Gender transformative programming

Rutgers For sexual and reproductive health and rights

What is a gender-transformative approach?

A gender-transformative approach is a type of gender lens that can be applied to any kind of programme, project or activity.

The goal of this approach is to transform harmful gender norms and power dynamics into positive ones, thus contributing to gender justice and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all. And it works: explicitly addressing harmful norms and power inequalities has already resulted in improved SRHR services[1], more impactful sexuality education[2] and a decrease in intimate partner violence[3].

Rutgers has developed its own way of working with gender-transformative approaches by combining the following six key principles:

Six principles

1. Using human rights as a basis for all interventions
2. Analysing and critically addressing power dynamics
3. Analysing and critically addressing rigid and harmful gender norms
4. Using a non-binary approach to gender and including sexual and gender diversities
5. Focusing on the empowerment of women and girls
6. Ensuring the meaningful engagement of men and boys

1. Simbaya, J., Both, J. et al. (2020). *Enhancing comprehensive sexuality education through a gender-transformative approach: Studying the effects of GTA capacity building on CSE teaching in Zambia* (Rutgers).
2. Haberland, N. A. (2015). The case for addressing gender and power in sexuality and HIV education: A comprehensive review of evaluation studies. *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 41(1):31-42.
3. Doyle, K., Ruti G. et al. (2018). Gender-transformative Bandebehero couples' intervention to promote male engagement in reproductive and maternal health and violence prevention in Rwanda. *PLOS ONE*.

These six principles can be embedded in programmes and projects. Rutgers has developed a toolkit on gender-transformative approaches that helps individuals to increase their understanding and awareness of gender norms and power dynamics. It also helps organisations to apply the principles of a gender-transformative approach to their programmes.

About this Quickscan

This tool combines the analysis of the Engender Health gender toolkit[4] with Rutgers' analysis of what gender-transformative programming looks like. This is why each of the Quickscan boxes focuses on one of the six principles of Rutgers' gender-transformative approach. For those who are developing or starting new programmes, we have added an extra box for gender-transformative programme design (principle 0).

Instructions

Note down a score for each item on the list, thinking about your own programme or project. The comments section allows you to explain your scoring. It is possible to sum up your totals per principle, which helps you to analyse which principles are already strongly represented in your programme and which ones might still need some attention.

Please note: this checklist does not suffice as a one-off solution for gender-transformative programming. Rather, see it as a tool that can help you think about what gender-transformative programming means in your context and spark conversations about this in your team. It is also helpful as an evaluation tool when applying this checklist in several stages of your programme.

Want to learn more? Visit us at www.rutgers.international/gta or send us a message via gtatoolkit@rutgers.nl

4. www.engenderhealth.org/pubs/gender/gender-toolkit/pages/sbcc-materials-gender-sensitivity-checklist.html

3 = very well
2 = okay
1 = needs improving
0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

0	Is the programme design gender-transformative?	Score
A	Is a gender and power analysis included in the design stage of the programme?	
B	Are the target groups actively involved in the development of the programme?	
C	Does the programme include specific indicators and budgets for gender equality?	
D	Will the programme collect gender disaggregated data in a non-binary way (options: male/female/other)?	
	Total	

Comments

3 = very well
2 = okay
1 = needs improving
0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

1 Is the programme based on human rights?	Score
A Does the programme approach your target group as rights holders?	
B Does the programme aim to hold duty bearers (schools, governments, service providers) accountable for increasing access to SRHR for your target groups?	
C Is the programme adapted to the specific needs of your target audiences?	
D Is the programme accessible for all people without discrimination on the basis of their background, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability etc?	
Total	

Comments

3 = very well
2 = okay
1 = needs improving
0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

2   Does the programme address power relations?

		Score
A	Does the programme have accountability structures in place to prevent power abuse?	
B	Does the programme address power inequalities in the lives of your target audience?	
C	Does the programme ensure that those whose boundaries are not respected are able to seek support?	
D	Does the programme support people's own power and agency?	
	Total	

Comments

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2 = okay
1 = needs improving
0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

3	Does the programme talk about norms and values?	Score
A	Does the programme teach about how we perceive masculinity, femininity and sexuality in our society?	
B	Does the programme recognise the negative impact of (some) gender norms on the issue you are trying to address?	
C	Does the programme address positive and negative effects of norms and values on gender and sexuality of people?	
D	Does the programme provide reflection and information about norms and values in your specific cultural context(s)?	
	Total	

Comments

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2 = okay
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0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

4 Is the programme inclusive of gender and sexual diversity?	Score
A Does the programme differentiate between sex and gender?	
B Does the programme help your target group(s) to understand the range of diversity in gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations and sex characteristics?	
C Does the programme take specific effort to include LGBTIQ+ people?	
D Does the programme address wrong assumptions about gender and sexual diversity?	
Total	

Comments

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2 = okay
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0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

5	Does the programme empower women* and girls?	Score
A	Does the programme help women and girls to get increased autonomy over and understanding of their own bodies?	
B	Does the programme provide life skills to women and girls to build healthy, productive relationships?	
C	Does the programme give confidence and agency to women and girls to protect their boundaries?	
D	Does the programme empower girls to make informed choices with regards to sexual behaviour and reproductive health and rights?	
	Total	

Comments

*By women, we mean all people who identify as women

3 = very well
2 = okay
1 = needs improving
0 = not done
X = not applicable
Y = don't know

6	Does the programme engage men and boys?	Score
A	Does the programme challenge harmful norms about masculinity?	
B	Does the programme promote positive images of men and boys as caring and communicative?	
C	Does the programme actively engage men and boys as part of the journey towards gender justice?	
D	Does the programme recognise that rigid gender norms also harm men and boys?	
	Total	

Comments