prevent and respond to risks, particularly in conflict-affected settings.¹⁹ The lack of formal safety mechanisms - such as secure venues, harassment reporting systems, and protection policies - limits women's ability to engage fully. Additionally, censorship and expected conformity often hinder women's ability to express freely their opinion which is in itself a form of violence. Ensuring women feel safe to express themselves should be a priority in safety and accountability mechanisms.

Finally, leadership development is critical - not just for individual empowerment, but for ensuring that women are actively shaping decision-making processes in conflict resolution efforts. Women's leadership remains an area where progress is needed. Many organizations continue to frame women in traditional, passive roles rather than as active decision-makers. Leadership training is often sporadic, and women's participation and representation in high-level decision-making is limited. Even when organizations acknowledge the value of women's leadership, they do not always have structured programs to support their advancement.²⁰

By strengthening internal structures, organizations can build a solid foundation for gender-sensitive conflict resolution efforts. This module will guide organizations through practical steps to identify gaps, implement necessary reforms, and ensure that gender equity is not just an external advocacy goal but a deeply embedded institutional practice. Thereby, it will help organizations assess and strengthen their internal frameworks, ensuring that gender considerations are embedded in policies,

budgeting, training, and safety measures to create lasting, institutional change. This module will offer concrete strategies to institutionalize safety measures, ensuring that protection is embedded in all aspects of an organization's work. Lastly, it will address women's barriers by providing tools to cultivate leadership skills and create environments where women can take on meaningful, decision-making roles.



¹⁷ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon - WE'AM Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

¹⁸ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

¹⁹ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

²⁰ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

Tool 1

Policy Frameworks - Identifying Gaps and Challenges

The effectiveness of organizations working on conflict resolution and gender equality in Lebanon heavily relies on the robustness of their internal policy frameworks. Such frameworks guide their ability to address gender dynamics, implement gender-sensitive programming, and advocate for systemic reforms. However, the findings from the WE'AM project highlight several critical gaps and challenges in existing policies and practices that undermine the potential impact of these organizations.

A recurring challenge is the **superficial understanding of the interplay between conflict dynamics and gender**, with organizations lacking comprehensive strategies to address women's specific needs in these settings. For instance, the instrumentalization of women during conflicts, while acknowledged, is rarely integrated into policy frameworks or programming efforts. Similarly, although systemic barriers such as economic exploitation, cultural and care-work burdens, and domestic violence are recognized, these issues are often underrepresented in policies, leaving gaps in protection and support mechanisms.²¹

One significant gap is the **absence of robust gender-sensitive budgeting (GSB) frameworks**. While some organizations claim gender sensitivity in their work, they often equate this with funding women-specific initiatives rather than adopting equitable resource allocation strategies across all programs. A lack of structured planning, monitoring, and consistent application of GSB principles further diminishes the ability of organizations to address systemic gender disparities comprehensively.²²

Internal policies also reveal **limitations in inclusivity, with certain actors perpetuating restrictive gender stereotypes**. For instance, women in municipal contexts are often relegated to informal, family-centered roles, portraying them as passive participants rather than active decision-makers. Furthermore, while some organizations emphasize the need for community collaboration, few conduct thorough needs assessments or mapping exercises, resulting in projects that may not align with the realities of target populations.²³

Training and capacity-building efforts for internal teams also remain inconsistent. Many organizations rely on informal discussions and guidelines for promoting gender sensitivity, lacking formalized structures, regular follow-ups, or refreshers to ensure long-term impact. Additionally, municipalities often lack proactive measures to address women's safety challenges, with many relying on reactive approaches rather than integrated, preemptive strategies.²⁴

Finally, the **absence of comprehensive internal gender-sensitive policies** across organizations and municipalities limits their ability to implement inclusive and sustainable interventions. Many policies are narrowly focused on quotas or selective initiatives, neglecting broader considerations like legal reform, enforcement mechanisms, and protective measures.²⁵ This challenge is exacerbated by Lebanon's broader policy landscape, where the lack of national gender-sensitive policies and a complex political environment create significant barriers to progress.

This tool aims to guide organizations in identifying gaps and challenges to gender equality within their policy frameworks. Once the gaps are identified, the remaining tools in this toolkit will support organizations as they work to bridge them. This tool consists of a necessary first step in the adoption and implementation of a gender transformative lens in conflict-affected settings.

Objectives

- Identify gaps and challenges for gender equality in internal policy frameworks
- Review the available internal policy frameworks and determine areas for improvement

21 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

22 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

23 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

24 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

25 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

A. PESTEL & SWOT Analysis

Analyse the context you are working in and then identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of your organisation, focusing on gender equality and representation in the workplace and gender-sensitive programming.

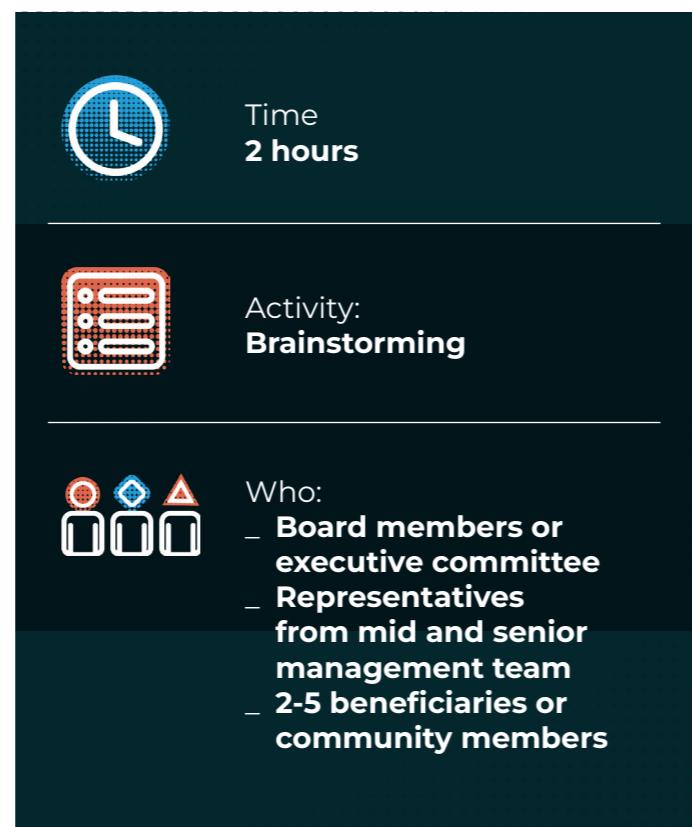
A PESTEL analysis is an acronym for a tool used to identify the macro forces facing an organisation. The letters stand for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal.²⁶

The framework is also used to identify potential threats and opportunities, which are used in a SWOT analysis.²⁷

A SWOT analysis provides valuable insights at any stage of a conflict resolution initiative. It can be used to:

- Identify key challenges and barriers to progress
- Assess strengths and opportunities to enhance impact
- Develop or refine strategies for effective action

By analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats,²⁸ organizations can make informed, strategic decisions that promote sustainable, gender-responsive conflict resolution initiatives.



Conduct a PESTEL analysis for your organization

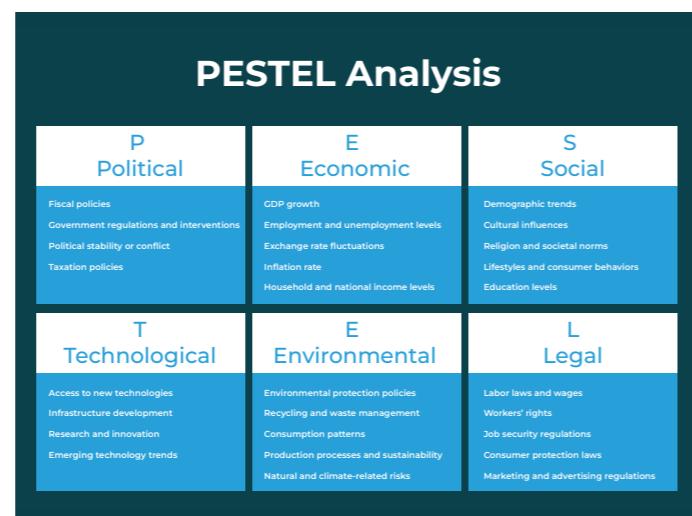
Answer the following guiding questions to conduct your PESTEL analysis.

Political Factors:

- What government policies, political trends, or regulations could impact our operations?
- How stable is the current political environment in the countries we operate in?
- Are there upcoming elections or changes in leadership that may affect our sector?
- What is the level of government support for our industry?
- Are there any trade restrictions, tariffs, or political pressures we should be aware of?

Economic Factors:

- What is the current economic climate (e.g., inflation, interest rates, GDP growth), and how might it affect our work?
- How do exchange rates, employment levels, and consumer confidence impact our organisation?
- Are there economic trends or forecasts that suggest opportunities or risks?



(Image ²⁹)

- How does income distribution and economic inequality affect our market or beneficiaries?

Social Factors:

- What demographic shifts (e.g., aging population, youth bulge) are occurring in our region?
- How are cultural attitudes and values evolving, and how might that affect our mission or services?
- What are the prevailing trends in education, lifestyle, and family structure?
- Are there changes in public opinion or societal expectations we should address?
- How do social movements and advocacy groups impact our stakeholders and operations?

Technological Factors:

- What new technologies or innovations are emerging in our sector?
- How are automation, AI, or digital platforms transforming the way we deliver value?
- Are there opportunities to use technology to improve efficiency or reach?
- What are the potential risks of technological disruption to our model?
- How are our competitors or peers leveraging technology differently?

Environmental Factors:

- How are environmental issues such as climate change or resource scarcity affecting our work?

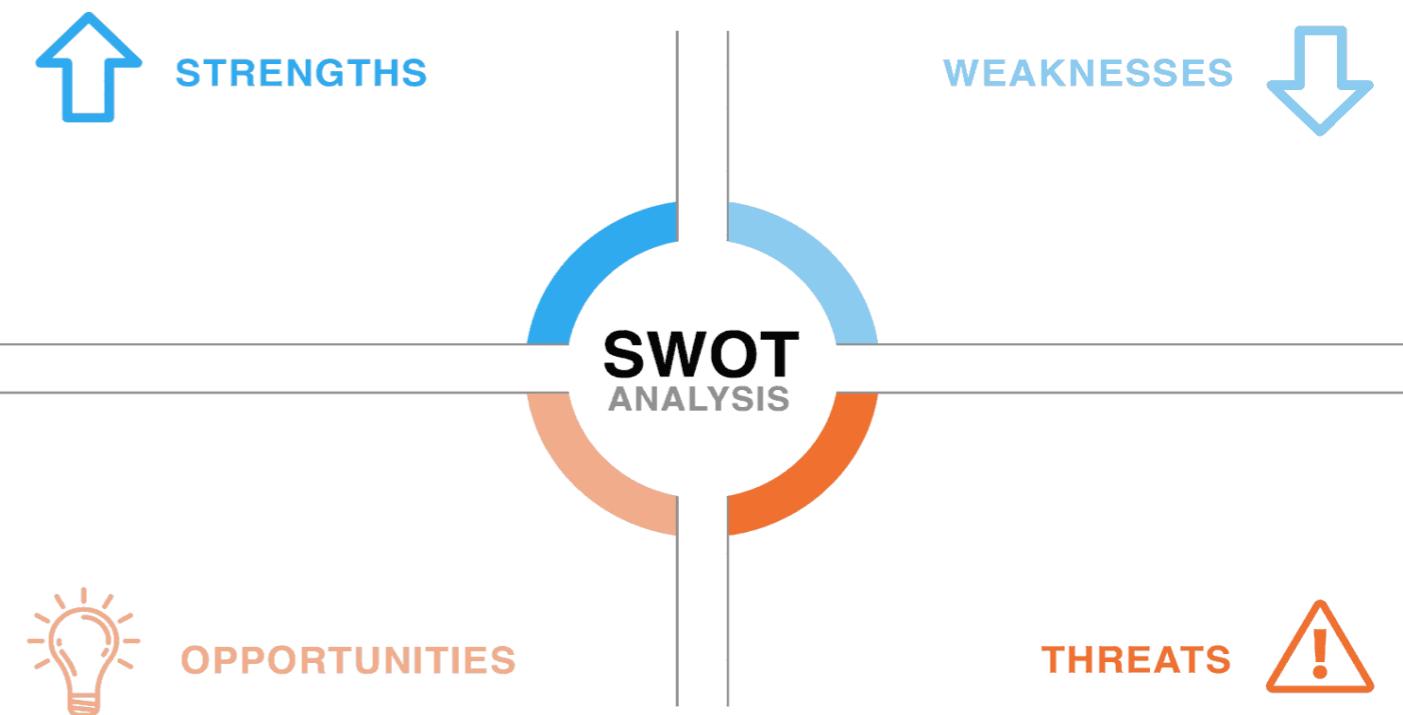
- What regulations or international standards around sustainability apply to us?
- How can we improve our environmental footprint and adopt sustainable practices?
- Are there environmental risks (e.g., natural disasters, droughts) that threaten our operations?
- How do stakeholders expect us to respond to environmental challenges?

Legal Factors:

- What are the key laws and regulations that govern our sector locally and internationally?
- Are there anticipated legal changes that could affect our operations or obligations?
- How compliant are we with employment laws, data protection, and health and safety regulations?
- Are there international conventions or human rights frameworks we must align with?
- What legal liabilities or risks should we be proactively managing?

→ The outcomes of your PESTEL can then be used to fill in the Opportunities and Threats in your SWOT analysis.

Conduct a SWOT analysis for your organization



26 Oxford College for Marketing, What Is A PESTEL Analysis <https://blog.oxfordcollegeofmarketing.com/2016/06/30/pestel-analysis/>

27 Oxford College for Marketing, What Is A PESTEL Analysis <https://blog.oxfordcollegeofmarketing.com/2016/06/30/pestel-analysis/>

28 "Section 14. SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats," Community Tool Box, accessed February 6, 2025, <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>.

29 Photo From Ideascale

Strengths: Internal Positives

- What do we do well?
- What unique assets do we have internally (such as knowledge, background, policies, network, reputation or skills) and externally (such as partners, beneficiaries, technology or capital)?

Weakness: Internal Negatives

- What and where can we improve?
- Where are the gaps in our assets and resources (such as knowledge, policies, cash or equipment)?
- How can we improve organizational processes?

Opportunities: External Positives

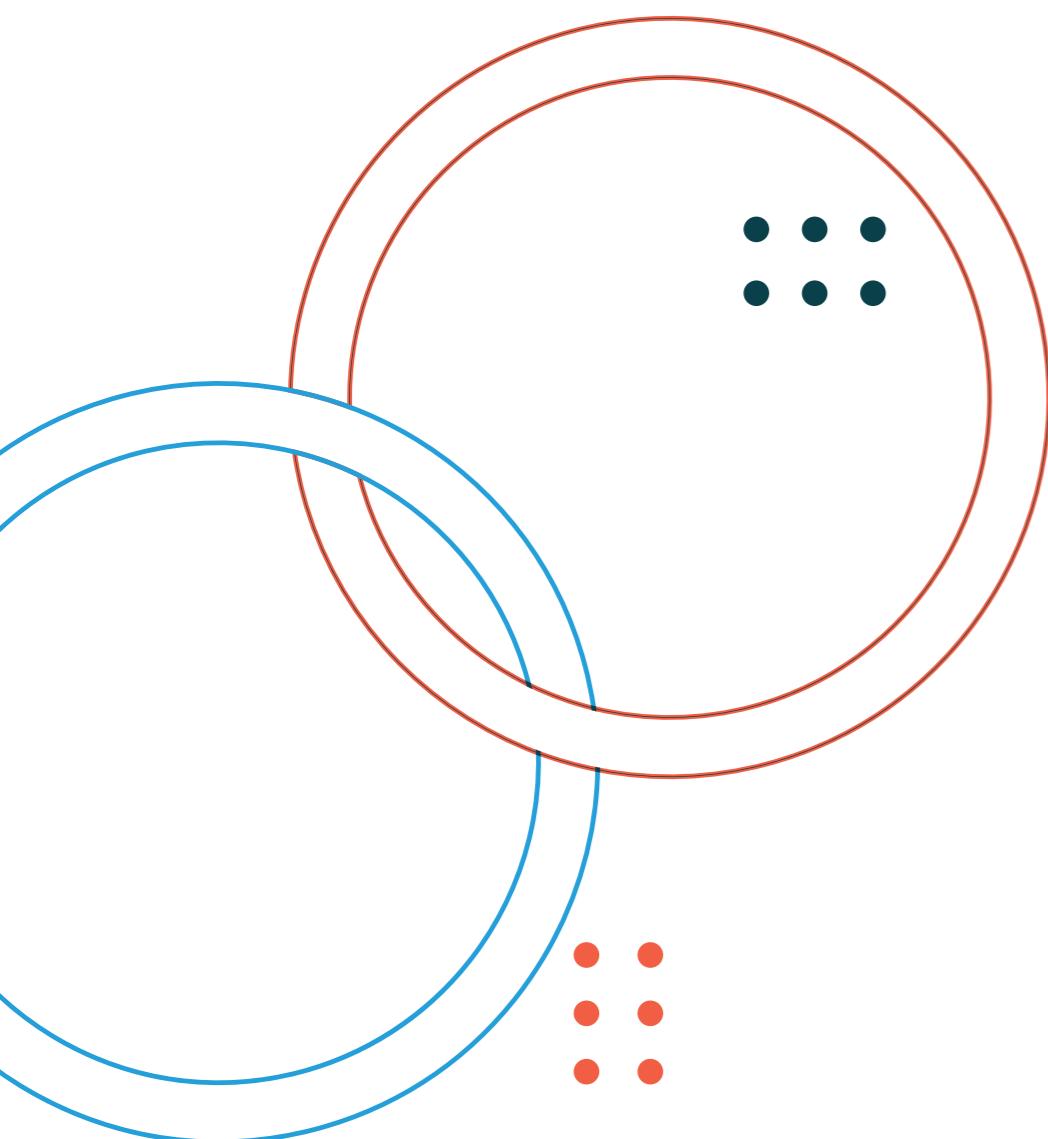
- What trends can we use to our advantage to increase our commitment to gender equality & representation & gender-sensitive programming?

- Are there any changes or events that might positively impact us (such as cultural shifts, regulations, policies, donor commitments, or new technology)?
- Has anything changed that creates opportunity for us?

Threats: External Negatives

- What factors beyond our control could place us at risk?
- Are our resource and material supplies unstable or insecure?
- Are there any changes or events that might negatively impact us (such as cultural shifts, regulations, policies, donor commitments, or new technology)?

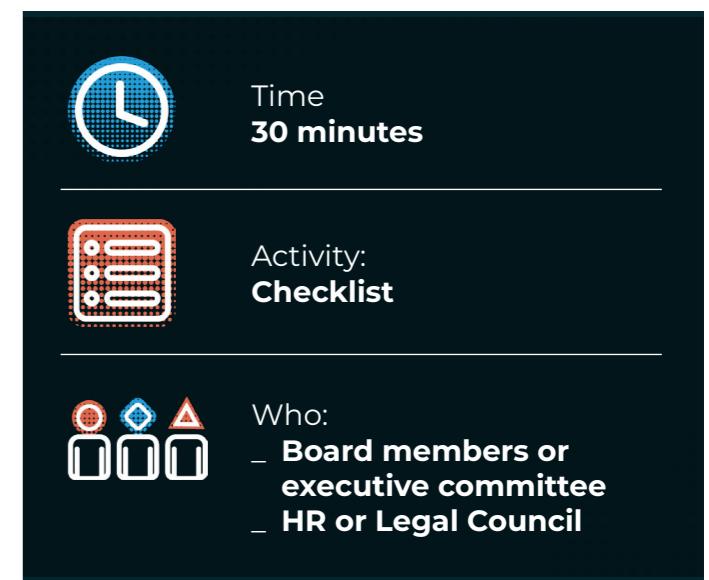
→ Use the findings of your PESTEL and SWOT Analysis to guide your work throughout this toolkit.



B. Gender Gap Checklist

Review your internal policy framework and identify the missing tools that will help you mainstream gender-equality and representation as well as gender-sensitive programming

The Gender Gap Checklist³⁰ will help determine what your organization is doing to advance gender equality, and identify strengths and areas where further action can be taken.



Review the Policy Frameworks & Fill the Checklist

1. Does your organization have leadership commitment and support for gender equality and women's empowerment?
2. Does your organization have a non-discrimination and equal opportunity policy?
3. Does your organization have an approach to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity in recruitment processes?
4. Does your organization have an approach to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity in professional development and promotion processes?
5. Does your organization have an approach to ensure women and men are compensated equally?
6. Does your organization offer and support paid maternity leave? Number of Weeks: _____
7. Does your organization offer and support paid paternity leave? Number of Weeks: _____
8. Does your organization have an approach to accommodate the work/life balance of all employees?
9. Does your organization have an approach to ensure an environment free of violence, harassment and sexual exploitation?
10. Does your organization have an approach to fight intersectional and compounded discrimination and to ensure an inclusive environment for all including for persons with disabilities?
11. Does your organization have an anonymous feedback mechanism?
12. Does your organization track and integrate women's opinions in the decision-making process?
13. Does your organization have an approach to promote access to quality health services that meet the specific health needs of women employees?
14. Does your organization take proactive procurement steps to expand relationships with women-owned businesses in the value chain and when contracting vendors?
15. Does your organization have an approach to responsible communication that considers the portrayal of gender stereotypes?
16. Does your organization have an approach to assess differential impacts on women and men when designing, implementing, and evaluating your programs?
17. Does your organization have an approach to embed gender in monitoring and evaluation efforts?
18. Does your organization have an approach to ensure gender-sensitive budgeting?
19. Does your organization have policies and processes in place to ensure the responsibility to respect the rights of women and girls in the local communities in which it operates?
20. Does your organization have an approach to embed gender in public advocacy, and partnerships?
21. Does your organization have an approach to embed gender in conflict resolution efforts?

→ Use this checklist to identify the policies you may choose to develop to help you further your commitment to gender equality and to determine which tools to focus on in this Toolkit.

Tool 2

Safety, Security, and Protection - Establishing Safe Environments



Ensuring the safety, security, and protection of women in conflict-affected settings is essential for fostering meaningful participation and sustainable engagement. However, findings indicate that organizations and municipalities sometimes lack structured approaches to creating truly safe environments. While some actors acknowledge the importance of safety measures, their strategies often focus on logistical aspects - such as providing venues - without deeper planning to address women's specific risks and protection needs. This tool seeks to support organizations in identifying gaps and implementing more comprehensive safety frameworks.

A key limitation is the inconsistent prioritization of mental and physical health concerns within safety strategies. Women in conflict zones face heightened risks of SGBV both in public and at home, alongside broader safety threats such as shelling, displacement, inadequate shelter, nutrition, and limited healthcare access.³¹ While some organizations recognize immediate needs, for example by providing menstrual hygiene kits, broader psychological and physical safety considerations remain underdeveloped. Many organizations lack clear frameworks for addressing gender-specific safety risks, including harassment, trauma, and long-term psychosocial support. A study found women often have greater need for mental health services in emergencies, yet face more barriers accessing them—highlighting the need for inclusive, gender-responsive support systems³². Similarly, municipalities often express commitment to inclusivity and freedom of expression, yet provide no concrete mechanisms to ensure the safety of women participating in dialogues or public discussions.³³

Another critical gap is the absence of formalized protection policies, particularly regarding sexual exploitation and harassment. Women community members across regions did not report knowledge of formal safety mechanisms, such as secure transportation, reporting mechanisms for abuse, or anti-harassment policies, suggesting either their absence or a failure to communicate them effectively. While some organizations have such policies in place, they appear to be inconsistently applied or deprioritized, reflecting broader gaps in internal gender-sensitive frameworks.³⁴

The ability to tailor interventions to local contexts, for example through strategic sensitivity in language and facilitation, is another underutilized safety measure.³⁵ The ability to tailor programs to local cultural and societal norms is essential for minimizing risks, yet not all organizations demonstrate this level of preparation. Poorly communicated or inconsistently applied safety proto-

cols risk reinforcing existing divisions, particularly when concerns about favoritism or unequal benefit-sharing emerge. Without clear and transparent safety guidelines, organizations may unintentionally create environments where women feel vulnerable or unsupported.

While some organizations demonstrate best practices in safe space creation - such as skilled facilitation and trust-building activities - many municipalities lack structured efforts beyond providing physical spaces. Safety is often reduced to logistical arrangements without addressing privacy, security, timing, or cultural appropriateness, particularly in conservative or high-risk settings. Scheduling often fails to accommodate women's availability, such as caregiving responsibilities or mobility constraints, limiting their participation. Moreover, women are rarely consulted in decisions around activity planning or space design, undermining the responsiveness of these initiatives to their lived realities.

Additionally, municipalities rely heavily on external partners for safety provisions, reflecting a reactive rather than proactive approach. Although collaboration with external actors can be beneficial, it highlights a lack of internal capacity to address gender-specific safety concerns independently.³⁶

Another recurring challenge is the informal nature of gender-sensitivity and protection training. While many organizations claim to conduct sensitization sessions, these sometimes lack formal structures, follow-up mechanisms, or systematic implementation across all branches and staff.³⁷ This inconsistency weakens long-term impact and prevents the institutionalization of robust safety practices.

This tool will help organizations move beyond basic or reactive safety measures by establishing comprehensive, proactive security and protection frameworks. By integrating structured policies, clear communication strategies, and a gender-sensitive approach to safety, organizations can create environments that empower women, foster trust, and ensure meaningful participation in conflict resolution efforts.

³¹ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, [Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon - WE'AM Women in Conflict Settings](#) - April 2025

³² CARE, "Financial Insecurity, Hunger, Mental Health are Top Concerns For Women Worldwide" September 2022 <https://www.care.org/media-and-press/financial-insecurity-hunger-mental-health-are-top-concerns-for-women-worldwide/>

³³ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

³⁴ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

³⁵ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

³⁶ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

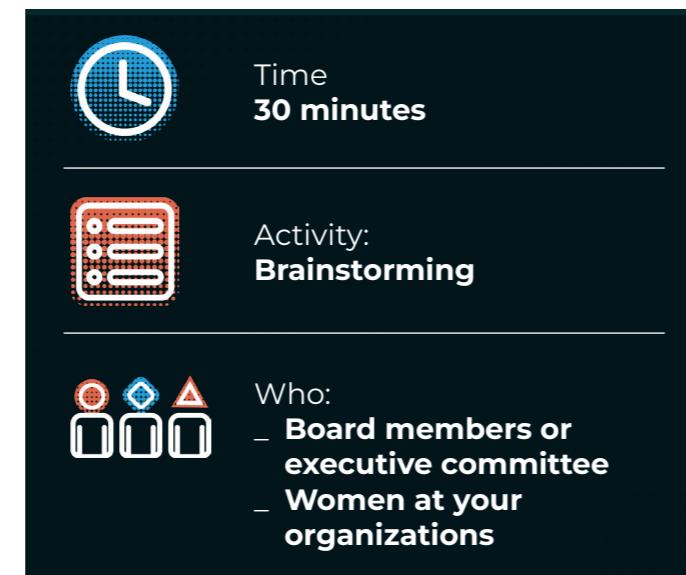
³⁷ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

A. The Impact of Unsafe Environments on Women at your Organization

Explore the potential consequences of unsafe environments on women at your organization.

This discussion will allow you to identify the potential unwanted risks that unsafe environments pose to women at your organization and guide you towards tailoring appropriate mitigation strategies.

For the purposes of this tool, “unsafe environments” refer to any work environment that makes women or other minorities feel unsafe, unprotected, or threatened.

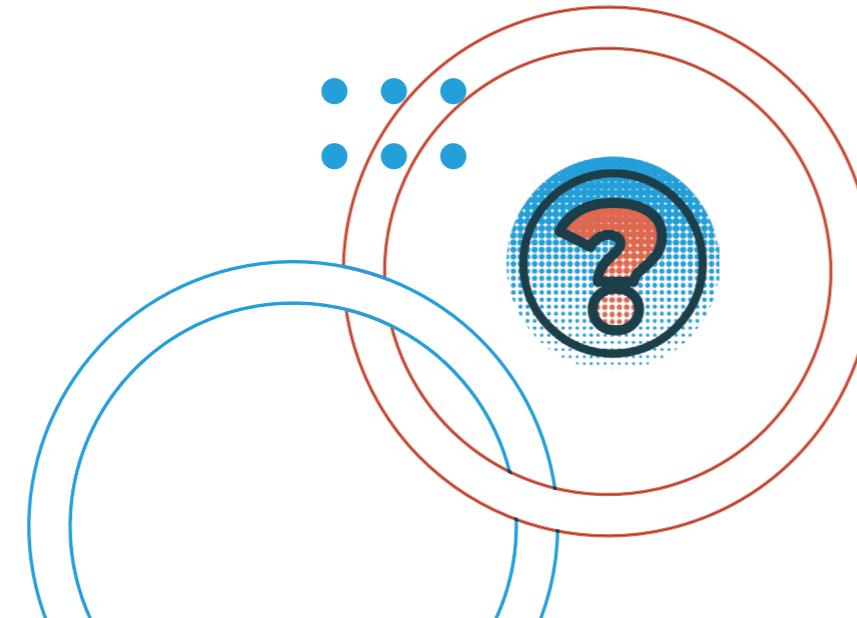


Conduct Focus Group discussions

Sample discussion prompts:

1. How would you rate the workplace environment at [your organization] from not safe at all [0] to very safe [5]
2. What potential attitudes or behaviors would make you feel unsafe or threatened?
3. How would these attitudes and behaviors impact you?
 - Emotional distress
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Decline in self-esteem
 - Fear of retaliation or being disbelieved
 - Decreased productivity or motivation,
 - Wanting to resign
 - Other: _____
4. What measures would increase your feeling of being protected and your trust in your organization's support?

→ Use this tool to define your priorities as you develop your anti-sexual harassment policy



B. Develop your Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy

Develop a tailored tool that protects your team and meets international standards



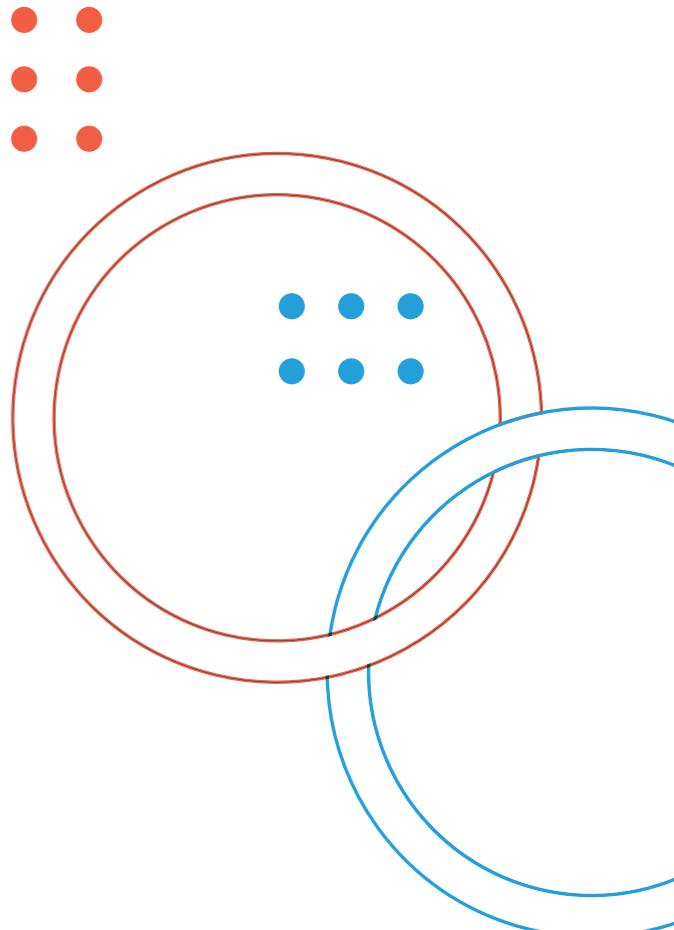
Develop a Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Check Annex A of this toolkit for a sample Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Tailor the following points to your organization's need and capacity:

1. How will you define sexual harassment?
2. What prevention mechanisms will you adopt?
3. What reporting mechanisms will you adopt?
4. What investigation mechanisms will you adopt?
5. What sanctions will you implement in cases of sexual harassment?
6. Who will be in charge of implementing this policy?
7. What extra measures will you take to protect victims of sexual harassment

→ Once you have developed your tailored anti-sexual harassment toolkit, how will you start enforcing it?



Tool 3

Leadership Development on Gender Justice - Building Leadership Skills



Enhancing women's leadership in conflict resolution and peacebuilding is essential for fostering inclusive and sustainable solutions. While women community members express confidence in their abilities and recognize the value of their contributions³⁸, they often describe the need to push harder to have their voices heard. Many report that even small successes in awareness-raising and skill-building have strengthened their confidence, equipping them with critical leadership competencies such as conflict communication, project management, and adaptability. Despite these gains, systemic barriers remain, reinforcing the need for targeted leadership development initiatives.

A key challenge lies in how women's leadership potential is framed. Many organizations and municipalities acknowledge women's positive contributions but often describe them in vague or traditional terms. Women are frequently depicted as moral supporters, caregivers, and mediators rather than as active decision-makers or strategic leaders. Some municipalities openly resist projects that promote women's autonomy, arguing that such initiatives threaten traditional family structures. Statements like "women should be under the wing of men"³⁹ reflect deeply ingrained patriarchal attitudes that continue to limit women's roles in leadership. Women community members highlight that during crises, they are assigned nurturing and service-oriented roles, only to be sidelined from decision-making once stability is restored.⁴⁰ This cycle of exclusion hinders women's sustained influence in peacebuilding efforts.

Institutional barriers further restrict women's leadership opportunities. Many municipalities lack women's representation in their councils, with some having no women members at all. This absence of women in decision-making bodies significantly reduces their ability to shape peacebuilding initiatives and advocate for gender-sensitive policies. Structural obstacles, such as cultural norms that associate leadership with masculinity, make it even more difficult for women to step into leadership roles without facing social scrutiny. Some organizations recognize these challenges and provide leadership training for women in conflict resolution, fostering local ownership of gender justice initiatives. However, the broader lack of supportive measures - such as mentorship programs, equity-driven policies, and active efforts to challenge exclusionary practices - continues to slow progress.⁴¹

Another gap is the tendency to focus on formal equality such as 50/50 quotas, rather than addressing structural inequalities that limit women's access to leadership. Some organizations and municipalities assume that women have equal opportunities if they work hard enough, overlooking systemic barriers that make leadership positions more accessible to men. Women community members report having to exert significantly more effort than men to gain the same level of recognition, demonstrating the need for policies that go beyond quotas and actively support women's advancement.⁴²

Despite these challenges, momentum is building. Organizations and municipalities acknowledge a positive shift in Lebanon, citing the formation of women's peacebuilder networks, gender units within ministries, and increased community acceptance of women in leadership. Women are already demonstrating their leadership capabilities, taking on active roles in organizing municipal meetings and youth engagement. Women working within municipalities note that participatory leadership has fostered inclusivity, reduced divisions, and strengthened collaboration - even across sectarian and national lines.⁴³

To capitalize on this momentum, this tool will equip organizations with strategies to foster women's leadership more effectively. By moving beyond traditional narratives, addressing institutional barriers, and promoting equity-driven approaches, organizations can ensure that women's leadership is recognized, supported, and sustained in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.

Insight Box:

Women community members reported that skepticism and hostility often came from other women in their community. It is therefore important to create inclusive projects that are open and accessible so as to not create divisions within the community. Women should be empowered to support each other by understanding internalized patriarchal attitudes.

38 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

39 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

40 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

41 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

42 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

43 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

A. What makes a good leader?

Discuss the traits of a good leader and the obstacles for women leadership



Time
2 hours



Activity:
Facilitated Workshop



Who:
- Board members or executive committee
- Team

Discuss the following points

1. What makes a good leader?

a. What are the top traits a leader should have?

Leadership Traits⁴⁴

Honest
Intelligent
Decisive
Organized
Compassionate
Innovative
Ambitious

b. Which of these traits are women good at?

Which of them women are not so good at?

Are women more likely to make irrational or emotional decisions in positions of power?

What is your rationale? (misconceptions, cultural beliefs / vs experience and research)

Women Seen as More Compassionate, Men More Decisive

% saying each characteristic is ...

	More true of women	More true of men	Equally true of both
Compassionate	65	2	32
Organized	48	4	46
Honest	29	3	67
Innovative	11	12	75
Intelligent	9	4	86
Ambitious	9	21	68
Decisive	9	27	62

Note: "No answer" not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center survey, Nov. 12-21, 2014 (N=1,835)

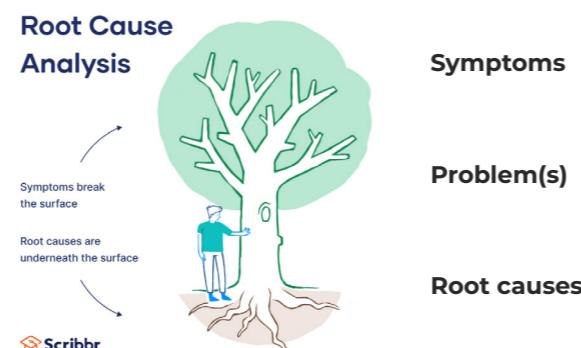
2. What are the obstacles to women's leadership in Lebanon? In your community (**problem**)?

a. What are the consequences of these obstacles (**symptoms**)?

b. What are the root causes of these obstacles?

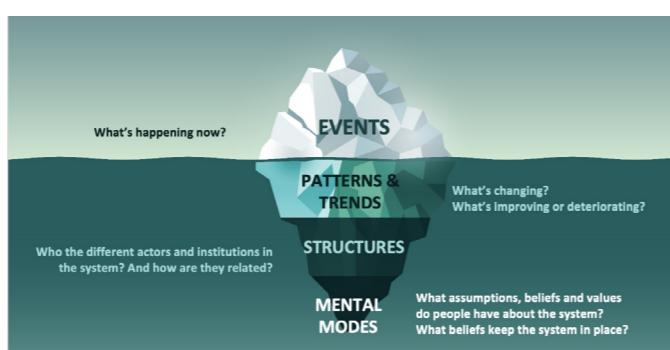
3. What strategies can help overcome obstacles to women's leadership in Lebanon?

a. Are these strategies dealing with the symptoms? problem(s)? Or root causes?



For a more in-depth discussion, use the iceberg model below⁴⁵:

- Events (problem or symptoms)
- Root causes (Patterns & trends, structures, mental modes)
- Strategies: at which level are you intervening?
- Use the results of your analysis to guide your action steps in section B of this tool.



B. Guiding principles for Building the Leadership Skills of Women at your Organization

Devise a plan for leadership development on gender equality



Time
30 minutes



Activity:
Brainstorming



Who:
- Board members or executive committee
- Team

Fill this template⁴⁶

Objective	How are you meeting this objective	Action Steps to better meet this objective	Timeline	Needed Resources
Showing leadership commitment – Leaders take real action, like updating policies and practices.				
Bringing in diverse talent – Hiring people from different backgrounds and preparing them for leadership.				
Always improving – Regularly reviewing and making things better.				
Clear and open communication – Being honest and transparent inside and outside the organization.				
Supporting women entrepreneurs – Helping women start businesses and get fair access to funding.				

→ Follow these principles to build effective women leadership at your organization.

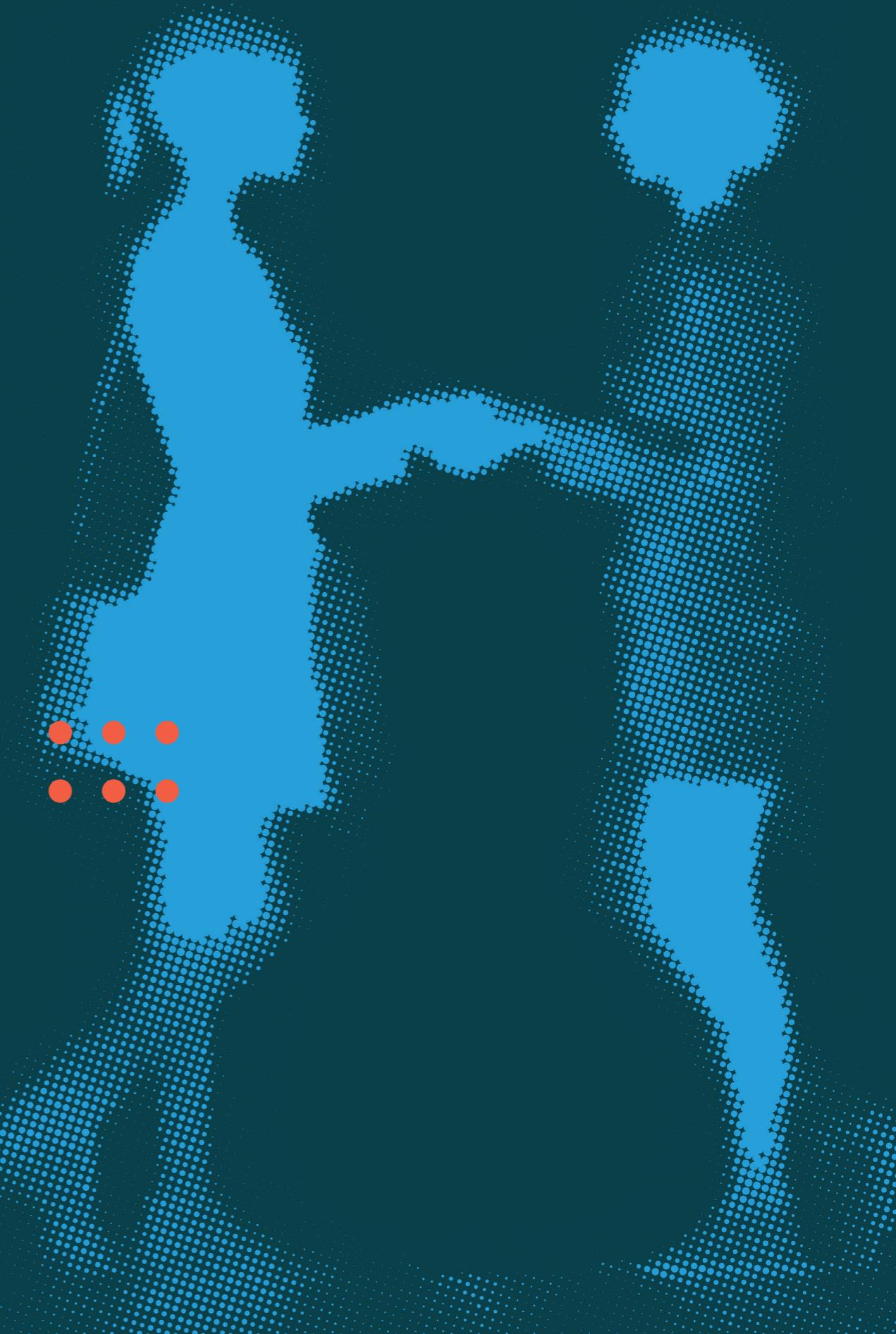
⁴⁴ Pew Research Center. (2015). Women & Leadership: Public Says Women are Equally Qualified but Barriers Persist. Pew Research Center.

⁴⁵ Adapted from SI. Leader Lab 2023 - Iceberg Module

⁴⁶ Adapted from: ILO, 2020. Empowering Women at Work – Company Policies and Practices for Gender Equality. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcms5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent@multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf

Module 2

Quality Programming



Tool 4

Quality Programming and Gender Equality - Ensuring Program Quality

Tool 5

Gender Equality Outcomes
- Measuring Impact

Tool 6

Gender-Sensitive and Sex-Age Indicators
- Developing Relevant Indicators

Tool 7

Effective, Sustainable, and Productive
Partnerships - Building Strong
Partnerships

Ensuring high-quality programming is essential for organizations aiming to integrate gender equality into conflict resolution efforts. Effective programming goes beyond project implementation; it requires deliberate planning, strong partnerships, and mechanisms for measuring impact to ensure sustainable and transformative change. Despite commitments to gender-sensitive approaches, organizations often face challenges in systematically embedding gender considerations into their programming. Addressing these gaps is crucial to creating initiatives that are both impactful and responsive to the needs of women in conflict settings.

This module consists of four tools designed to enhance program quality and gender sensitivity:

Tool 4
Quality Programming and Gender Equality - Ensuring Program Quality

Tool 5
Gender Equality Outcomes - Measuring Impact

Tool 6
Gender-Sensitive and Sex-Age Indicators - Developing Relevant Indicators

Tool 7
Effective, Sustainable, and Productive Partnerships - Building Strong Partnerships

These tools were selected based on key gaps identified during the KIIs and FGDs. While many organizations express a commitment to gender equality, inconsistencies in planning, monitoring, and evaluation weaken their ability to translate commitments into meaningful change. A selective approach to gender mainstreaming, where women's involvement is prioritized only when externally mandated, limits systemic impact. Additionally, organizations struggle to balance inclusivity with the practical realities of navigating political, cultural, and logistical barriers. This module provides structured approaches to strengthen programming processes, ensuring that gender considerations are systematically integrated from design to implementation and evaluation.

This module aims to equip organizations with the necessary frameworks to:

- 1. Ensure Gender-Responsive Program Design:** Move beyond superficial inclusion by embedding gender considerations into all stages of project planning and execution.
- 2. Improve Measurement of Gender Equality Outcomes:** Establish clear mechanisms for evaluating gender-specific impacts to ensure accountability and continuous learning.

- 3. Develop Effective Gender-Sensitive Indicators:** Move beyond general metrics like participation rates and establish meaningful indicators that capture empowerment and systemic change.
- 4. Strengthen Partnerships for Sustainability:** Build strong collaborations with municipalities, CSOs, WROs, and international actors to ensure local buy-in, relevance, and long-term impact.

Organizations working in conflict resolution often struggle with fragmented approaches to gender-sensitive programming. A key challenge is the inconsistent application of gender considerations in project design, where gender is sometimes integrated only when required by donors or when specific projects demand it. This selective approach undermines efforts to institutionalize gender justice within programming processes. Additionally, many organizations fail to conduct comprehensive needs assessments before launching initiatives, limiting their ability to address the specific barriers faced by diverse women in different contexts.⁴⁷

Measuring impact is another significant gap. While some organizations track gender-related outcomes, many rely on surface-level indicators such as gender quotas rather than deeper, qualitative assessments of women's empowerment and participation.⁴⁸

Weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks further limit organizations' ability to capture long-term impact, making it difficult to refine strategies and scale successful interventions. Without robust measurement tools, organizations risk overlooking key insights that could enhance program effectiveness.

Partnerships also play a critical role in quality programming. Many organizations rely on municipal collaborations to facilitate project implementation, yet engagement levels vary significantly. Some municipalities actively support gender-sensitive initiatives, while others remain passive or resistant, particularly regarding women's empowerment efforts.⁴⁹ This inconsistency underscores the need for organizations to develop strategic, sustainable partnerships that align with their goals while navigating political and cultural sensitivities.

By addressing these challenges, this module provides organizations with the tools needed to institutionalize gender-sensitive programming, ensuring that interventions are both effective and sustainable. Strengthening program design, establishing meaningful indicators, improving impact measurement, and fostering strong partnerships are essential steps in enhancing the quality of conflict resolution initiatives. This module will help organizations move beyond ad-hoc approaches, ensuring that gender equality is systematically integrated into programming processes for lasting change.

Tool 4

Quality Programming and Gender Equality - Ensuring Program Quality



⁴⁷ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

⁴⁸ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

⁴⁹ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

The effectiveness of conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts depends not only on the topics they address but also on the quality of program design and implementation. Ensuring that programming is gender-sensitive and responsive to local needs is critical for fostering long-term impact. However, findings from the WE'AM project highlight several gaps and inconsistencies in how gender considerations are integrated into program planning, execution, and follow-up. These challenges hinder the full participation of women and limit the overall effectiveness of initiatives.

A key issue is the selective inclusion of women in project planning and decision-making processes. While some municipalities and organizations demonstrate positive trends, many still lack structured initiatives to formalize women's involvement. In several cases, women's participation in municipality projects is confined to gender-specific projects, while broader gender equity goals are left to external actors such as NGOs. Similarly, some organizations only apply gender-sensitive approaches when explicitly required, rather than mainstreaming them across all programs.⁵⁰ This inconsistent approach highlights the need for more systematic and inclusive strategies to ensure that women's voices are integrated into decision-making processes from the beginning.

Another challenge lies in the limited consideration of gender in program design. While many organizations acknowledge the importance of gender-sensitive programming, their efforts often remain incidental or constrained by donor parameters. Some organizations face resistance from local religious or political actors, forcing them to navigate sensitive cultural dynamics to sustain their initiatives.⁵¹

The lack of tailored support and community engagement further weakens program quality. Several organizations do not conduct thorough needs assessments before launching projects, leading to initiatives that may not fully align with community realities. Women community members consistently emphasized the importance of culturally sensitive program design, noting that externally imposed frameworks often fail to address their specific needs.⁵² Effective programming requires a deep understanding of local contexts, which can only be achieved through meaningful engagement with target populations.

Skilled facilitation is also essential to ensuring program quality. Women community members highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence, neutrality, and cultural sensitivity among facilitators. However, municipalities and some organizations lack structured efforts to create safe and inclusive environments for women. Too often, safety is reduced to providing physical spaces without addressing privacy, security, or the cultural appropriateness of interventions.⁵³ Comprehensive training for facilitators is necessary to enhance participants' sense of safety and foster more impactful engagement.

This tool will help organizations assess and improve the quality of their programming by embedding gender-sensitive approaches throughout project planning, implementation, and evaluation. By strengthening inclusivity, tailoring initiatives to community needs, and enhancing follow-up mechanisms, organizations can create more effective and sustainable programs that advance gender equality in conflict resolution efforts.

Insight Box:

Women community members noted that rural environments are less supportive of women's opinions compared to urban settings, underscoring the importance of understanding local contexts. Awareness-raising and education were noted as key factors in fostering confidence in these settings.⁵⁴

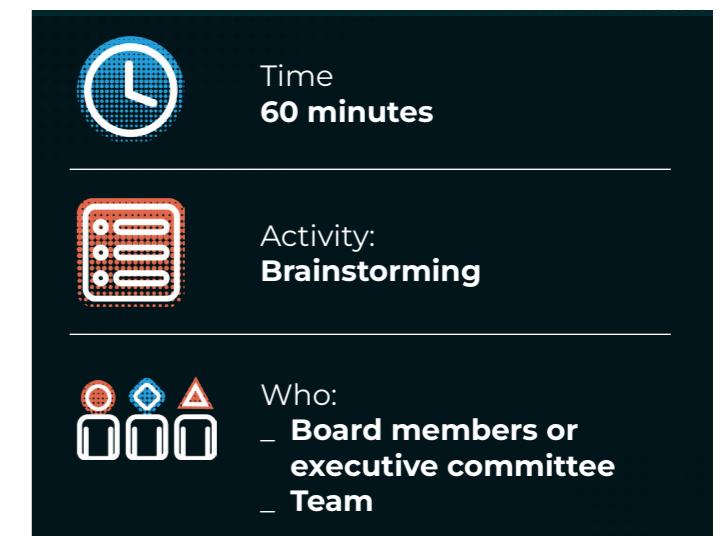
A. Problem Diagram

Start by identifying your problem and therefore your objectives

Problem Diagram: a method for exploring a systemic problem, root causes and the difference between causes and symptoms. Through this process you create one or more problem statements that express the root causes or most important parts of the problem to tackle.

In other words, the problem diagram helps you define your problem, its root causes, and its consequences. It can be used as a stepping stone for any project you may want to work on.

It is advisable that problems identified in this exercise, and, in general, tackled in any project, constitute major concerns in your society with a significant impact on the community.



Follow this step by step guide in your brainstorming exercise

1. Identify the problem(s) or challenge(s) you're tackling (you can use your vision to define a problem statement or statements).
2. Write down the immediate and long-term effects (what happens as a result) of this problem.
3. Write down the direct and underlying causes (what situations directly support the problem, what contributes to those situations).
4. Go through the effects and causes with the team, discuss what elements of the problem you want to address in your strategy.
5. Can you identify a root cause that you need to change, or identify what problem you are going to tackle and why? Write it on a large post-it note.

→ Use this template to define your problems & objectives



50 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

51 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

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B. Integrating a Gender Lens in Quality Programming

How are you ensuring your programs adopt a gender lens?

The following tool allows you to assess whether you are ensuring women participation and that specific gender needs are taken into account at every step of your program.



Fill this checklist

- **Representation:** Are women and gender-diverse people part of the team, leadership, and beneficiaries?
- **Access:** Can everyone equally access the program/services? Any barriers (location, time, cost)?
- **Participation:** Are all genders involved in planning and implementation?
- **Specific Needs:** Have we identified different needs across genders? Are services adapted?
- **Safety & Dignity:** Are there any risks of harm, harassment, or exclusion? Are protective measures in place?
- **Decision-Making:** Do women and marginalized genders have a say in decisions?
- **Impact:** Are outcomes being tracked for different genders?
- **Adjustments:** Based on this analysis, what needs to change in the program?

_____ 55

→ Use this template to guide you as you focus your gendered perspective for all your programs

Tool 5

Gender Equality Outcomes - Measuring Impact



55 Adapted (simplified) from EmPower and UN Women's Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change Resistance https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEA/Docs/Publications/2021/06/ETM_G_CCR_1%20Module%203.pdf

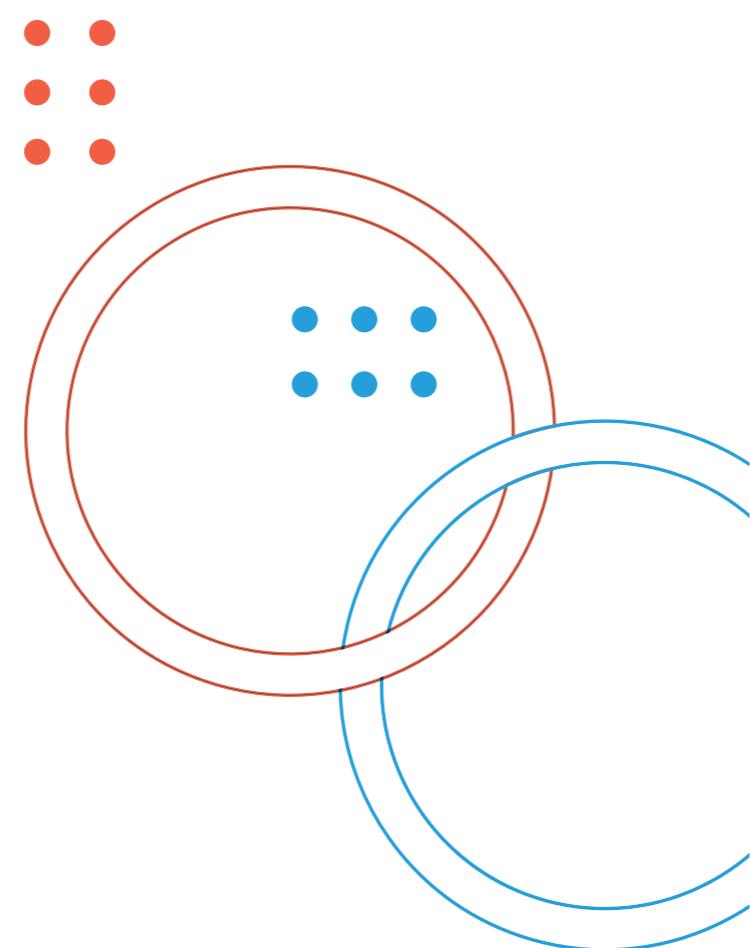
Ensuring that programs meaningfully contribute to gender equality requires more than just including women in projects - it demands robust mechanisms to assess and measure their impact. However, findings from the WE'AM project highlight key gaps in how organizations, particularly municipalities, evaluate gender-related outcomes. Without clear frameworks for assessing the effects of initiatives on women's empowerment and participation, progress remains difficult to track, and successful strategies risk being underutilized or overlooked.

One of the most pressing challenges is the oversimplification of gender impact measurements. Many organizations equate gender-sensitive programming with achieving numerical parity, such as a 50/50 gender composition in projects⁵⁶. While representation is important, this approach fails to capture deeper issues of equity, empowerment, and long-term systemic change. A quota-based model does not assess whether women are genuinely included in decision-making, whether they feel safe and supported, or whether their leadership potential is nurtured.

Additionally, long-term impact measurement remains a challenge for many organizations. The emphasis on short-term initiatives often leads to missed opportunities for sustainable change. For example, while some women community members reported skill-building initiatives that enhanced their confidence and participation, others noted that projects lacked continuity and failed to address deeper structural barriers, such as discriminatory personal status laws.⁵⁷ Without consistent tracking of how interventions translate into long-term empowerment, organizations risk implementing projects that appear successful in the short term but fail to drive lasting gender equality outcomes.

Moreover, many organizations struggle with capturing informal but significant successes, often by not working closely enough with target communities. Women's advocacy efforts, small-scale initiatives, and shifts in community attitudes are often overlooked in evaluation frameworks that prioritize quantitative data over qualitative insights. However, in Baalbeck, women-led initiatives, such as municipal election support and conflict-reducing infrastructure projects, demonstrated clear contributions to peacebuilding and social cohesion.⁵⁸ These successes underline the importance of working closely with communities to understand the nuanced ways women influence conflict resolution and gender equality.

To address these gaps, this tool will help organizations develop more comprehensive impact measurement strategies that go beyond numerical representation and short-term outcomes. It will offer guidance on tracking both tangible and intangible progress, ensuring that initiatives contribute to sustainable, transformative change rather than just participation statistics. By equipping organizations with tools to measure gender equality outcomes effectively, this approach aims to enhance accountability, refine program strategies, and ultimately strengthen the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.



56 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

57 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

58 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

A. Developing an Impact Measurement Framework

Follow this step by step guide to develop an impact measurement framework⁵⁹

In addition to Tool 4 and 6 that provide tips for integrating a gender lens in quality programming and developing gender sensitive indicators, this tool helps you ensure that the indicators and means of assessment you choose help you measure the impact of your project. In other words, how can you determine if your project reached the intended goal and made its intended impact?



Fill this checklist

Step one: Map your theory of change:

Many actors struggle to know where to begin with impact measurement. Starting with your goals and developing a theory of change provides clarity, revealing the causal links between what you do and what you are trying to achieve. It gives you a coherent framework to underpin your measurement efforts so that you can move away from ad hoc and opportunistic data collection.

Step two: Prioritise what you measure:

Focus on collecting quality data—not just lots of it. It might take some trial and error, but start by choosing the most important results you want to measure (based on your theory of change).

Keep in mind:

- Your work affects people differently—by age, gender, background, etc.—and at different times. Trying to measure everything can be overwhelming and not useful.
- Don't just collect easy data. Just because it's simple to count doesn't mean it shows real impact.
- Be gender-sensitive. Make sure your data captures how women, men, and other groups experience your work differently (e.g., how a job-training program supports women's confidence, or how access to services differs).
- Track not only the good outcomes, but any unexpected negative effects too—this helps you do better.
- Skip data that doesn't help your goals or that you can't realistically analyze.

Example: Instead of just counting how many people attended a GBV awareness session, ask how many women felt safer afterward or used legal services.

Step three: Choose your level of evidence:

Pick the right level of evidence to show your impact—one that fits your goals and what your audience expects. There's no single right way. It depends on your resources and who you're sharing the results with.

For example:

- Donors want to see solid proof their money made a difference.
- Researchers may look for more detailed comparisons (like "what would've happened without the project").
- Organizations need practical insights to grow and improve their work.

Step four: Select your sources and tools:

Decide what data you need and select or develop measurement tools or data sources to capture it. You may find an existing tool or data source, or you may need to develop one. Do not feel the need to reinvent the wheel: consider what tools are already available and think about existing evidence for the causal links in your theory of change. It is important to use measurement tools that are fit-for-purpose, and that capture the change you want to bring about.

Once you have followed all 4 steps, you are now ready to fill the following matrix.

This matrix, called the theory of change matrix, is like your project's GPS—it shows where you're going, how you'll get there, and what needs to happen along the way to make change real!

59 Adapted from The Investment Impact Index Short Guide on Developing an Impact Measurement Framework <https://investmentimpactindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/III-A-short-guide-How-to-develop-an-impact-measurement-framework-Digital.pdf>

Situation	What is the context or reason for this change?		Aims	What will 'success' look like?	
Inputs and activities	Outputs	Change mechanism	Outcomes	Impacts	
Inputs What resources will be required?	What tangible results, products, lessons, inspections or improvements will be produced?	What actions will be needed to achieve the change(s)? Are you removing frictions, changing behaviour etc.?	Short term What will be the benefits and wider outcomes? Long term What will be the sustainable and lasting changes, and what metrics will be used to measure these?	What are the impacts and how do they fit with your priorities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are you ensuring a gendered impact beyond simple equal distribution of beneficiaries? What is the long-term impact of your project? How will you be able to measure your impacts? Any out-of-the box, innovative, informal data collection methods that can be relevant?	
Evidence assessment					What is the strength of the existing evidence base for this change? Can we trust the data collected?
Assumptions	What is being assumed as part of the plan? What conditions should be met for the project to succeed?	Possible unintended consequences	Are there any other outcomes that might result from this project?		

→ for a more detailed guide Check The Investment Impact Index Short Guide on Developing an Impact Measurement Framework (p 42)⁶⁰

Tool 6

Gender Sensitive and Sex-Age Indicators - Developing Relevant Indicators



⁶⁰ The Investment Impact Index Short Guide on Developing an Impact Measurement Framework <https://investmentimpactindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/III-A-short-guide-How-to-develop-an-impact-measurement-framework-Digital.pdf>

Accurately measuring progress toward gender equality in conflict resolution requires well-defined, context-sensitive indicators that go beyond basic participation statistics. However, findings from the WE'AM project highlight gaps in the use of specific gender-sensitive and sex-age disaggregated indicators, with numerous organizations relying on broad, surface-level metrics that fail to capture meaningful gender transformation. This tool aims to support organizations in developing more precise and inclusive indicators, ensuring that gender-sensitive approaches are systematically integrated into monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks.

A key shortcoming in current approaches is the reliance on quantitative participation rates, such as achieving a 50/50 gender balance in projects, as a proxy for gender equity. While such metrics are useful, they do not assess deeper issues like women's leadership, decision-making power, or the extent to which initiatives address structural inequalities. Some organizations demonstrate a strong commitment to integrating gender-sensitive indicators, tailoring evaluations to the specific groups they work with. Others, however, adopt a more superficial approach, often influenced by donor requirements, which prioritize generic indicators over meaningful, qualitative insights.⁶¹

While some organizations employ mixed-method evaluation strategies - such as combining surveys, focus groups, and impact assessments - others lack structured methodologies to assess gendered experiences over time. Measuring long-term impact remains a challenge, with organizations struggling to track changes beyond the immediate project cycle.⁶² Given the short-term nature of many initiatives, capturing sustained transformations in gender roles, social norms, and empowerment is often overlooked.

Encouragingly, some organizations have demonstrated promising practices by incorporating qualitative methods such as one-on-one interviews, informal feedback, and community-based evaluations to ensure that diverse voices, including marginalized women, inform program assessments.⁶³ However, a systematic dissemination of lessons learned remains limited, which may hinder the broader integration of gender justice principles across interventions.

Another critical gap is the inconsistent consideration of local contexts when designing indicators. For example, women community members noted that rural environments are often less receptive to women's voices compared to more urbanized settings.⁶⁴ This underscores the need for organizations to research and adapt their indicators to reflect community-specific challenges. However, this is not always straightforward, as municipalities and communities vary in their willingness to engage with gender-sensitive topics, particularly those seen as challenging cultural norms.⁶⁵

This tool will guide organizations in developing and implementing stronger gender-sensitive and sex-age disaggregated indicators, ensuring that evaluations reflect both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of gender equality. By improving how progress is tracked, organizations can enhance accountability, refine programming, and create more impactful, long-term solutions for women in conflict settings.

A. Develop Gender Sensitive & Sex-Age Indicators

Follow this step-by-step guide to develop gender sensitive and sex-age indicators⁶⁶

Why gender sensitive indicators⁶⁷?

1. Gender-sensitive indicators are important because they can measure changes in gender equality – a definition of a gender-sensitive indicator is an indicator which measures gender-related changes in society over time.
2. Gender-sensitive indicators are needed in order to measure progress towards targets which themselves need to be gender-sensitive. A prerequisite for the establishment of gender-sensitive indicators is the availability of statistical data disaggregated by sex and other more qualitative types of information reflecting differences between women and men.

The goal of this tool is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to create meaningful, context-specific gender-sensitive and sex- and age-disaggregated indicators that enhance inclusive programming and accountability in conflict-affected areas.

Time
60 minutes

Activity:
Develop Gender Sensitive Indicators

Who:
Project Management Team

Follow this step by step guide to develop gender sensitive and sex-age indicators

Step 1: Understand the Basics (review the basic concepts)

- a. Indicator: A measurable variable used to assess the performance or impact of a program.
- b. Gender-Sensitive Indicator: An indicator that captures differences in outcomes between genders.
- c. Sex- and Age-Disaggregated Data (SADD): Data collected and presented separately for different sexes and age groups.

Step 2: Contextual Analysis (Discuss & Map)

- a. Identify Local Gender Dynamics:
 - i. Discuss roles, responsibilities, and power relations of different genders within the community.
 - ii. Consider how conflict has altered these dynamics.
- b. Assess Vulnerabilities:
 - i. Identify which groups are most affected by conflict (e.g., women, children, elderly).
- c. Example:
 - i. Local Gender Dynamics:
 1. Men typically manage local committees.
 2. Women are still expected to focus on domestic work.
 - ii. Vulnerabilities Identified:
 1. Women, especially widows and single mothers, feel excluded from decision-making.
 2. Young girls have few women role models in leadership.

Step 3: Define Objectives

- a. Set Clear Goals:
 - i. What does the program aim to achieve regarding gender equality?
 - ii. What issue, identified in step 2, would you like to tackle?
- iii. Examples:
 1. Increase women's participation in local governance.
 2. Ensure equal access to healthcare services for all genders
 3. Ensure equal access to healthcare services for persons with disabilities
- b. Example:
 - i. Goal:
 1. Increase women's participation in community decision-making spaces.
 - ii. Specific Objective:
 1. Enable women to join and actively contribute to the local municipal council.

Step 4: Develop Indicators (Indicator Formulation Workshop)

- a. => What measurable variable can be used to assess the performance or impact of your program?
- b. => Use the SMART Criteria:
 - i. Specific: Clearly defined.
 - ii. Measurable: Quantifiable or qualifiable.

61 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

62 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

63 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

64 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

65 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

66 Adapted from the World Bank's Toolkit on Using Digital Solutions to Address Barriers to Female Entrepreneurship <https://digitalforwomen.worldbank.org/indicators>; Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators, Better Evaluation: www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/tool-kit-gender-equality-results-indicators.pdf

67 <https://www.focusintl.com/GD124d-%20Gender%20Campus%20Module%20bis%20-%20Introduction%20to%20Gender%20sensitive%20indicators.pdf>

- iii. Achievable: Realistic given resources.
- iv. Relevant: Aligned with objectives.
- v. Time-bound: Set within a timeframe.
- c. => Make sure you take into account the specific needs relevant to gender and age.
- d. SMART Gender-Sensitive Indicator Example:
 - i. Number of women attending community meetings (disaggregated by age).
 - ii. Number of women actively elected to the municipal council (disaggregated by age).
 - iii. Percentage of women members who contribute to planning decisions (disaggregated by age).

Step 5: Data Collection and Analysis (tips for next steps)

- a. Collecting Data (how and where to collect this data?):
 - i. Surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations.

- ii. Ensure tools are gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate.
- b. Analyzing Data (Interpreting the data into helpful and usable information):
 - i. Compare outcomes across different gender and age groups.
 - ii. Identify disparities and areas needing attention.

Step 6: Report and Utilize (tips for next steps)

- a. Present Findings:
 - i. Use disaggregated data to highlight gender disparities.
 - ii. Include narratives to provide context.
- b. Inform Decision-Making:
 - i. Use insights to adapt programs and policies for better gender inclusivity.

→ Fill the table below to track your indicators in one place.

Objective	Activity	Who? (Target audience, number)	Where? (Channel)	When?	Result Indicators (disaggregated by gender and age*)	How will you measure them?	Impact Indicators	How will you measure them?	Responsible Team Member	Budget
1.1										
1.2										

Tip Box:

What is an indicator?

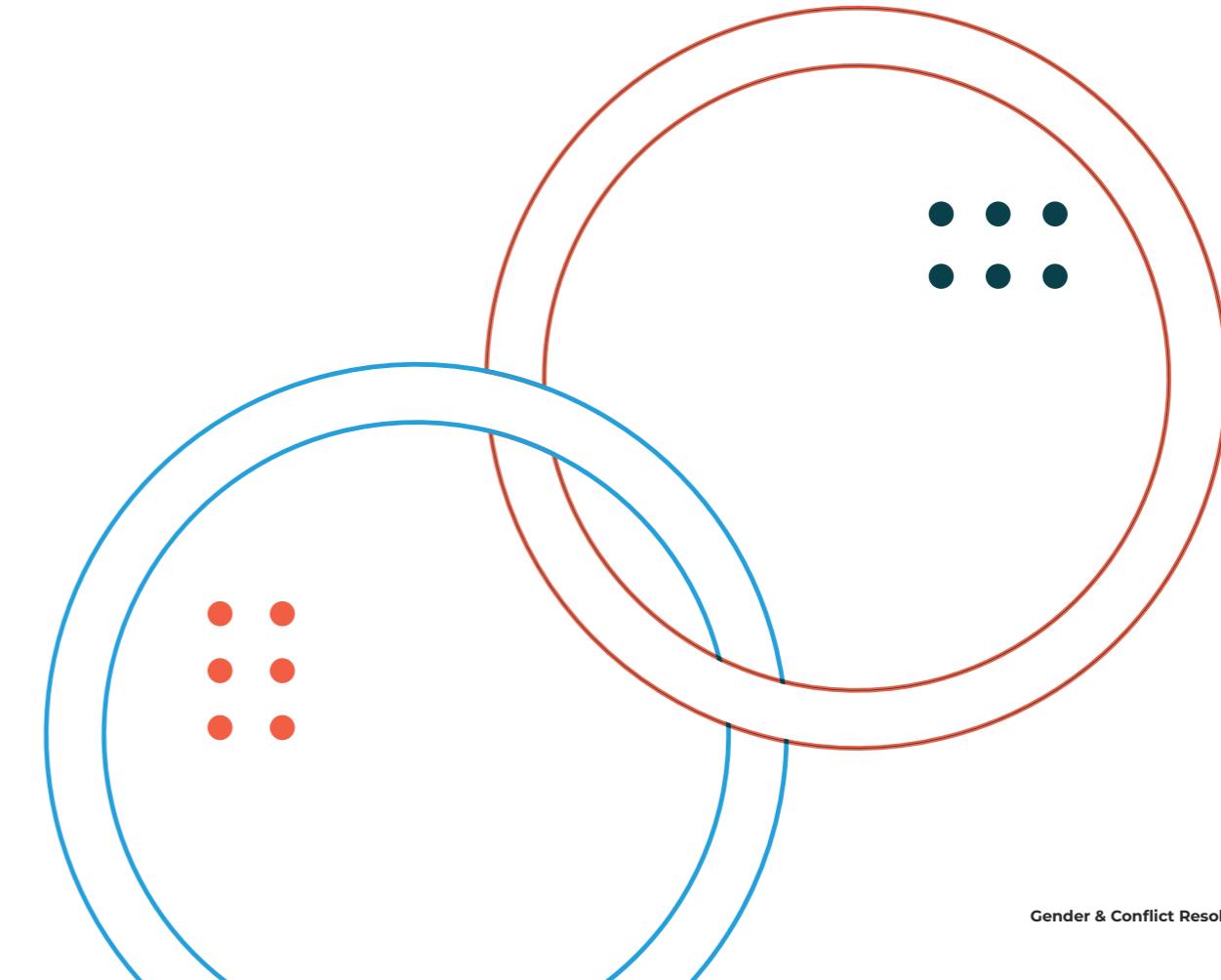
Indicators are measurable signs (always a number) that help you track progress toward the goal. Think of them as a “thermometer” that tells you how well you are doing!

For example, if your goal is “empowering women in political participation”, your indicator would be “the number/the percentage of women in leadership roles”

Tips for a Gender-Sensitive Indicator?

- Start with understanding how gender roles, norms, and power relations affect the issue you are working on
- Use this information to shape your indicator
- Disaggregate by gender, age and other factors to see how different groups are affected
- Use both Qualitative and Quantitative Indicators, try to combine numbers (e.g. % of women beneficiaries) with stories or feedback (e.g. women's perception of safety)
- Include indicators that reflect change in gender norms: Go beyond counting women, ask yourself: Are the attitudes changing?
- Align with your objectives, every indicator should be clearly linked to the gender-related outcome in your project
- Be culturally and contextually relevant
- Test your indicators, ask yourself: Is this easy to measure? Can we collect this data ethically or reliably?
- Involve women when designing and validating indicators
- Watch out for Tokenism: DO NOT just measure the number of women involved - look at the quality of their participation and influence

→ Make sure all your indicators are disaggregated by gender and age



Tool 7

Effective, Sustainable, and Productive Partnerships - Building Strong Partnerships



Strong, well-structured partnerships are critical for the success and sustainability of conflict resolution and gender-focused initiatives. However, findings from the WE'AM project highlight significant challenges in collaboration between key stakeholders, including municipalities, local authorities, CSOs, WROs, and community members. This tool aims to strengthen partnership-building strategies, ensuring that organizations can navigate institutional barriers, align efforts with community needs, and foster meaningful engagement across all levels.

Municipal partnerships represent a crucial yet inconsistent area of collaboration. Many organizations work with municipalities as gatekeepers to navigate resistance and expand their initiatives, but engagement is often selective and reactive rather than proactive and strategic. While some municipalities provide logistical support, such as venues and security, others demonstrate scepticism or passive engagement, limiting the effectiveness of joint efforts. Municipal support is highly dependent on individual leadership, with progressive leaders facilitating collaboration and more traditional authorities resisting gender-focused interventions. Women community members and WROs noted institutional biases and corruption within municipalities, further complicating fair partnerships and resource distribution.⁶⁸

Beyond municipalities, engagement with other local authorities, such as police or political parties - is often limited, leaving gaps in addressing broader systemic obstacles. Weak institutions and resource constraints force NGOs to take on responsibilities outside their mandates, creating additional challenges in project implementation.⁶⁹ While some organizations work closely with international agencies to gain visibility and funding, there remains a need to strengthen partnerships with local and national organizations to ensure contextually relevant and sustainable interventions.⁷⁰

Collaboration with local communities and grassroots organizations and groups is another key aspect of effective partnerships as a key entry into culturally and societally contextualized approaches. Some organizations effectively tailor their language and approaches to align with cultural norms, making gender-sensitive topics like domestic violence more acceptable by framing them within broader community well-being. However, gaps remain in outreach to diverse community segments, suggesting the need for more inclusive and structured engagement strategies.⁷¹

A major challenge across partnerships is the inconsistent inclusion of men and youth. Many organizations struggle to actively involve men, either due to a lack of commitment or resistance from communities and municipal authorities who view gender-specific projects as unnecessary. However, gender-transformative actions necessitate the inclusion of men not only as allies but as key stakeholders in challenging and reshaping existing gender norms. Similarly, youth engagement is often underdeveloped, representing a missed opportunity to build long-term support for gender equality and peacebuilding efforts.⁷²

Finally, organizations benefit from collaborating with key individuals, such as teachers, religious figures, and community leaders, to expand their reach and credibility. While these partnerships can be valuable, diverse motivations and a lack of formalized networks sometimes create challenges in scalability and local acceptance.⁷³

This tool will provide guidance on strategically establishing and maintaining strong partnerships, ensuring that organizations can effectively collaborate while maintaining their core gender justice objectives. By fostering inclusive, sustainable, and well-planned partnerships, organizations can enhance the long-term impact of their initiatives and create stronger, more resilient communities.

68 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

69 Jennifer Holleis and Sara Hteit, "Lebanon Ceasefire: Civil Society Ramps Up Reconstruction," DW, 29th of November 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/ceasefire-in-lebanon-civil-society-ramps-up-reconstruction-plans/a-70919839>.

70 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

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A. Identify & Rate Potential Partners

Use this tool to identify and rate potential partners & stakeholders that can help you meet your goals⁷⁴



Time
60 minutes



Activity:
Brainstorming



Who:

- Board members or executive committee
- Project Managers and field teams

Identify & Rate Potential Partners

1. Identifying Potential Partners

	Potential Risks (any risks or concerns such as misaligned values, unclear roles, unequal power dynamics, or reputational and financial liabilities)	Involved in other Partnerships (with your organization or other similar stakeholders)	Pros (what could be the added value of having X as a partner?)	Cons (what could be a negative outcome of having X as a partner?)
Organizations				
Government				
1.				
2.				
Service Providers				
1.				
2.				
Community Groups				
1.				
2.				
Educational Groups				
1.				
2.				
Other				
1.				
2.				

2. Rate Potential Partners

Elements (How do you rate each partner on a scale of 1-5 on the following elements?):	Partner A	Partner B	Partner C
1. Has similar organizational culture			
2. Is culturally sensitive			
3. Values acceptance and integration			
4. Has a solid reputation			
5. Shares your vision			
6. Has common goals and objectives			
7. Has clear division of roles and responsibilities			
8. Has skills and capacity you need			
9. Communicates effectively			
10. Has effective ways of resolving conflicts			
11. Is flexible and adaptable			
12. Has a supportive leadership style			
13. Recognizes and rewards success			
14. Willing to share decision-making authority; willing to give up some autonomy			
15. Has similar accountability processes			
16. Has similar administrative processes			
17. Has procedures that deal with liability issues			
18. Willing to share resources			
19. Willing to have a partnership agreement			
20. Shows commitment			
21. Willing to reassess the partnership			
22. Provides value-added			
23. Fosters a sense of trust			
24. Has comparable administrative processes appropriate to the organization's size and scope.			
25. Has a wages and benefits structure aligned with sector standards, adjusted for organizational scale			
Total			

⁷⁴ Adapted from the Partnership Toolkit: <https://www.mosaicbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/partnership-Toolkit.pdf>

After reviewing the potential partner's profile, assessing their alignment with your goals, and weighing the pros and cons—including the level of effort required—you can decide whether or not to move forward with the partnership.

You should also outline a basic action plan for how you would engage with them if you proceed. It doesn't need to be overly detailed, but having these reflections clearly documented (e.g., in a table) is important for clarity and accountability.

Additionally, your analysis should highlight the added value from a gender perspective—specifically, how this partnership could help you enhance gender sensitivity in your work or reach more gender-equitable outcomes.

→ **This tool helps you identify the most relevant and impactful partnerships**

Module 3

Project Designing



Tool 8
Project Designing - Ideation and Contextual Analysis

Tool 9
Gender Equality Expertise and Team Responsibilities - Defining Roles and Responsibilities

Tool 10
Gender Equality Risks - Identifying and Mitigating Risks

Tool 11
Gender Equality Budgeting - Allocating Resources Effectively

Effective project design is the foundation of impactful conflict resolution and gender equality initiatives. A well-structured design process ensures that interventions are contextually relevant, gender-sensitive, and capable of addressing the specific challenges faced by women in conflict settings. However, many organizations struggle with integrating gender considerations from the outset, leading to gaps in responsiveness, risk management, and resource allocation. Addressing these challenges is essential for creating sustainable and transformative projects that meaningfully engage women in peacebuilding efforts.

This module consists of four tools designed to strengthen project design by embedding gender equality into every stage of planning:

Tool 8
Project Designing -
Ideation and Contextual Analysis

Tool 9
Gender Equality Expertise and Team Responsibilities -
Defining Roles and Responsibilities

Tool 10
Gender Equality Risks -
Identifying and Mitigating Risks

Tool 11
Gender Equality Budgeting -
Allocating Resources Effectively

These tools were selected based on key gaps identified in KIIs and FGDs. Although many organizations acknowledge the importance of gender-sensitive programming, inconsistent planning processes frequently undermine its effective implementation. A lack of gender expertise within project teams results in superficial approaches to inclusion, and without proper contextual analysis, projects risk being misaligned with the realities on the ground.⁷⁵ Additionally, organizations frequently overlook potential barriers and risks to gender equality, leading to unintended consequences that undermine both project impact and participant safety.⁷⁶ Another common challenge is the inadequate allocation of financial resources for gender-related components, which limits the effectiveness of interventions.⁷⁷

This module aims to equip organizations with the necessary frameworks to:

1. Ensure Gender-Responsive Project Ideation:
Develop projects that are grounded in comprehensive contextual analyses and address the specific needs of women in conflict settings.

2. **Integrate Gender Expertise into Teams:** Institutionalize gender-sensitive approaches by embedding expertise within project teams and decision-making structures.
3. **Identify and Mitigate Gender-Related Risks:** Proactively assess potential risks to gender equality and implement safeguards to ensure that projects do not inadvertently reinforce gender inequalities or expose participants to harm.
4. **Strengthen Gender-Responsive Budgeting:** Allocate financial resources in a way that reflects a genuine commitment to gender equality and ensures that gender considerations are not an afterthought.

Organizations working in conflict resolution often struggle with fragmented approaches to gender-sensitive project design. Many rely on ad-hoc or donor-driven gender integration rather than systematic strategies that ensure sustainable impact. The absence of dedicated gender expertise within teams or the lack of a clear division of responsibilities can further weaken efforts to design inclusive projects, leading to gaps in implementation.⁷⁸ Additionally, risk assessments frequently fail to preemptively account for risks to gender equality within projects, exposing women to potential harm rather than ensuring their empowerment.⁷⁹ Without adequate financial support, gender-sensitive initiatives remain underfunded, limiting their ability to achieve meaningful change.

By addressing these challenges, this module provides organizations with the tools needed to design projects that are both gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive. Strengthening contextual analysis, embedding gender expertise, improving risk management, and ensuring adequate financial allocations are essential steps toward effective and sustainable project design. This module will help organizations move beyond superficial inclusion and toward meaningful, systemic integration of gender equality in conflict resolution initiatives.

Tool 8

Project Designing - Ideation and Contextual Analysis



⁷⁵ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

⁷⁶ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

⁷⁷ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

⁷⁸ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

⁷⁹ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

A well-grounded project design begins with robust ideation and a deep understanding of local contexts. In the realm of gender and conflict resolution, this tool is essential because it ensures that initiatives are not simply based on generic or externally imposed frameworks, but are instead tailored to the unique cultural, social, and political dynamics of each community. Many organizations currently face challenges due to limited direct interaction with local communities, which restricts their ability to identify and address cultural barriers. Without comprehensive context analysis, projects risk being misaligned with the actual needs of women and the communities they serve.

A recurring gap is the lack of a systematic approach to engaging target communities during the ideation phase. Women community members have consistently emphasized that culturally sensitive project design is crucial for effective participation. Without this, organizations risk overlooking key societal barriers and missing opportunities to foster long-term acceptance of gender-sensitive initiatives. Participants in one region stressed the ineffectiveness of generic, externally imposed frameworks in addressing community needs.⁸⁰ To ensure women's meaningful involvement in project planning, closer collaboration with target communities is essential for identifying needs and aligning initiatives with local dynamics. Due to this often flawed foundation, multiple organizations have been found to struggle to tailor projects to local needs based on these insights. While some demonstrate commendable efforts in tailoring their projects to cultural norms by using locally acceptable language and collaborating with community leaders, this adaptability must not come at the expense of gender justice principles. Striking a balance between cultural sensitivity and transformative goals remains a challenge, with some organizations hesitant to push for broader societal change. Additionally, women community members provided limited insights into the cultural relevance of the projects they participated in, suggesting gaps in communication and engagement that may hinder long-term impact.⁸¹

Another challenge is the selective integration of gender considerations in project planning. While some organizations implement gender-sensitive practices, they often do so only when required by a specific project rather than as a standard approach. This fragmented application of gender mainstreaming weakens efforts to create systemic change. Municipalities, in particular, demonstrate a limited approach to inclusion, with few structured initiatives to formalize women's involvement in planning processes. The absence of clear strategies to expand women's roles reflects a broader institutional gap that hinders sustainable gender inclusivity during the ideation phase.⁸²

Tool 8 is designed to bridge these gaps by guiding organizations through a structured process of ideation and contextual analysis. It encourages a proactive approach that involves comprehensive needs assessments, active engagement with diverse community members, and the integration of local insights into every stage of project planning. By doing so, organizations can develop initiatives that not only reflect the immediate realities on the ground but also promote sustainable, transformative change in gender and conflict resolution efforts.

A. Programmatic Recommendations Checklist

Follow these programmatic recommendations to ensure that your programs are gender responsive⁸³



Fill this checklist

Does your organization:

1. **Adopt Gendered Internal Policies**
 - Clearly define gender and gender-specific needs
 - Ensure all programs include an intersectional gender analysis in design, implementation, and evaluation, with clear indicators tracking participation, benefits, and outcomes across different gender and social groups. Adopt a 50% women's quota within your team
 - Ensure that at least 50% of all project beneficiaries are women or girls
 - Ensure that minority women such as LBQT women, refugees, migrants, stateless women, women with disabilities, etc. are fairly represented and gain a just share of the funds or services provided
 - Develop and implement internal policies and procedures that protect against the mismanagement of funds and guarantee the inclusion and fair treatment of women. These policies shall include, in addition to a policy that ensures gender responsive programming:
 - Financial Policies and Procedures
 - Code of Conduct
 - Anti-Corruption, Bribery and Money-Laundering Policy
 - Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
2. **Implement Gender Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation tools that are gender sensitive
 - Conduct a gender analysis, as well as a needs assessment with the targeted beneficiaries before the implementation of any project
 - Involve beneficiaries and/or community members at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the project and conduct gender sensitive outreach
 - Conduct at least one evaluation with beneficiaries at the end of the project to assess for progress, impact or the need for improvement
 - Seek/provide funding to conduct the pre and post assessments and for the ongoing involvement of beneficiaries
 - Offer regular training programs to project managers and officers on feminist programming, gender analysis and gender sensitive outreach
 - Raise awareness on the importance and need for a clear monitoring and evaluation system
3. **Ensure Transparency, Access to Data and Accountability**
 - Seek/provide funding to design and implement a monitoring and evaluation plan
 - Set realistic indicators to assess for programmatic and financial progress in addition to measuring impact across all activities. These shall include gender disaggregated data as well and disaggregation by age and minority status
 - Create realistic means by which to gather the necessary data to measure for progress, as well as measuring impact
 - Conduct/require a gender analysis in the design and evaluation phase of each new initiative
 - Publish financial and programmatic reports on at least a quarterly basis. There is no need to divulge specific data on individual salaries. Instead, the total quarterly amount spent on salaries should be published on your online platforms
 - Publish gender disaggregated data on at least a quarterly basis. It is not recommended to divulge any data about beneficiaries that might lead to their identification, such as their names
 - Ensure that the published data is disaggregated by minority status whenever possible. Take into account the potential security risks of publishing data about the beneficiaries' minority status, especially if they include criminalized groups. Make sure anonymity and confidentiality are respected and safeguarded as a rule.
 - Provide easily-accessible and straightforward data without any jargon
 - Clearly define whether the reported percentages reflect the funds disbursed to women, the number of women who have benefitted from the programs, or the number of activities that targeted women
 - Seek/provide funding to communicate results on your organization's website and/ or your social media accounts
 - Launch a centralized platform that showcases gender disaggregated data on all aid programs in Lebanon, as well as other relevant data
 - Ensure that new funding opportunities are easily-accessible to the public.

80 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

81 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

82 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

83 Adapted from "Seeds for Legal Initiatives, June 2022. Study Report: In the Shadow of a State: Towards More Gender Responsive Aid".

- Opportunities should be shared through all available means to reach all concerned stakeholders. The language of the call and the application process should be simple, without any jargon or complex requirements.
- Ensure that newly offered services are easily accessible to the public. The availability of the services should be shared through all available means to reach all those who might need them. The language of any advertisement or details about the offered services should be simple, without any jargon or complex requirements.
- Conduct more in-depth research on aid accountability and gender in various contexts and develop best practice guidelines.

4. Devise an Effective Coordination Plan

- Foster networking efforts among donors, among NGOs, and between donors and NGOs
- Develop clear TORs for networking and coordination platforms with explicit objectives and a clear division of roles

Now fill the following table based on your checklist above

Define your own deliverables – action points that are relevant to you. (The below are examples)

Recommendation	Deliverables	Resources Needed	Progress	Deadline
1. Adopt Gendered Internal Policies	Number of policies Quotas		Number of policies	
2. Implement Gender Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation	1 Gender-sensitive M&E tool 1 training in first quarter		First tool draft submitted for review	
3. Ensure Transparency, Access to Data and Accountability	Publish gender-disaggregated data for all 3 projects in 2025 on your website		Gender-disaggregated data published for 1 project	31/12/2025
4. Devise and Effective Coordination Plan	Adoption of gender responsive and women-inclusive policies in 1 network or coalition		Vote for adoption of policies scheduled for next coalition meeting	

→ The outcomes of this checklist will guide you as you ensure a more gender-sensitive program design

- Adopt a clear and intersectional gendered perspective along with gender responsive and women-inclusive policies across all platforms. A clear definition of gender and gender-specific needs as well as a clear understanding of the impact of gendered power inequities is also recommended.
- Develop concrete evaluation mechanisms to allow for a quarterly assessment of these platforms, of any progress made, and any areas for improvement
- Ensure that the objectives set forth by these platforms are intertwined with those of the member institutions and that the time and efforts of representatives are acknowledged and compensated, either through direct funding for networks and task forces, or through institutional funding
- Join efforts to lobby for a better integration of gender in aid initiatives and for a more customized, and therefore more effective, system of funding.

B. Ensuring Community Engagement

Ensuring a participatory approach is a key component of gender-sensitive programming

This tool is a planning template for a community engagement workshop where community members determine priority goals, and set the agenda and the program design. This is a first step in community engagement that is later followed by a needs assessment (Tool 8 C). It can also be repeated as needed throughout the program cycle.



Follow these Steps for Community Engagement⁸⁴ to Develop your Outreach Plan

What is your detailed plan to meet each of these steps?

Community Engagement Workshop

- Invite:** managers, government representatives, local leaders, service providers, representatives of women, youth, elderly, and persons with disabilities.
=>Local community members are engaged & drive the agenda. The workshop can be held in person or online depending on preference, time constraints, financial constraints, etc.

Problem Identification & Problem Solving

- Use needs assessment information (if available) to guide your discussion
- The following are suggested brainstorming exercises to determine priority concerns for the community as well as potential solutions for them

i. Community Treasure Map

Goal: Identify key issues in the community and prioritize areas to focus on.

What You Need:

- Large sheet of paper or flip chart
- Markers, stickers, sticky notes
- Small “treasure chest” drawings or icons
- Optional: colored dots for voting

a. Step 1: Draw the Map (10 min)

- Draw a basic sketch of the community (real or symbolic). Include schools, clinics, roads, homes, etc. Let participants add landmarks.

b. Step 2: Spot the Issues (15 min)

- What problems do you see in different parts of the community?
- What's missing? What's unsafe or unfair?
- Place sticky notes or draw icons on the map where issues are located (e.g., no streetlights, youth unemployment, lack

Who:

- Board members or executive committee
- Project Management Team

of health services, exclusion of women in leadership).

c. Step 3: Find the “Hidden Treasures” (10 min)

- What's working well? What are your community's strengths?
- Place “treasure chest” stickers or symbols where strengths exist (e.g., a strong women's group, active youth, clean water source).

d. Step 4: Prioritize Together (10-15 min)

- Give each person 3 colored dots (votes). Ask them to place their dots on the issues they feel are most urgent or impactful.
- Tally the votes to identify top priorities.

e. Step 5: Reflect and Discuss (10 min)

- Why are these issues priorities?
- How do they affect different groups (e.g., women, youth, elderly)?
- What small steps can we take next?

ii. Power Tool⁸⁵

A method for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of your idea and then building on these to amplify strengths and mitigate weaknesses

Step-by-step

Create five columns on a flip chart paper (landscape is easiest) with the letters P-O-W-E-R at the top of each column.

Go through the questions below for each column capturing your assessment and new ideas to build on and improve your idea.

1. Positives

What is good about the idea? Why might it succeed? Praise your idea!

2. Objections/Obstacles

What are the flaws? Why might it fail? Be super critical!

3. What else?

What's missing? What is unclear?

⁸⁴ Adapted from Unicef's Community Engagement Field guide <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/5746/file>

⁸⁵ Adapted from SI Leader Lab 2023

4. Enhancements

How might the positives become even stronger? Review your list and build on them.

5. Remedies

How might the objections or obstacles be overcome? Review and improve your idea.

Action Plan

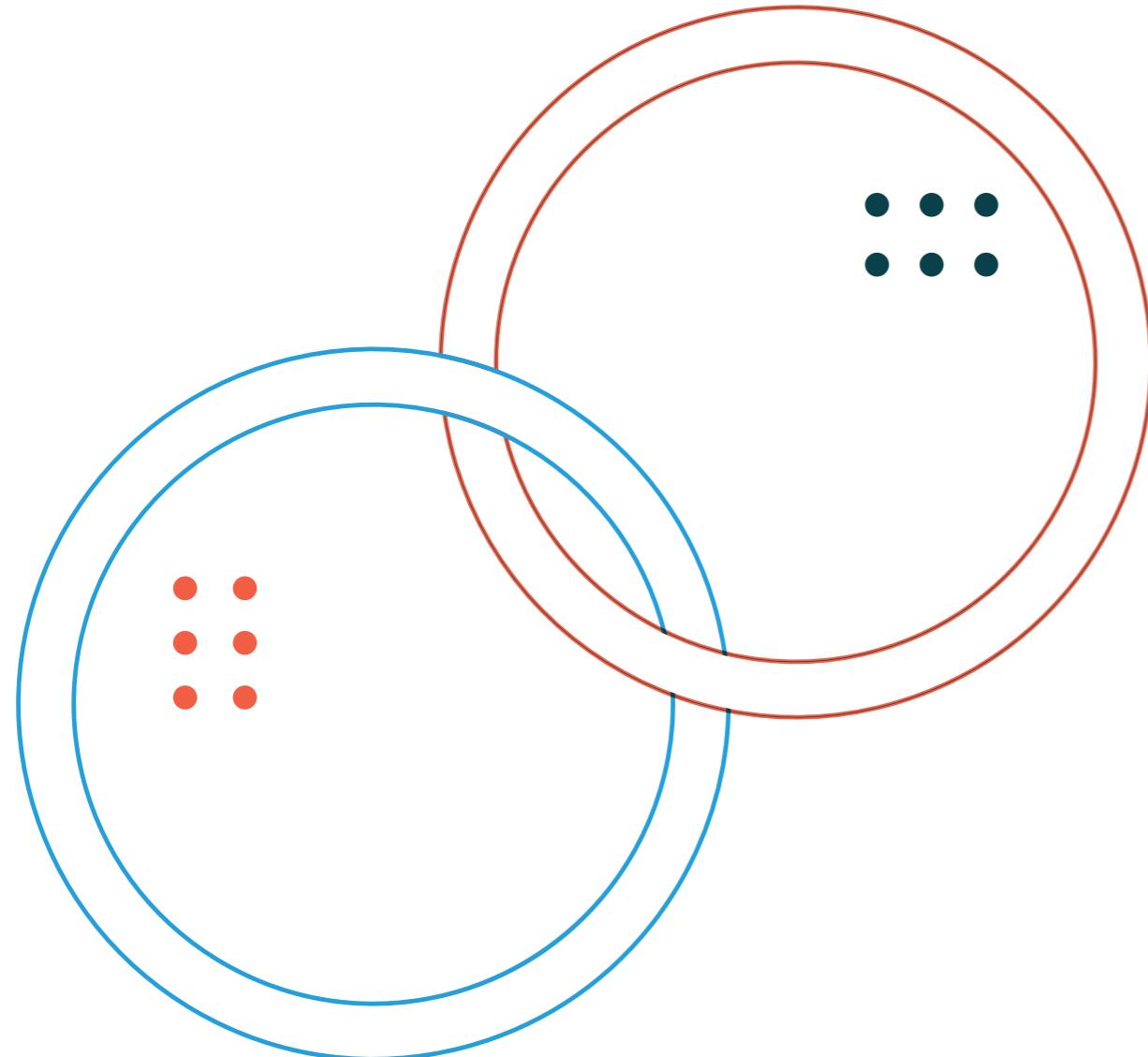
Once you determine your goal(s), identify:

- Partners - who can help?
- Actions - what will you do?
- Resources - what do you need to be able to do it?,
- Responsibilities - who is in charge of what?

Implementation & Monitoring

- a. Coordinate with partners & service providers
- b. Community members track monitoring indicators (regular community engagement workshops or meetings can be held)

→ Make sure you develop a Community Engagement Plan for all your programs

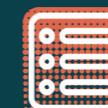


C. Gender-Responsive Needs Assessment Checklist

Ensure that your needs assessments are gender-responsive



Time
60 minutes



Activity:
Checklist



Who:

- Board members or executive committee
- Project Management Team

Fill this checklist

Gender-responsive needs assessment checklist⁸⁶ - A⁸⁷

1. Establish an assessment working group

- Ensure the assessment working group (AWG) includes, as a minimum, a gender and inclusion specialist.

2. Conduct the secondary data review (SDR): An ongoing summation and compilation of available information for regular analysis to inform decision making.

- Use secondary pre-crisis data collected as part of preparedness measures as a baseline for understanding the effects of interruptions caused by the crisis from a gender and inclusion perspective.
- Decide which questions can be addressed through existing data, and which will require primary data collection during the field assessment.
- Ensure there is a gender specialist within in-country partners and remote technical experts supporting SDR teams to collect and analyze secondary data. Such specialists could identify sources, collect sex- and age- disaggregated data, and/or review the SDR to ensure it adequately assesses gendered needs.

3. Design the field assessment

- a. Determine assessment questions and sources

- Use the results of the SDR to identify additional information needs where 1) analysis points to particularly disadvantaged groups based on sex, age, or other markers of disadvantage for further probing; and 2) relevant questions could not be answered through existing secondary data.
- Formulate field assessment questions accordingly.
- Engage with gender-based violence (GBV) and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) specialists to ensure adequate consideration of protection issues in the assessment design.

b. Sampling strategy

- Ensure that girls, boys, women, and men from different subsections of the affected population meaningfully participate in the assessment and sampling. This must include people with disabilities.

c. Select data collection techniques

- Use a range of methodologies and approaches to engage affected people, including focus groups, interviews, transect walks, and gendered risk mapping.

d. Design, translate, and pilot data collection tools

- Ensure that girls, boys, women, and men from different subsections of the affected population participate in piloting and have the opportunity to feed back on the process (including methodology, questions/topics, and assessment team composition).

e. Determine assessment field team composition

- Ensure that the assessment teams which carry out data collection are gender balanced and include specialists on gender and protection.

4. Collect and enter primary data

a. Train field assessment and data entry teams

- Training should introduce potential gender dynamics that may be encountered during the assessment (e.g., negative attitudes and behaviours towards women team members or towards the training of young women as teachers).
- Training should include information on action to take if an incident or protection issue is disclosed, and on the relevant referral pathway.
- Ensure that the code of conduct for the assessment team incorporates a full commitment to gender-responsive needs assessments and protection from sexual abuse and exploitation.

b. Conduct and manage the data collection

- Consider the safety and security of data collection teams.

c. Debrief with assessment teams

- Ensure any gender issues that arise within assessment teams or that emerge within findings are flagged so that real-time adjustments can be made to procedures.

d. Enter primary data

- Ensure that the data entry tools and corresponding coding approach make it possible to disaggregate data by sex, age, and other pre-identified markers

⁸⁶ Adapted from EiE-Genkit - A core resource package on gender in education in emergencies https://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/2.1_Gender-responsive_needs_assessment_checklist%20.pdf

⁸⁷ For established organizations

- of disadvantage relevant to the context (e.g., rural/urban, host/ refugee/internally-displaced person (IDP), disability).
- Include specific instructions on the importance of recording this during the training of data entry teams.
- e. Analyze the data
 - Ensure that questions used to guide the analysis are gender-responsive.
 - Triangulate and validate your primary data findings with secondary data analysis from the SDR.
 - Identify any inconsistent or unexpected findings. Seek further verification through additional secondary sources to gain a complete understanding of particularly vulnerable groups' needs (e.g., use shadow reports, reports from women's and men's rights organizations and disabled people's organizations (DPOs)).
- f. Generate and share an assessment report and products
 - Adapt the report to different audiences. Invite relevant members of these audiences to participate in the subsequent action planning workshop.

Gender-Responsive Needs Assessment: A Simple Guide for Small Teams - B⁸⁸

1. Prepare for the Assessment

- Form a small working group—include at least one person who's familiar with gender and inclusion issues.
- Review existing data—what's already known about gendered needs in your context?
- Decide what to explore further—some questions may need new data from the field.

2. Design Your Field Assessment

- Ask the right questions—focus on key gaps found in the data review, especially around women, youth, and marginalized groups.
- Make it inclusive—ensure a mix of voices (women, men, youth, people with disabilities) are represented in your sample.
- Choose simple methods—like focus groups, interviews, and informal conversations.
- Test your tools—let community members review questions before full rollout.
- Build a gender-balanced team—if possible, include people who understand protection and GBV.

3. Collect & Enter Data

- Train your team—cover gender sensitivity, referral steps for protection concerns, and respectful behavior.
- Stay safe—plan for team security while in the field. Track gender & inclusion data—always record gender, age, disability, etc. to understand diverse needs.

4. Analyze & Report

- Use a gender lens—ask how issues affect people differently based on gender and other factors.
- Compare with existing data—verify patterns or flag surprises.
- Share findings clearly—make your report audience-friendly and invite key stakeholders to plan next steps together.

→ **Follow these guidelines every time you conduct a needs assessment**

Tool 9

Gender Equality Expertise and Team Responsibilities - Defining Roles and Responsibilities



⁸⁸ Adapted from Adapted from EiE-Genkit - A core resource package on gender in education in emergencies https://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/2.1_Gender-responsive_needs_assessment_checklist%20.pdf

Achieving gender equality in peacebuilding and conflict resolution projects requires more than just acknowledging the importance of women's participation; it demands a clear definition of roles, expertise, and leadership opportunities within teams. While multiple organizations recognize women as valuable agents of change, there remains a gap in fully integrating gender expertise within project teams and ensuring equitable distribution of responsibilities. This tool aims to address these gaps by outlining strategies for defining roles and ensuring that gender considerations are embedded in team structures, leadership, and expertise.

Many organizations fail to systematically integrate gender expertise within their teams. While some employ social workers and psychotherapists, structured gender-focused roles remain rare. While it may not always be necessary to include trained professionals on certain issues, this general lack of specialization limits organizations' ability to proactively address gender dynamics and ensure that peacebuilding initiatives are inclusive and sensitive to the needs of women in conflict settings.⁸⁹

To implement meaningful gender-sensitive approaches, municipalities and organizations must build internal gender expertise rather than rely solely on external partners.

However, even when women's participation is formally recognized, they are often confined to traditional roles—described as calm, nurturing, and thoughtful—rather than valued as decision-makers or strategists. This reflects a deeper institutional gap in understanding and addressing gender dynamics, reinforcing the need for sustained internal capacity and expertise.

This limits their opportunities to engage in leadership and reinforces gendered assumptions that ultimately hinder the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts. In many cases, women are assigned informal, family-oriented roles, with their contributions recognized primarily during times of crisis—only to be marginalized again once the conflict subsides.⁹⁰

Women continue to face barriers in assuming leadership roles within many aspects of their lives, likely also limiting their opportunities within project teams. Many organizations emphasize their role as moral boosters or their involvement in gender-specific issues, but fail to recognize their broader potential in strategic planning and decision-making. Deeply ingrained societal norms, including the prioritization of men leadership, further restrict opportunities for qualified women to take on influential roles.⁹¹

Some organizations lack formalized gender-sensitive policies that clearly define responsibilities in cases of abuse or safety threats, leaving gaps in accountability and response mechanisms. While certain organizations offer gender training, some rely on informal sensitization efforts rather than structured capacity-building programs.⁹² This inconsistent approach undermines the long-term sustainability of gender equity in team dynamics.

Ensuring balanced gender representation in teams also requires active engagement of men, yet organizations report challenges in involving men. Whether due to lack of commitment or societal barriers, the absence of men allies in gender-sensitive work weakens the overall effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives.⁹³

Effective peacebuilding initiatives require well-trained teams capable of fostering trust and dialogue. Women community members emphasized the importance of neutrality, emotional intelligence, and skilled facilitation in ensuring a sense of safety during projects. Without competent facilitators who understand both conflict resolution and gender dynamics, peacebuilding efforts risk alienating participants and reinforcing existing power imbalances.⁹⁴

For peacebuilding projects to be truly inclusive and effective, organizations must go beyond symbolic representation and ensure that gender expertise is embedded in team structures and leadership roles. Addressing restrictive gender roles, expanding leadership opportunities for women, and strengthening gender-sensitive policies are crucial steps. Additionally, ensuring that facilitators are well-trained in cultural sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution enhances trust and safety within projects. Wherever possible, team members should also be selected from the local communities, possessing deep societal awareness and active involvement in community groups to further strengthen connection and relevance. This tool will help organizations assemble a well-structured and competent team that not only advances gender equality but also strengthens the overall impact and sustainability of peacebuilding initiatives.

A. Establishing a Team with Gender Sensitive Expertise - Checklist

Ensure that your team include gender-sensitive experts

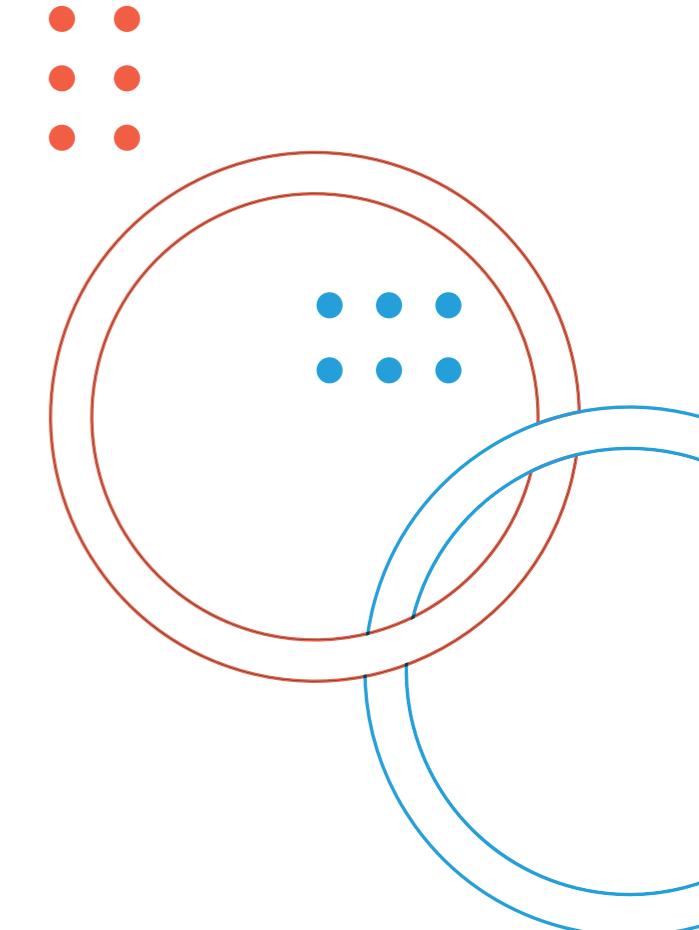


Fill this checklist

Checklist for establishing a team with Gender Sensitive Expertise⁹⁵

- Is your team gender-balanced and culturally and geographically diverse (does your organization represent the community it operates in, in its diversity)?
- Does your internal regulation protect people of different sexual orientations and gender identities as well as disability status?
- Does someone in your team have experience conducting gender-responsive evaluations or incorporating gender analysis?
- Within your team, is there knowledge of the relevant gender equality legal and policy frameworks and gender-related challenges in the policy/advocacy area?
- Does your organization have a gender unit and/or gender (equality) focal points?
- Does your organization have an environmental or sustainability unit?
- Have you considered engaging external gender experts and researchers who know your policy/advocacy area?
- Have you allocated appropriate budgetary resources to allow you to acquire this expertise?
- If you are working with external contractors to conduct the evaluation, have you included gender requirements for the evaluation team in the Terms of Reference (ToR)?

→ Follow these guidelines to guarantee that your team comprises gender-sensitive experts. Consider engaging external gender experts if necessary.



89 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

90 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

91 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

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94 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, ["Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings."](#) - April 2025

95 Adapted from the Gender-responsive evaluation for a sustainable future for all - European Institute for Gender Equality <https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/annex-1-tool-3-checklist-for-establishing-an-evaluation-team.pdf>

Tool 10

Gender Equality Risks - Identifying and Mitigating Risks

Ensuring gender equality in peacebuilding and conflict resolution requires not only promoting women's participation but also actively identifying and addressing the risks that hinder their involvement. Many organizations, municipalities, and civil society actors recognize the challenges women face but often define them in vague terms or fail to integrate structured risk mitigation strategies. This tool aims to bridge this gap by helping organizations systematically identify gender-specific risks and implement measures to mitigate them.

One of the most pervasive risks is the underestimation of women's abilities, particularly within municipal structures where they are often sidelined or confined to traditional roles. Many organizations focus on broad principles of equality but lack proactive measures to ensure equity, resulting in the exclusion of women from leadership and decision-making spaces. Furthermore, some organizations do not adopt a comprehensive approach to reform, treating women's empowerment as secondary to other priorities.⁹⁶ This lack of integration weakens efforts to address systemic barriers such as political marginalization, restrictive gender norms, and cultural resistance.

Structural inequalities remain a major challenge. Many initiatives fail to address deep-rooted societal norms that frame leadership as inherently masculine, subjecting women to scrutiny and reputational attacks that men rarely face. In some communities, women's autonomy is viewed as a threat to family structures, leading to resistance from local authorities and municipalities. Religious and political barriers also emerge, with certain organizations facing backlash from religious leaders who perceive gender equality efforts as contradictory to traditional values. In extreme cases, organizations advocating for feminist initiatives experience withdrawal of support from influential stakeholders, making it difficult to sustain projects⁹⁷

Flexibility in responding to emerging threats is another critical factor. While some organizations demonstrate the ability to learn and adapt as projects progress, others lack mechanisms to effectively integrate new insights into their strategies.⁹⁸ This rigidity can result in ineffective interventions that do not address evolving challenges faced by women in conflict settings.

Mitigating gender-specific risks requires targeted strategies. Economic empowerment is a key factor in reducing vulnerabilities, as financial independence enables women to engage more freely in peacebuilding and advocacy. However, many economic programs reinforce traditional gender roles by focusing on crafts and caregiving rather than diversifying opportunities. Additionally, logistical support - such as transportation, childcare, and safe spaces - plays a crucial role in enabling women's participation but is often overlooked.⁹⁹

To ensure meaningful participation and protection from risks, organizations must go beyond acknowledging barriers and adopt concrete mitigation strategies. This tool provides guidance on identifying risks early, implementing preventive measures, and responding to emerging challenges, ultimately strengthening gender-sensitive peacebuilding efforts¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁶ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)," - April 2025

⁹⁷ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)," - April 2025

⁹⁸ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)," - April 2025

⁹⁹ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)," - April 2025

¹⁰⁰ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2024-01/ran_missing_gender-dimension_in_risk_assessment_14112023_en.pdf

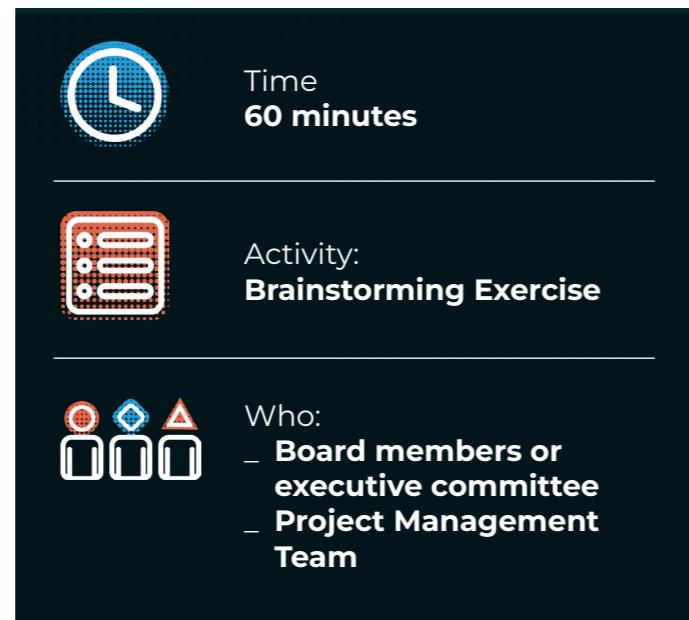
A. Integrating a Gendered Lens in Risk Analysis¹⁰¹

Explore the intricacies of gender when conducting a risk analysis

Most risk analysis tools do not explicitly adopt a gendered perspective although they often comprise a person-centered approach allowing a more tailored approach when needed.

However, relying on gender analyses and intersectionality dimensions could improve the efficacy of risk analyses and mitigation plans.

This tool aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to conduct comprehensive risk analyses that incorporate gender perspectives, enhancing inclusive programming and accountability in conflict-affected areas.



Step 5: Monitoring & Evaluation of your Risk Analysis

- Establish Indicators:
 - Develop gender-sensitive indicators to monitor the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
- Feedback Mechanisms:
 - Implement systems to gather feedback from all gender groups to inform ongoing risk analysis.
 - Feedback mechanisms strengthen accountability by ensuring that all gender groups can voice concerns and see their input reflected in program adjustments.
- Example:
 - Track registration and attendance by sex
 - Collect feedback from women on barriers and adjust accordingly

→ By following these steps, you can make sure that gendered differences are taken into account in risks analyses and mitigation plans

Follow this step by step guide to develop a plan to integrate a gendered lens in risk and mitigation analyses

Step 1: Define Key Concepts:

- Risk Analysis:** The process of identifying and assessing factors that could negatively affect the success of a project or objective.
- Gendered Risks:** Risks that disproportionately affect individuals based on their gender due to societal norms, roles, and inequalities.

Step 2: Risk Identification

- Use Guiding Questions:
 - What potential risks can you face as you implement your program?
 - What are the potential risks faced by different gender groups in the current context?
 - How do societal norms and roles contribute to these risks?
- Example: Low participation of women in a planned job training program.
 - Reasons:
 - Training is scheduled during times women are often busy with childrearing or household activities.
 - No childcare provided
 - Cultural norms may limit women's mobility or access to mixed-gender spaces.

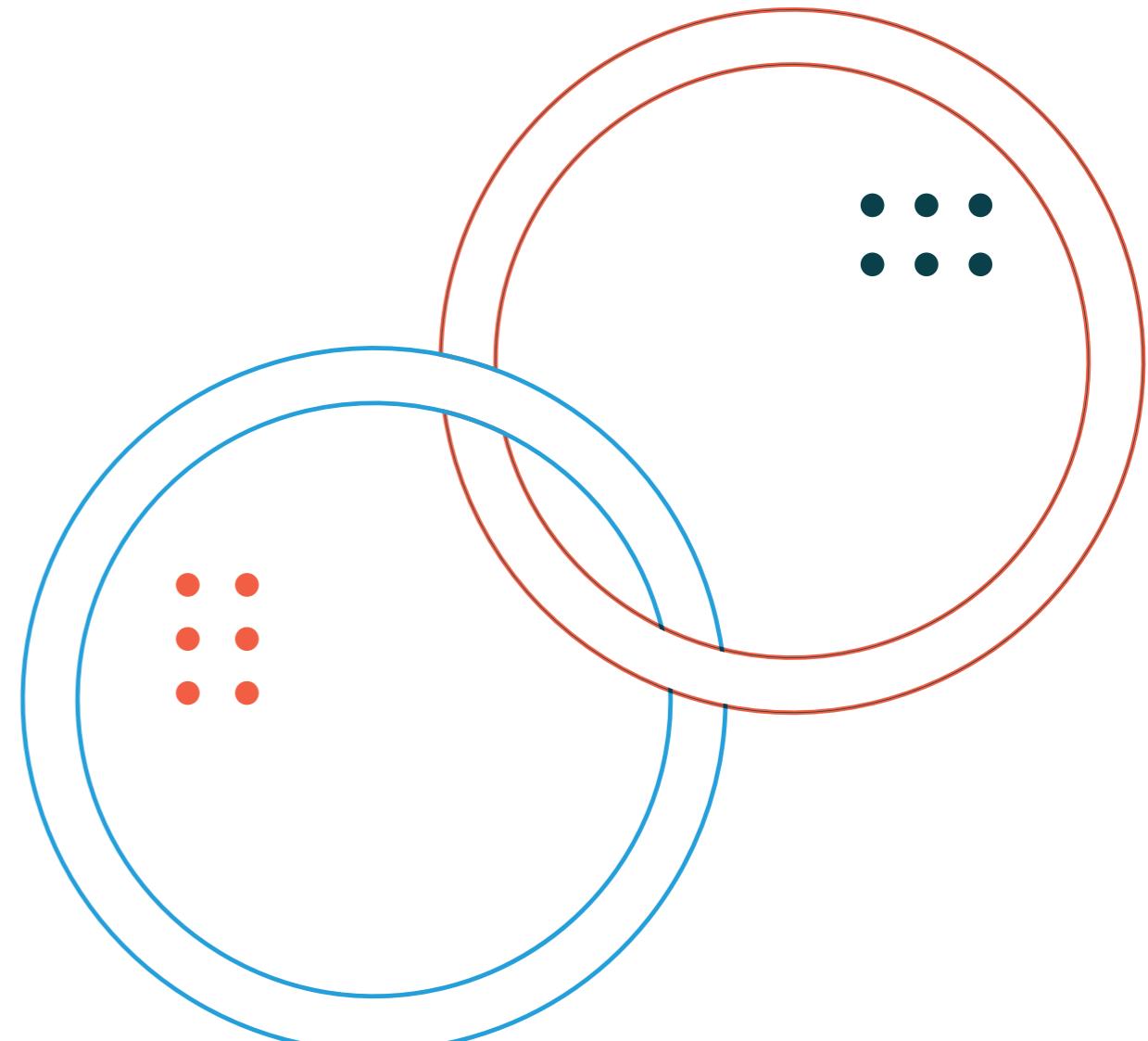
Step 3: Risk Assessment

- Assess Severity and Likelihood:
 - Determine the potential impact and probability of each identified risk.
- Prioritize Risks:
 - Rank risks based on their assessed severity and likelihood.

- Example:
 - Severity: Medium – Women miss out on upskilling and income-generating opportunities.
 - Likelihood: High – Similar past programs had low women turnout.
 - Vulnerable Groups:
 - Mothers with young children
 - Women in conservative households
 - Widows or women heads of household
 - Potential Data Sources:
 - Past program attendance logs (sex-disaggregated)
 - Quick survey or focus group with local women
 - Consultation with local women's NGOs

Step 4: Mitigation Strategies

- Develop Action Plans:
 - For each prioritized risk, outline steps to mitigate or manage the risk, ensuring gender-sensitive approaches.
- Assign Responsibilities:
 - Determine who will be responsible for implementing each mitigation strategy.
- Example:
 - Design Adjustments:
 - Offer sessions at flexible times (e.g. mornings or weekends)
 - Provide childcare during training
 - Offer women-only sessions if needed
 - Community Engagement:
 - Partner with local women's groups to promote the training
 - Share success stories of past women participants



¹⁰¹ Adapted from Gender-sensitive conflict analysis facilitators guide, Conciliation Resources <https://www.c-r.org/learning-hub/gender-sensitive-conflict-analysis-facilitators-guide?utm>

Tool 11

Gender Equality Budgeting - Allocating Resources Effectively



Ensuring gender equality in conflict resolution and peacebuilding projects requires not only policy commitments but also concrete financial investments. Women face distinct challenges in accessing and benefiting from these initiatives, necessitating targeted resource allocation to remove structural and logistical barriers. Gender-sensitive budgeting (GSB) is a crucial tool in this process, ensuring that financial resources are distributed equitably to meet the specific needs of women in conflict settings. However, current budgeting practices among organizations remain inconsistent, with financial constraints and gaps in understanding hindering effective implementation.

A well-structured budget should account for gender-specific needs, including provisions for caregivers, accommodations, and safe transportation, demonstrating a genuine commitment to women's participation. Funding for training, sensitization, and maintaining robust reporting mechanisms is equally critical to fostering inclusive and effective conflict resolution projects. Yet, many organizations struggle with limited budgets, restricting their ability to implement these essential measures.¹⁰²

Donor-related challenges further complicate resource allocation. Several CSOs and municipalities reported financial constraints as a significant barrier, noting that donor funding often lacks the flexibility needed to tailor programs to the specific cultural and logistical challenges of their communities. One organization highlighted that, due to limited donor budget flexibility, they had to directly negotiate with local service providers—such as hotels—to ensure accommodations that met women's needs, like safe and accessible spaces, while still complying with fixed cost constraints. This underscores the necessity for organizations to develop strong internal advocacy skills, ensuring they can effectively negotiate for gender-responsive allocations. Additionally, international actors at times do not recognize the importance of adaptable funding structures that allow organizations to respond to community-specific gender needs without risking donor non-compliance.¹⁰³

Despite some organizations incorporating gender considerations into their general budgets, many lack dedicated allocations or robust GSB frameworks. Some apply GSB selectively, addressing gender-sensitive budgeting only when required by a particular project, rather than embedding it within broader financial planning. Others narrowly interpret GSB as simply funding women-focused initiatives, rather than ensuring equitable distribution of resources across all programs.¹⁰⁴ This limited approach results in missed opportunities to comprehensively address gender disparities and structural inequalities.

A major gap in implementation is the absence of structured planning and monitoring mechanisms. While some organizations claim to integrate gender sensitivity into their projects, they often lack concrete financial strategies or mechanisms to track expenditures against gender equity objectives.¹⁰⁵ The inconsistent application of GSB principles, particularly when approached situationally or on a project-by-project basis, further weakens its overall impact.

This tool aims to bridge these gaps by providing organizations with practical strategies for integrating GSB into financial planning, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to advance gender equality. It will offer guidance on advocating for flexible donor funding, developing structured budget lines for gender-specific needs, and implementing monitoring mechanisms to track gender-responsive spending. Strengthening these financial practices is essential to ensuring that peacebuilding initiatives are not only inclusive but also sustainable, addressing systemic barriers and fostering meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution efforts.

¹⁰² Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

¹⁰³ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

¹⁰⁴ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

¹⁰⁵ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "[Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings](#)." - April 2025

A. Gender Sensitive Budgeting Tool

Develop gender-sensitive budgeting practices

 Time 60 minutes	 Activity: Brainstorming	 Who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board members or executive committee Project Management Team
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Follow this step-by-step guide to develop gender-sensitive budgeting practices

Use the prompts below to guide you as you develop a gender-sensitive budget¹⁰⁶

A. The Five Steps of Gender Sensitive Budgeting:

- a. Describe the situation of women and men, girls and boys (and different sub-groups) in the sector
- b. Is your strategy gender-sensitive?
- c. An adequate budget is allocated to implement the gender-sensitive strategy?
 1. Budget for implementing the gender-sensitive strategy
 - Ensure that all planned gender-responsive activities are properly costed and funded.
 - Example: In education, this could include training teachers on gender-sensitive pedagogy and providing gender-separated sanitation facilities.
 2. Budget for gender expertise on your team
 - Allocate funds to hire or train staff with gender analysis skills.
 - Example: In health programs, this could mean hiring a gender specialist to advise on service delivery for women and marginalized genders.
 3. Budget for safe spaces for women and girls
 - Ensure funding for the physical and psychosocial safety of women and girls.
 - Example: In shelter or protection programs, this may include women-only service areas or trauma-informed staff.
 4. Budget for care services and accessibility
 - Consider the time burden of unpaid care and physical access to services.
 - Example: In livelihoods projects, allocate for child-care or transport subsidies to enable women's participation.
 5. Budget for gender balance in your team
 - Include resources to support equitable recruitment and retention practices.
 - Example: In a humanitarian response team, allocate funds for flexible work arrangements, paren-

tal leave coverage, or gender equity training to help recruit and retain more women in field leadership roles.

6. Budget for emergencies and backlash
 - Set aside contingency funds to respond to risks like harassment or community resistance to gender equity work.
 - Example: In community engagement, include funds for conflict mediation or rapid response teams.

Accountability tip:

Make budgets transparent and track spending by gender outcomes. Use internal audits, community scorecards, or anonymous reporting mechanisms to allow teams and beneficiaries to flag gaps in resource use.

- d. Was the expenditure spent as planned?
- e. Project Impact: Did it address both men and women's needs?

B. When preparing your budget ask yourself:

- a. What are women and men's particular needs in terms of programs, benefits and services?
- b. Do women and men have equal access to this program, its benefits, and services?
- c. Who benefits most from the program as it is, from its benefits and services?
- d. What do I need to change or to add for men and women to benefit equally?
- e. Who has control over decision-making on spending in this area?
- f. Are women and men consulted equally in the development and delivery of policy and programs?
- g. What are the long-term costs and consequences of not using a gender analysis addressing women's inequality?

C. Example of a gender sensitive budget analysis

Use these questions to further guide your analysis

Objective	Example	Gender Perspective	Input
	Building Emergency Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a gender-specific impact? (What kind of impact is there on men and women?) • What does the achievement of the objective contribute towards gender equality? • Do men and women have equal access to the activities undertaken to achieve this objective? • Does the budget take into account and address the root causes of gender inequality? 	Are the projects' means (funding and human resources) enough to guarantee equal access and benefit for men and women migrants?
Measures of outputs (Utilization of services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of local young women and of men trained in ... • % of young girls and % of young boys... • Number of women and of men that gained... • Number of women and of men placed in key positions in the public and private sectors • The number of women and of men who received counselling or testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do men and women benefit from the outputs? • Do the outputs contribute towards gender equity? 	

→ Once you have answered these questions, you can develop a gender-sensitive budget making a list of expenses / required resources to address the gaps you identified earlier in this toolkit. This budget can be used in your general fundraising strategy or included in your project proposals when you seek out funding.

106 Adapted from IOM's Booklet on Understanding Gender Sensitive Budgeting https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/periodicals_and_newsletters/gsb_final_%20booklet.pdf

Module 4



Understanding the Linkage between GBV and Conflict Resolution



Tool 12

Delving Deeper into Gender Equality in
Conflict Resolution - Linking GBV and
Conflict Dynamics

Gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict are deeply interconnected, yet their relationship is often overlooked in conflict resolution efforts. Armed conflicts exacerbate existing gender inequalities, creating conditions that heighten the risks of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and exploitation.¹⁰⁷¹⁰⁸¹⁰⁹ At the same time, GBV itself contributes to instability, reinforcing cycles of violence and weakening efforts toward sustainable peace. Despite this, organizations working in conflict resolution at times fail to systematically integrate GBV considerations into their approaches, limiting the effectiveness of their interventions.

This module consists of one tool designed to strengthen the integration of GBV within conflict resolution efforts:

Tool 12 Delving Deeper into Gender Equality in Conflict Resolution - Linking GBV and Conflict Dynamics

While organizations generally recognize the importance of addressing GBV, their approaches often remain fragmented. Some focus only on direct forms of violence while neglecting the structural inequalities and restrictive gender norms that sustain conflict-related GBV. Others engage with gender-sensitive practices only when externally mandated, preventing the systemic integration of GBV considerations into peacebuilding frameworks.¹¹⁰ The exclusion of women from security and peace processes further limits the development of effective responses.

This module aims to equip organizations with the knowledge and strategies needed to analyze GBV as both a consequence and driver of conflict. By strengthening gender-sensitive conflict analysis and institutional responses, organizations can design more comprehensive and sustainable interventions that address GBV as a core element of conflict resolution efforts.

This module seeks to:

- 1. Strengthen Gender-Sensitive Conflict Analysis:** Equip organizations with the tools to assess how GBV intersects with conflict dynamics, ensuring that interventions address both immediate and structural factors.
- 2. Improve Institutional Responses to GBV:** Support municipalities, CSOs, and WROs in systematically incorporating GBV considerations into conflict resolution initiatives.
- 3. Ensure the Systematic Integration of GBV prevention in Peacebuilding:** Move beyond ad-hoc gender mainstreaming by embedding GBV-sensitive approaches into security, peace, and mediation efforts.
- 4. By tackling these challenges, this module helps organizations develop more holistic and sustainable approaches** that recognize the essential role of gender equality in conflict resolution.

Tool 12

Delving Deeper into Gender Equality in Conflict Resolution - Linking GBV and Conflict Dynamics



107 Oxfam, Community Conflict Analysis Report - WE'AM Conflict Mapping Study (Final Report), 72.

108 Rebecca O'Keeffe, "Revolution and the Role of Women: Lessons from Lebanon," Friends of Europe, April 14, 2023, <https://www.friendsofeurope.org/insights/revolution-and-the-role-of-women-lessons-from-lebanon/>.

109 Lana Khattab and Henri Myrtiny, "Gender, Security and SSR in Lebanon," International Alert, November 2014, 4.

110 Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings." - April 2025

Understanding the intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict dynamics is critical for designing effective conflict resolution initiatives. While conflicts exacerbate existing gender inequalities, they also create new vulnerabilities that heighten the risks of GBV. Women and girls, particularly in conflict-affected regions, face increased threats of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and exploitation.¹¹¹¹¹²¹¹³ However, despite the well-documented links between GBV and conflict, organizations working in conflict resolution at times fail to systematically integrate GBV considerations into their approaches. Addressing these gaps is crucial to developing more comprehensive and effective interventions.

Gender-blind approaches overlook how restrictive gender norms, displacement, and economic instability compound GBV risks, making it difficult to implement sustainable peacebuilding strategies. In Lebanon, the persistent exclusion of women from security and peace processes further limits the capacity to address these issues effectively.¹¹⁴ Without a nuanced understanding of how GBV and conflict intersect, interventions risk being incomplete or ineffective, failing to address the structural inequalities that perpetuate cycles of violence. While practical experience informs many organizations' work, integrating gender-sensitive conflict analysis remains a challenge.

A key challenge remains the inconsistent application of gender-sensitive approaches across stakeholders. While many organizations recognize the importance of addressing GBV, they often lack the theoretical frameworks needed to analyze its deeper connections to conflict. Some municipalities and CSOs focus on immediate causes of violence but fail to account for systemic gender inequalities that fuel conflict and insecurity. Moreover, the selective integration of gender-sensitive practices - where gender considerations are prioritized only when externally mandated - weakens the potential for lasting change.¹¹⁵ Addressing GBV requires a nuanced understanding of how social, economic, and political factors intersect to shape women's experiences in conflict settings.

Therefore, this tool provides a framework to deepen actors' understanding of GBV in conflict settings by moving beyond surface-level approaches to examine how conflict exacerbates GBV risks and how GBV itself contributes to instability. It seeks to integrate gender-sensitive conflict analysis and ensure that conflict resolution efforts account for how gender dynamics influence violence, security, and peacebuilding. This tool aims to enhance institutional responses to GBV and strengthen the capacity of municipalities and civil society organizations to incorporate GBV considerations into their conflict resolution initiatives.

By strengthening the understanding of GBV within conflict resolution frameworks, this tool equips organizations with the knowledge and strategies needed to design more holistic, effective, and sustainable interventions. Recognizing the diverse ways women experience and influence conflict is essential to creating inclusive peacebuilding processes that address both immediate and structural forms of violence.

A. Understanding Gender & Conflict Dynamics

Discuss the Dynamics of Gender & Conflict



Use the guiding questions below to discuss the dynamics of gender & conflict

Understanding Gender & Conflict Dynamics - Guiding Questions¹¹⁶:

A. How does the crisis affect women and men differently?

- i. To what extent does the crisis place significant burdens upon women and girls (economic and social impact, SGBV, participation in public life, access to justice, freedom of movement etc.), or inversely empower them? (for example, women may take to the streets to protest and become prominent political activists, or become heads of the household).
- ii. To what extent does the crisis undermine the possibilities of men to live up to societal expectations to be economic providers, protectors, or decision makers?
- iii. To what extent does the crisis empower some men/women dominated institutions (security institutions, executive branch, political opposition, social movements, etc.)?
 1. What are the social groups that might be particularly affected by the crisis and intersectional forms of discrimination (for example, internally displaced people (IDPs), children with disability)?
 2. How are those social groups affected by the crisis (for example, migration, displacement, SGBV, new forms of economic activity, forced trafficking, etc.)?
- iv. How does the crisis affect women human rights defenders?

B. How does the crisis impact/is impacted by gender norms?

- i. To what extent does the crisis reinforce/challenge gender norms?
- ii. What are the positive and/or negative impacts?
- iii. How do the notions of masculinity and femininity develop in interaction with other power factors – such as age, class, religion, and ethnicity – and influence the crisis dynamics?

Gender norms may be driving violence. While attention paid to gender and violence is often focused on sexual violence, gendered factors such as militarized notions of masculinity may play a role in driving armed conflicts¹¹⁷. A crisis may impact positively or negatively gender norms:

C. What are the elements reinforcing gender inequalities during a conflict?

- i. What are the social processes and/or institutions related to the crisis that reinforce gender inequalities?
- ii. How are relations of power (re)producing gender inequalities?

For example, peace talks often exclude women, but also more generally those who do not hold power, including civil society organizations.

¹¹¹ Oxfam, Community Conflict Analysis Report - WE'AM Conflict Mapping Study (Final Report), 72.

¹¹² Rebecca O'Keeffe, "Revolution and the Role of Women: Lessons from Lebanon," Friends of Europe, April 14, 2023, <https://www.friendsofeurope.org/insights/revolution-and-the-role-of-women-lessons-from-lebanon/>.

¹¹³ Lana Khattab and Henri Myrtilinen, "Gender, Security and SSR in Lebanon," International Alert, November 2014, 4.

¹¹⁴ UN Women Lebanon, "In Brief - Women, Peace and Security," 1.

¹¹⁵ Seeds for Legal Initiatives, "Applying a Gender Lens to Conflict Resolution Efforts in Lebanon, WE'AM - Women in Conflict Settings," - April 2025

¹¹⁶ Adapted from UN Women's Gender, Crisis, and Conflict Analysis tool <https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/Gender%2C%20Crisis%20and%20Conflict%20Analysis%20Tool.pdf>

¹¹⁷ Mann, D. 2024. Unveiling Gendered Conflict: Intersections of Power, Masculinity, and Violence. Modern Diplomacy. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/05/05/unveiling-gendered-conflict-intersections-of-power-masculinity-and-violence/>

Positive impact	Negative impact
<p>Crisis situations can disrupt traditional gender roles and provide new opportunities to advance gender equality.</p> <p>For example, women may take leadership roles in social and political movements and be recognized as political leaders.</p>	<p>Crises can generate rigid gender stereotypes. In many contexts, shifts in gender relations and roles (women taking up new responsibilities) have led to calls, at the end of a crisis, for reducing the gains that women have made.</p> <p>For example: women who became social and political leaders during a crisis, in their communities or on the national stage, may face threats when engaging in public life at the end of a crisis.</p>
<p>Political moments of peacebuilding, such as peace negotiations and constitutional reforms, can also provide opportunities for advancing women's rights.</p> <p>For example, granting women the same inheritance rights as men.</p>	<p>The social, economic and political shifts that occur in times of crises often narrow the opportunities for men to live up to societal expectations placed on them.</p> <p>For example: men may lose their jobs and engage in violent behaviors (violence against intimate partners, domestic violence, etc.) or engage in self-harm (substance abuse, risk-taking behavior and suicide).</p>

→ **Integrate the deeper understanding of gender and conflict dynamics that this tool provides in all your programs and frameworks by:**

- Incorporating gender and conflict dynamics analysis into all stages of programming - planning, implementation, and evaluation - to ensure risks and power imbalances are addressed.
- Designing targeted interventions that mitigate increased gender and conflict dynamics risks (e.g. GBV, displacement, loss of livelihood) while also building on moments of empowerment (e.g. women's leadership during crisis).
- Creating feedback loops with affected groups, especially marginalized voices, to inform conflict-sensitive and gender-responsive programming.
- Ensuring accountability by embedding gender indicators including those related to gender and conflict dynamics in M&E frameworks and involving diverse gender groups in oversight and decision-making.
- Advocating for inclusive processes, such as peacebuilding or recovery efforts, that meaningfully include women, marginalized groups, and civil society actors.

These steps help shift programming from reactive to transformative, tackling root causes of inequality including when it comes to gender and conflict dynamics while addressing immediate needs.

Conclusion and Annexes:

This Gender Transformative Toolkit serves as a practical resource for organizations working at the intersection of gender and conflict resolution in Lebanon. By addressing key structural, cultural, and institutional barriers, it provides actionable tools to enhance internal policies, improve program quality, strengthen project design, and integrate gender-sensitive approaches into conflict resolution efforts. Grounded in research findings and tailored to Lebanon's unique socio-political landscape, the toolkit supports CSOs, WROs, municipalities, and other stakeholders in developing more inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding initiatives.

Beyond offering guidance, the toolkit fosters a shift towards gender-responsive programming that moves beyond tokenistic inclusion to meaningful empowerment. It equips organizations with the necessary frameworks to mainstream gender considerations in their

operations, ensuring that women are not only beneficiaries but also active agents of change in conflict resolution processes. Through structured training and capacity-building efforts, the toolkit strengthens institutional knowledge and promotes collaboration among key actors.

By applying the strategies outlined in this toolkit, organizations can contribute to long-term social cohesion and stability in Lebanon. Ensuring that gender perspectives are systematically integrated into peacebuilding efforts is not only a matter of equity but also a critical component of effective conflict resolution. The practical implementation of these tools will help reshape Lebanon's conflict landscape, reinforcing the essential role of women in creating a more inclusive and resilient society.

Annex A: Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

I. Introduction

A. Policy Statement

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual exploitation and abuse.

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] is committed to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse both within the organization and within the framework of [YOUR ORGANIZATION] programs.

To this end, SEEDS's Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: encourages prevention; promotes detection; sets out a clear investigation procedure; sets out a mechanism of sanctions

This policy is aimed at guiding [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member and partners, and must be considered together with SEEDS' Policies Handbook

II. Interpretation and Application

A. Scope of Application

- The policy applies to all [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team members, contractors and governance members.
- It also applies to participants in all [YOUR ORGANIZATION] programs

B. Definitions

Sexual Exploitation and abuse: for the purposes of this policy, the term "sexual exploitation and abuse" includes: sexual harassment, abuse of power for the purpose of obtaining sexual favors, rape, sexual assault, sexual relations with a minor, sex-related human trafficking.

a. Sexual Harassment:

"Sexual harassment" is characterized by the imposition of sexual comments or behaviors on a person that:

- are not consensual,
- are degrading or humiliating in nature,
- or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation for the person concerned

Any form of serious (even non-repeated) pressure with the real or apparent aim of obtaining a sexual act for the benefit of the perpetrator or a third party is considered as sexual harassment.

It is specifically prohibited to sexually harass any [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member or other entities referred in the "Scope of Application" of this policy during or outside working hours.

Sexual harassment includes a large number of prohibited behaviors such as:

- physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape or sexual assault, attempts to commit such acts or physical intent such as touching, pinching, fondling or any other gesture against the body of another individual;
- sexual advances, sexual proposals or comments with sexual connotations such as equivocal gestures, noises, remarks, jokes or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experiences;
- preferential treatment or promise of preferential treatment in exchange for sexual favors from a person, or explicit request for sexual intercourse in exchange for any reward;

- intimidation, threats or barriers to career progression because of the gender of the person concerned;
- retaliations in response to a sexual harassment complaint

b. Abuse of Power for the Purpose of Obtaining Sexual Favors:

The “abuse of power to obtain sexual favors” is characterized by a sexual relationship imposed by force or by a relationship of social or economic dependence or subordination.

Any relationship with a minor will be considered as sexual exploitation or abuse.

Abuse of power to obtain sexual favors also includes rape and sexual assault.

c. Rape:

“Rape” is defined as any act of sexual penetration, of any kind, committed against another person, whether a minor or an adult, by violence, coercion, threat or surprise. Sexual penetration includes vaginal, anus or mouth penetration through the penis or any other part of the body, including penetration with an object.

d. Sexual Assault:

“Sexual assault” is defined as any sexual assault committed against another person, whether a minor or an adult, by violence, coercion, threat or surprise.

e. Sexual Relation with a Minor:

“Sexual relation” with a minor is defined as sexual penetration (as defined in c) Rape) or sexual assault (as defined in d) Sexual assault) against a minor under the age of 18.

Sexual relation with a minor is considered as sexual abuse.

Any sexual activity with a child is prohibited because of the age of majority and lack of consent. A child is defined as any person under 18 years old, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Not knowing the person's age is not a valid defense.

f. Sex-related Human Trafficking

“Human trafficking of a sexual nature” or procuring is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer or concealment of persons by the provision of means, threat or any other form of coercion, fraud or abuse of power or by taking advantage of the sexual activity of a minor or an adult.

C. Information and Adherence to Policy

- This policy is published under the authority of SEEDS. [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member, as well as the other entities referred to in “Scope of Application”, are required to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy and must therefore be aware and have understood of its provisions and of any changes. When they are unsure of how to proceed, they should seek the advice of a competent person, notably their direct manager.

· It is the responsibility of [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member with managerial responsibilities to ensure that team member under their supervision are aware of and commit to the full respect with this policy; and to take or propose appropriate disciplinary measures as sanction against any violations of its provisions.

· This policy shall form part of the working conditions of [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member

· [YOUR ORGANIZATION] will review the provisions of this policy at regular intervals

III. General Principles

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] managers and team member and stakeholders shall abide by the principles of neutrality, impartiality, confidentiality and protection of privacy when submitting or investigating a complaint.

Information should only be sought out and disclosed when relevant and necessary for the investigation. No information is revealed to anyone except with the explicit consent of the complainant. Upon completion of the investigation and the implementation of appropriate disciplinary measures, a brief report shall be circulated to [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member stating that a complaint was made against a specific team member, an investigation was conducted and disciplinary measures were taken. The identity of the complainant and the nature of the complaint are not divulged. The identity of the team member against whom the complaint was made and the measures taken may be divulged only if necessary.

IV. Mechanisms to Fight Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

A. Prevention

Fully aware that sexual exploitation and abuse can be most effectively avoided by creating an organizational culture which rejects and effectively acts upon any form of sexual exploitation and abuse, [YOUR ORGANIZATION] has developed a body of legal and practical procedures, notably through its Code of Conduct and its HR policy, asserting the need to respect the dignity of individuals and prohibiting all sexual exploitation and abuse.

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] also strives to provide capacity building opportunities to its team member to learn about sexual harassment and abuse, how to prevent it and how to identify it in the workplace.

Additionally, [YOUR ORGANIZATION] informs all program participants of its stance on sexual harassment and abuse and the potential disciplinary actions that may be taken. This information is included in the “house rules” announced at the start of every SEEDS’ event.

B. Reporting

1. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed as part of a consultancy relationship:

· If a [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member believes that he or she is a victim of or witness to any of the conduct

defined in this policy, he or she is encouraged report the facts to the “Protection Committee”.

· It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details related to the facts and the names of any witnesses.

2. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed as part of a SEEDS’ program

· If a program participant (or a SEEDS’ team member believes) that he or she is a victim of or witness to any of the conduct defined in this policy, he or she is encouraged to report the facts to the designated SEEDS’ representative on that day.

· The representative is responsible for taking appropriate disciplinary measures during the event and/or reporting the incident to the “Protection Committee” with the complainant consent.

· It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details related to the facts and the names of any witnesses.

3. All complaints can be sent to report@seedslb.org Obligation to report

· [YOUR ORGANIZATION] intends to respond/come up with an answer/bring an (appropriate) response to any sexual exploitation and abuse.

· [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member who considers to be a witness or victim of sexual exploitation and abuse which may be in violation of or contravenes to the present policy, must report it to a member of the “Protection Committee”.

· [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member must report any evidence, allegation or suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse of which they are aware in or in the course of their duties. The investigation of the reported facts is SEEDS’s responsibility.

· If reporting to a member of the “Protection Committee” is not appropriate (for example if they are involved in the complaint), [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member should report to the Executive Director.

· [YOUR ORGANIZATION] must ensure that [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member who reports a case as described above on the basis of reasonable suspicions and in good faith does not suffer from any harm as a result.

· Cases of misuse of complaint mechanisms may be subject to sanction

C. Investigation

1. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed as part of a consultancy relationship:

· A complaint can be submitted orally or in writing to a member of the “Protection Committee”.

· It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details

related to the facts and the names of any witnesses.

· The complainant may wish to remain anonymous. In this case the committee may move forward with the complaint in accordance with the scope of information detailed in the submitted letter.

· Upon receipt of a complaint, the “Protection Committee” will:

o Make sure to separate the complainant from the alleged perpetrator(s) for the duration of the investigation. No contact is allowed between them during this period.

o Detail the process to be followed including investigation (and with whom), potential sanctions and information that may circulated in an internal report at the conclusion of the enquiry.

o Request, where appropriate, to provide further clarification and evaluation of the complaint

o The consent of the complainant shall be thought before moving forward with all and any of the steps in the process

· The 2 members of the “Protection Committee” (or one of them with the ED in case the other member is involved in the complaint) will meet with the complainant, alleged wrongdoer and any witnesses individually.

· The “Protection Committee” shall make its assessment and issue its report. The decision depicted in the report (confirmation or disproving of the wrongdoing) and the appropriate disciplinary measures should be agreed on unanimously.

· The committee shall keep the details of the investigation confidential and only divulge necessary information and only with the consent of the complainant. A brief report may be circulated internally to [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member following the aforementioned principles.

· All records of any suspected wrongdoing and that may be required for further investigation shall be kept

2. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed as part of a SEEDS’ program:

· A complaint can be submitted orally or in writing to the designated SEEDS’ Representative (SR) on that day

· It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details related to the facts and the names of any witnesses.

· The complainant may wish to remain anonymous. In this case the SR may move forward with the complaint in accordance with the scope of information detailed in the submitted letter.

· Upon receipt of a complaint, the SR will:

o Make sure to separate the complainant from the alleged perpetrator(s) for the duration of the investigation. No contact is allowed between them during this period.

- o Request, where appropriate, to provide further clarification and evaluation of the complaint
- o The consent of the complainant shall be sought before moving forward with all and any of the steps in the process

- The SR will meet with the complainant, alleged wrongdoer and any witnesses individually.

- The SR shall make its assessment and make the appropriate decision following SEEDS' "Safe Place Guidelines".

- The SR shall record all complaints made at SEEDS' events along with the disciplinary measures taken in response. This report shall be submitted to the "Protection Committee".

- Enquiries that are not settled during the program shall be passed on to the "Protection Committee" that can then continue the formal investigative process.

D. Investigative Authority

The "Protection Committee", comprised of the Chief Operating Officer (representing the Executive Team) and of a member of the Advisory Council, is in charge of the management of all sexual exploitation and abuse issues within SEEDS.

E. Sanctions Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – at the workplace

1. Disciplinary Sanctions

The violation of the present policy, which constitutes in particular a violation of SEEDS' Code of Conduct, may result in sanctions ranging from warning to termination of the consultancy contract for serious misconduct, with no notice and no payment of compensation.

2. Other Sanctions

Sanctions could also include an obligatory attendance of workshops or classes on sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse prevention; signing a pledge to refrain from any harassing or exploitative behavior towards colleagues or others; or others.

3. Reporting to Competent Authorities

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] reserves the right, depending on the seriousness of the facts found, to report to the competent prosecution authorities the facts constituting sexual exploitation and abuse.

F. Sanctions Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – at SEEDS' programs

Safe Space Guidelines

- [YOUR ORGANIZATION] a zero tolerance approach towards harassment.

- Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to: offensive verbal comments, inappropriate physical behavior or gestures, displaying or distributing offensive material, intimidation, unwanted advances, bullying in all its forms and others.

- If a participant or team member engages in such behav-

ior, [YOUR ORGANIZATION] reserves the right to take any actions to keep a welcoming environment for all Participants and Team member

- [YOUR ORGANIZATION] may take action to redress anything designed to, or with the clear impact of, disrupting the event or making the environment hostile for any participants

- If a participant or a panelist engages in harassing behavior, [YOUR ORGANIZATION] reserves the right to have that person removed from the venue; and may be refused registration or participation as speaker or panelist at future [YOUR ORGANIZATION] events.

- If a complaint is made against a [YOUR ORGANIZATION] team member, further disciplinary actions may be taken following a formal investigation.

- If an allegation is determined to have been made frivolously, in bad faith, maliciously, for personal gain or for revenge, the person having made such allegations may be removed from the venue; and may be refused registration or participation as speaker or panelist at future [YOUR ORGANIZATION] events.

G. Protection of Victims

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] undertakes to do everything possible, in agreement with the victims of prohibited practices, to protect them, in particular by:

- maintaining all required confidentiality on the handling of reports made in accordance with this policy

- starting without delay an investigation regarding the facts reported in accordance with this policy

- offering personalized support to victims of incidents reported

- informing the victim of the action taken in response to the reported incidents



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