

The relationship between Gender Objectives and Gender Indicators

Each program or project must decide on its gender-related objectives. At a minimum, every USAID development project should avoid gender-negative strategies in which gender inequalities (i.e., norms, roles, and stereotypes) are reinforced in the process of achieving desired development outcomes. For example, to continue to support the stereotypes that women are only interested in traditional economic activities and that men have no responsibility for family hygiene and health or that they are the only ones involved in community decision-making. A continuum of over-arching, gender-related objectives includes the following categories:

Gender neutral	Gender sensitive	Gender positive	Gender transformative
Project or activity outcomes will not worsen but will not necessarily improve gender norms, roles, and relations.	Gender-related strategies are viewed as a <i>means</i> to reach sectoral project goals by redressing existing gender inequalities related to gender norms, roles, and access to resources.	In gender positive activities, the focus remains on development outcomes but changing gender norms, roles, and access to resources is seen as <i>central</i> to achieving positive development outcomes.	Addressing gender issues is viewed as <i>central</i> to both positive development outcomes and also to transforming unequal gender relations so that there is shared power, control of resources, decision making, and support for women's empowerment.

Gender sensitive indicators “have the special function of pointing out how far and in what ways development programs and projects have met their gender objectives and achieved results related to gender equity. Gender sensitive indicators measure gender related changes in society over time.”¹

There are three categories of indicators:

- *Quantitative indicators* are numerical measurements of changes in the behaviors, attitudes, and practices of targeted individuals, disaggregated by sex and/or other social variables such as age, education, and socioeconomic class. For example, the number of men and women who have gained new jobs as a result of business skills training.
- *Qualitative indicators* are more subjective measures that address perceptions and less-quantifiable outcomes, including a program's progress toward reducing gender-related impediments and improving gender equality. Qualitative indicators can provide information on why people behave in a certain way and the relationships among them. Scales, ranking and indices can be used to try to quantify qualitative changes. For example, a qualitative indicator could describe the number of men and women expressing their satisfaction level with government services.
- *Process-oriented indicators* can be both quantitative (e.g., measuring the achievement of activity deliverables) and qualitative (e.g., quality of participation of men and women in workshops).

Ideally, programs and projects should derive gender sensitive indicators and targets from baseline analyses and assessments that include gender analysis. To capture gender related changes, it is important and necessary to have some people-level indicators. Household results should be

¹ CIDA. 1997. The Why and How of Gender-Sensitive Indicators: A Project Level Handbook. CIDA.

disaggregated by couple- or female-headed households (e.g., numbers of men and women involved in local resource management bodies). It is often useful to augment and validate quantitative targets with qualitative data collection that is sex-disaggregated and focused on gender issues (e.g., changes in women's access to land). Gender sensitive indicators, like all indicators, should have associated targets that show more equitable participation or removal of gender related impediments. The process of setting these targets requires project management staff to think through what is desirable and what is possible from a gender equity standpoint. It is important to identify how indicators will be tracked and what remedial gender related actions will be taken if performance is less than acceptable. If gender related benchmarks are routinely not being achieved, then a project needs to revisit its initial gender analysis (if available) and/or periodically seek out gender expertise to identify gender-based constraints and new strategies for achieving results.²

² Ref for GATE training manual