

INSIDE OUT

GENDER EQUALITY SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

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ABBREVIATIONS

CV	Curriculum vitae
FGD	Focus group discussion
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
GESA	Gender Equality Self Assessment
GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
GBV	Gender-based violence
HR	Human resources
KII	Key informant interview
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PDQ	Program development and quality
RASCI	Responsible, accountable, support, consulted, informed
SC	Save the Children
SCI	Save the Children International
SOGIE	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States

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KEY TERMS

An understanding of the following terms is important when conducting a GESA:

Discrimination: The treatment of one individual differently than another because of that individual's membership in, or affiliation with, a protected category, or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates.

Equity: The process of being fair to all people, according to their respective needs. This might mean treating people differently to account for historical and social disadvantages.

Gender: A complex system of roles, expressions, identities, performances, and qualities that are given gendered meaning by a society and usually assigned to people based on the appearance of their sex characteristics at birth. Gender characteristics can change over time and vary between cultures.

Gender-based violence: Gender-based violence refers to all harm inflicted or suffered by individuals on the basis of gender differences. Its intention is to establish or reinforce power imbalances and perpetuate gender inequalities. GBV can affect females or males; however, it affects women and girls systematically and disproportionately. GBV includes, for example, child, early, and forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), sexual violence and abuse, denial of access to education and reproductive health services, economic deprivation, physical violence and emotional abuse.

Gender equality: Gender equality refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, when one sex or gender is not routinely privileged or prioritized over another, and all people are recognized, respected, and valued for their capacities and potential as individuals and members of society.

Gender identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither. How individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender norms: Gender norms are social principles and actions that govern the behaviours of girls, boys, women, and men in society and restrict their gender identity into what is considered to be an appropriate gender role at the time. As with gender roles, gender norms are neither static nor universal and change over time.

Gender roles: Gender roles are behaviours, attitudes, and actions society feels are appropriate or inappropriate for a girl, boy, woman, or man, according to cultural norms and traditions. Gender roles are neither static nor universal but vary between cultures, over time, between generations, and in relation to other social identities such as social class, socio-economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and health status. Gender roles may also shift with processes of urbanization or industrialization, and the fluid nature of gender roles requires careful and ongoing gender analysis.

Gender pay gap: A calculation of the difference in the average earnings for women and men.

Gender sensitive: Gender sensitive describes an approach or intervention in which the different needs, abilities, and opportunities of girls, boys, women, and men are identified, considered, and accounted for.

Gender transformative: When we use a gender sensitive approach and promote gender equality, while working with key stakeholders to identify, address, and positively transform the root causes of gender inequality with and for girls, boys, women, men, and non-binary individuals. Save the Children strives to use gender transformative approaches whenever possible across its programs, advocacy and organization.

Gender unaware: Gender unaware refers to approaches and interventions that are designed without any consideration of gender at all – they may inadvertently reinforce gender inequalities and miss opportunities in program design, implementation, and evaluation to enhance gender equality and achieve more sustainable project outcomes.

Intersectionality: Refers to the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

Racism: The belief that races have distinct cultural characteristics determined by hereditary factors and that this endows some races with an intrinsic superiority over others. Racism is the prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism towards members of another race on the basis of such belief.

Social Inclusion: Social inclusion is a process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.

OVERVIEW

WHY CONDUCT A GESA?

Advancing gender equality is central to accelerating change for all children, and we know that change must start from within. Gender disparities and discrimination permeate every aspect of our lives: our workplaces, our families, our faith institutions, our communities, healthcare, politics, and more. We believe that placing gender equality at the heart of our work will have a resounding impact on our organization and the lives of children and communities that we serve.

As an organization founded by feminist action, Save the Children has affirmed its commitment to gender equality. As we enter our second century of change, we are committed to the consistent application and resourcing of our global Gender Equality Policy, beginning with the systematic integration of gender equality approaches in our organization, our advocacy, our partnerships and in our programs.

The Gender Equality Self Assessment (GESA) serves as powerful mechanism that can catalyze change across our movement and help drive a deeper commitment and ownership to gender equality. Our vision is that the uptake of GESA will result in tangible changes across Save the Children, bringing us closer to being a global organization that embodies gender equality principles from the **inside out**.

WHAT IS A GESA?

The Gender Equality Self Assessment (GESA) enables Save the Children to self-assess its progress towards embedding gender equality - from the 'inside out'. It serves as a mechanism to assess, evaluate and reflect upon how gender equality is embedded within and throughout Save the Children's systems, processes, practices and programs, ultimately resulting in an action plan. This GESA guidance and toolkit build on existing resources to assess how commitment to gender equality is addressed across organizations and programs.

Objectives:

- To evaluate our organization's commitment and action to embed gender equality across all corners of our work
- To assess how gender equality issues are addressed in programs, advocacy and organizational systems, processes, operations and practices
- To understand the interplay of structural, organizational, individual and programmatic obstacles to equality and inclusion

The key outputs of the GESA are:

- A reflection on the status of gender equality within the organisation, specific to your office(s)
- A baseline for collective discussion and analysis
- A participatory process that builds organizational ownership for and agency commitment to gender equality and social inclusion
- A Gender Action Plan

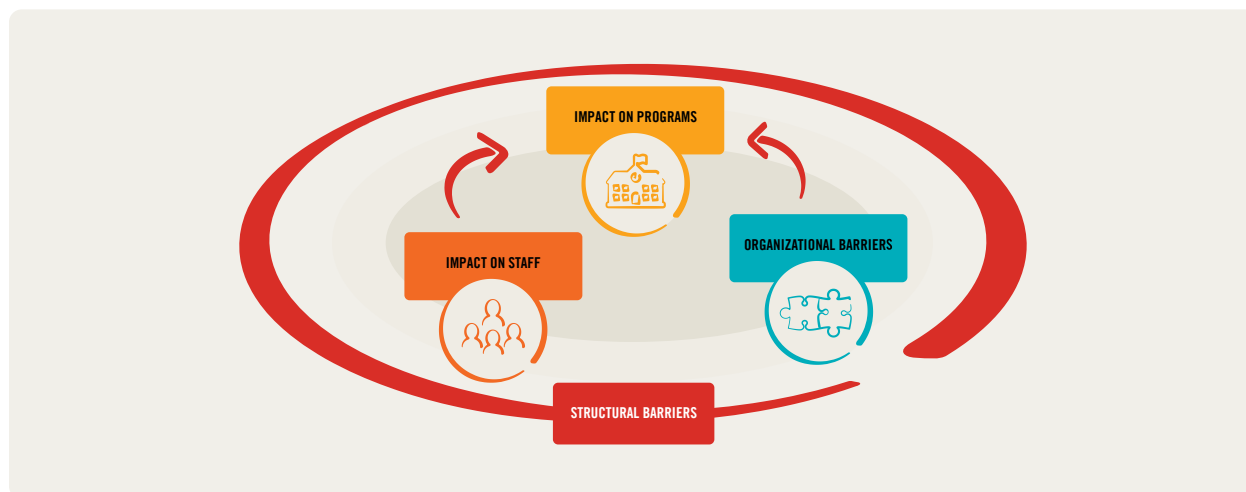
Save the Children offices should plan on conducting this GESA every 3-5 years, preferably prior to developing a new country strategy.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

In 2017, Save the Children adopted its Gender Equality Policy, which affirms that a focus on gender equality is fundamental to achieving our vision for all children. The policy states:

“Save the Children believes that it is critical to directly address gender discrimination and promote gender equality in order to ensure that no harm comes to children, and to advance our vision for a world where every child attains their equal right to survival, protection, development, and participation.”

We believe that transformative change can only be achieved if we take a comprehensive, dual-track approach to advancing gender equality, not only across our programmes and advocacy, but also in how we operate. Existing systems and structures play a significant role in exacerbating discriminatory and inequitable practices in our programs and within our own organization. Equally, adjusting these systems and structures to eliminate discriminatory and inequitable practices systemic inequality and discrimination can release pent-up power to enhance outcomes across all areas of our work.¹



WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This guidance is primarily intended for Gender Equality Advisors or focal points who are responsible for leading the GESA process. A key assumption of undertaking the GESA process is that the Save the Children office conducting the GESA has an individual who has sectoral responsibility for gender equality, or is the contact point on gender-related issues. This individual will need to lead the GESA process, guided by this document.

While this document includes a glossary of key terms, expertise on gender-related issues is needed to lead the GESA process. This includes being able to recognize key gender-related challenges facing the Save the Children office, having the capacity to communicate about the importance of gender equality to the organization's strategy, and making strategic decisions about the key issues to be prioritized in the GESA, including selecting which optional assessment tools and questions will be incorporated in the GESA. Following the completion of the GESA, the Gender Equality Advisor/focal point will need to ensure appropriate follow-up and monitoring occurs for the items identified in the action plan.

¹ Gender Equality Strategy, Save the Children US, 2019

SEVEN COMPONENTS OF A GESA

The GESA includes five core components (preparatory reading, survey, focus group discussions, interviews and action planning) and two optional components for offices that want to conduct deeper analysis (gender pay gap analysis and document assessment). The tools are designed to cover the key domains of the GESA - leadership, capacity, accountability, culture and safeguarding. These tools may be adapted to the country context. Before GESA is conducted, it is important to think carefully about the tool adaptation and ask the same questions each time an office conducts a GESA in order to track progress.

1. Preparatory reading

An initial analysis of literature helps to frame the tools and questions for inclusion in the GESA based on key contextual factors in an office/country. This preparatory phase (based on key questions outlined in GESA Toolkit, #1: Preparatory Reading), provides a snapshot of the main gender issues.

2. Survey

The survey can be conducted using hard-copy surveys or using an online survey tool (i.e. Survey Monkey or Microsoft Forms). The survey is an important way of ensuring that staff feel comfortable in anonymously sharing their opinions and perceptions.

3. Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) enable verification of the survey data, a deeper exploration of the key survey findings, delving behind the 'why' of the survey responses. They also provide an opportunity for staff to discuss their own experiences and to propose recommendations for how their Save the Children may address some of the gaps.

4. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are useful for triangulation. They involve meeting with a sample of staff across departments to dive deeper on areas uncovered in the survey and FGD findings, particularly around organizational culture. Similar to the survey, it is important to ensure staff know that their responses will be confidential and anonymous to ensure they will openly share opinions and perceptions without fear of retaliation.

5. Gender pay gap analysis (optional)

The gender pay gap analysis is an optional component of the GESA that provides additional insight. It should be led by Human Resources staff to ensure the calculations are done correctly and tracked over time. However, a Gender Equality Advisor or consultant can provide valuable technical insights, particularly in interpreting the results of the pay gap analysis.

6. Document assessment (optional)

The document assessment is also an optional component of the GESA. It involves answering key questions to assess how gender equality issues have been addressed across a sample of Save the Children policies, program documents, organizational strategies, and other relevant documents.

7. Action planning

The ultimate outcome of the GESA is the action plan to ensure accountability in implementing the recommendations of the GESA.

KEY DOMAINS OF THE GESA

Save the Children's GESA builds off InterAction's Gender Audit tool² expanding its Gender Integration Framework theory of change to include five domains: leadership, capacity, accountability, culture and safeguarding. These domains are outlined below:



Leadership

Ways in which leaders - at all levels of the agency - use their position of power, privilege and influence to demonstrate their support, leadership, enthusiasm for and commitment to championing gender equality within the organization and throughout programming and advocacy.



Capacity

Level of specialization needed for staff - across all levels of the organization - to integrate gender equality into their work, and the level of institutionalization of gender equitable and inclusive organizational processes.



Accountability

Mechanisms by which the agency determines the extent to which it is 'walking the talk' in terms of intentionally mainstreaming gender equality within organizational policies, procedures and practices and throughout programming & advocacy to achieve the highest quality standard.



Culture

The sum of intersecting attitudes, beliefs, customs, codes of behaviour, values and written and unwritten rules within an organization, all of which promote or undermine principles of equality and inclusion, ultimately influencing staff's experience within the workplace.



Safeguarding

Mechanisms by which the organization prevents and responds to all forms of sexual harassment, abuse, gender-based violence, exploitation and any abuse of power.

² Gender Audit Handbook, InterAction, <https://www.interaction.org/blog/gender-audit-handbook/>

INTERSECTIONALITY

The GESA process recognizes that gender needs to be analysed as intersecting with other power differentials, such as race, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE), refugee status, and others. While the primary focus of the GESA is gender equality, Save the Children views the tool as an important opportunity to engage in critical reflection on how other identities intersect with gender to create power or marginalize individuals and groups. Integration of these additional components is not as comprehensive as if one were to conduct a separate assessment focused on different aspects of diversity and inclusion – and should not be viewed as an alternative to a more targeted assessment. However, it serves as a useful starting point to think about how to more intentionally address the intersectional nature of gender inequality.

Additional questions have been integrated into the core survey, FGD and KII tools (see the GESA Toolkit), though it is acknowledged that not all Save the Children offices may have the capacity to explore these issues in depth. If an office does have the ability to explore issues beyond gender, the survey includes additional optional components; such as questions on how race/ethnicity, class, age, disability, SOGIE, and other factors may shape the opportunities, experiences, status, and treatment of Save the Children staff. These optional questions may not be relevant or appropriate for every Save the Children office, though we anticipate that over time, more Save the Children offices will integrate these issues in the GESAs they undertake.

PREPARING FOR GESA

Here are four steps to take before conducting the GESA:

- 1. Dedicate a Gender Equality Advisor/focal point to lead the process.** Expertise on gender equality issues is required to guide this assessment and monitor progress, therefore it is critical that someone is already in place to lead the GESA within the office.
- 2. Establish a Gender Action Team (GAT) to manage and support the GESA.** This action team can consist of a Gender Advisor/focal point, representatives from Human Resources, and staff from other relevant departments (where possible). The GAT will be responsible for working closely with senior leadership, communicating the aims and outcomes of the GESA across the organization, managing timeframes and budgets appropriately, communicating the results and supporting the Gender Equality Advisor/focal point in monitoring the action plan. The action team can consider utilizing the RASCI tool (GESA Toolkit, #2: Sample RASCI) to help clarify roles and responsibilities.
- 3. Ensure a dedicated budget and/or staff time. The GESA requires** financial resources and staff and/or consultant time. In the lead up to the GESA, develop a budget reflecting time commitment of the action team, travel, data analysis, consultant and other considerations (see GESA Toolkit, #14: Example Budget and #15: Consultant Scope of Work).
- 4. Develop a clear communication strategy.** Before conducting the GESA, members of the GAT will need to develop a plan for communicating the purpose of the GESA, the process, the value of conducting the GESA, and the actions that will be carried out within the organization as a result. The communications strategy should include a timeline for conducting the GESA and how this timeline and objectives of the GESA are communicated to staff (see GESA Toolkit, #11: Example Communications Plan).

INTERNALLY-LED OR CONSULTANT-LED PROCESS?

There are two main options for conducting the GESA. An internal GAT may be formed to lead the process, taking responsibility for adaptation of tools, conducting the initial contextual country/office analysis, and leading the FGDs, interviews and data analysis. Alternatively, a consultant may be hired to lead the process guided by the action team. The pros and cons of each of these approaches are listed below.

INTERNALLY-LED	CONSULTANT-LED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost, requires internal staff time • High level of knowledge of organizational structure, policies and key issues • Limited experience conducting GESAs • Lack of independence • May experience apprehension in challenging the status quo • Staff may not feel comfortable sharing personal opinions or experiences with an internal team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires budgeting for consultant fees • Limited knowledge of organizational structure, policies and key issues • Experience conducting GESAs • More independent • Less apprehension in providing constructive criticism of the organization

Alternatively, the team may adopt a hybrid approach and contract out for specific tasks of the GESA, such as adaptation of tools, data collection, analysis, etc.

MILESTONES/OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Once the decision is made to conduct the GESA, the GAT will need to establish a timeline for the process to ensure completion. Examples of key milestones to include in the timeline are listed below:

KEY MILESTONE	TIME
Discuss GESA with senior management and obtain approvals and budget	2-3 weeks
Develop TOR for hire of consultant (if applicable), including deciding on which optional components (if any) will be included in the GESA	2 weeks
Communicate to broader organization about GESA (there may be several communications throughout the process)	1 week
Adapt surveys, FGDs and interview guides as needed	2-3 weeks
Release survey to staff	2-3 weeks
Analyse survey data and prepare key data for presentation during FGDs and/or interviews	1 week
Conduct FGDs and interviews	1-2 weeks (depends on office size / # of locations)
Collate key recommendations and develop a draft Gender Action Plan, which is presented for discussion with senior management. Consider utilizing an Effort/Benefit Matrix (see GESA Toolkit, #18) to help prioritize recommendations	1 week
Draft report	2-3 weeks
Submit final report to senior leadership team	2-3 weeks
Communicate with broader organization about the GESA results and action plan	1 week
Conduct regular monitoring of gender action plan to ensure progress	Quarterly



Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

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