



Questions addressed during the webinar

- **In defining project indicators and definitions of success in the design process, did Pop Council engage girls in the target population, and if so, how?**

Karen: Yes, in each site we conducted a needs assessment that involved several focus group discussions each with different segments of adolescent girls – younger and older, in school and out of school, etc.

- **I would be interested to know how you control for the difference that group participants may be more confident and likely to trust interviewees with this information, in particular if they have come into contact with interviewees via participation in the group?**

Jeff: I'm not exactly sure what the context is for this question, but have a generic response: It is very challenging to effectively control for the comfort respondents may feel in different settings – generally the best we can do is to remain as vigilant to this as possible at all stages of data collection: when designing the data collection approach (basically ensuring that all measures are taken to ensure the comfort of respondents (including things like having enumerators be the same gender as the respondent, spending a lot of time on interpersonal skills and interview style during training, etc.); during data collection (checking in repeatedly with your data collection team to understand challenges they or the respondents are having); and during analyses (understanding how issues uncovered during data collection may bias your results).

Karen: I think I remember seeing this question pop up while I was speaking, and it was asking specifically about if girls in our program would be more “empowered” to open up to the interviewees about SGBV. Since our finding was that girls in the full program actually reported *less* experience of SGBV, then the issue of increased reporting after being sensitized about SGBV wouldn't apply. In addition to what Jeff wrote, it is best to have interviewers that are not part of the program, so people that the girls will not have seen before – this way there isn't the risk for bias that they would say what they think the staff from the program want to hear.

- **The big question I grapple with, given that qualitative data is critical to understanding the complex nature of change and power etc, how do you 'measure' qualitatively?**

Jeff: It is possible to ‘quantify’ some of the qualitative findings through careful coding of results in ways that identify the frequency with which themes emerge etc. , and this type of analyses are common. However, it is important to remember that qualitative and quantitative data have different strengths, which is why a mixed method approach is so appealing – this lets you measure things in a quantitative way (the strength of the methodology for the most part) and use qualitative data to understand the underlying reasons behind the patterns you see in the quantitative data (playing to the strengths of a more interpretive approach). It is worth remembering that there are many areas where quantitative data collection methods really struggle to get good information and that in many cases doing an entirely

qualitative study is the best approach, even if it doesn't provide the same type of 'measures' as a quantitative approach would.

- **As part of project monitoring specifically on outcome indicators, we usually conduct Focus Group Discussions with both men, women and most importantly children to understand how interventions impact on them. Is this approach part of applying gender sensitive M&E and how can we improve the process?**

Jeff: This approach *may* be part of a gender sensitive approach, but that really depends on whether the data collection approach, questions asked, etc. are done in a way that very deliberately takes gender and gender relations into account. A gender sensitive approach is more than who you talk to (though that is very important) – it really is about thinking very carefully about how gender influences your results, the validity of your data, etc. – and don't forget the importance of gender-based power dynamics – things like decision-making etc. are really important, but we won't know about them if we don't try to measure them.

- **How do you do M & E differently when you are dealing with women-only programmes? Should you include fathers, brothers, spouses in the M & E programme – or should you focus the M & E just on the women?**

Jeff: To a large extent that depends on what you are trying to measure or achieve in the program. Having said that, in most contexts other family members (particularly male family members) are very influential in terms of how women behave – if the program's goal is to measure change in women's behavior, it is really important to understand how others may influence that. Including men may also help explain unexpected findings – for example, Karen discussed the possibility that participation in microfinance programs could result in increases in intimate partner violence. The women themselves may have an idea of why that might be, but the men would be able to discuss that from a very different perspective. So in sum, I would usually recommend talking to men in many women-only programmes.

- **If every intervention / program is impacted by gender dynamics and if the program challenges the status quo (i.e. economic empowerment) then how do you go about justifying the potential violent backlash for challenging that status quo, which is what gender development / empowerment is about?**

Jeff: It is certainly true that one of the risks of challenging the status quo is violent backlash, and that is something that every program working on challenging gender norms must think very carefully about. In terms of justifying challenging the status quo, one must think about what the consequences are of *not* doing anything – very often the consequences are to continue living with quite fundamental violations of basic human rights, such as the right to control when one marries or when and to whom to have sexual relations. Programming should seek to make the case for why working with girls or women benefits everyone (men included) and where possible include men in some way. In terms of monitoring, it is critically important to think carefully about what adverse effects might result from program participation and to include measures of those in the monitoring system – this is an area where close collaboration with the field team is critical – they should be trained to look for evidence of adverse effects and know how to respond effectively and ethically.

Questions not addressed during the webinar

- **Could you give some examples on indicators you would use to conduct a gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation?**

Jeff: In terms of basic monitoring, I do think it is important to think beyond simply counting female and male participation and think more about the nature of that participation. One example of how this might work is in monitoring meetings where community members present their views/opinions on the project – the monitoring form might include things like number and type of participants, number male and female, etc. but could also include a very brief qualitative report from the person completing the form on whether men and women participated equally in the discussion, etc. In terms of evaluation indicators, my favorites are measures of decision-making ability, self-esteem, and gender norms/attitudes. In thinking about economic programs, decision-making questions (such as, when deciding how to spend your savings, who makes the decision: you yourself, yourself in consultation with your husband, you in consultation with other family members, your husband alone, other family members alone, other person alone? There are also multiple different measures of self-esteem (either as individual items or as part of a scale) and quite a few scales of gender attitudes (e.g. the GEM scale) that can be adapted to the particular circumstances of your program or evaluation. Even if changing these was not the focus of the program, these are likely to have an influence on how effective the program is (for example, all of these should be controlled for in any statistical analysis of the effectiveness of a microfinance/microcredit program, as the success of women's participation will depend on these to a very significant extent).

Karen: I would also add experience of SGBV

- **Could you give some examples on how you could measure changes in power dynamics?**

Jeff: I very much like questions around decision-making (as described in the examples above) and questions around whether the person's opinions are taken into account – for example, you can ask girls/women: "When making household decisions, do you feel your opinions taken into account: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never."

Karen: You can also ask about mobility – places where girls/women can go on their own, with permission, only accompanied, etc. If you are asking about sexual behavior, you can ask about decision making within sexual relationships.

- **How do we measure behavioral changes and gender impacts in interventions that are rather systemic focusing on market systems?**

Jeff: I have relatively little experience with these types of programs, but I think in these cases measurement is less of an issue than thinking very carefully about how gender might matter for these interventions. This can be in terms on input into the system (for example in agricultural systems, thinking of whether market access is the same for men and women farmers) or at the other 'end' of the system (does the market system developed reach men and women equally? Does it meet their needs? Are their needs different?). Once these theoretical issues have been thought out, developing measures for these will depend on other factors such as who data is being collected from, etc.).

- **Does gender-sensitive M&E differ for adolescent girls versus women? (i.e. In Karen's example, would older women also experience sexual harassment or was that an age-specific experience?)**

Jeff: While the principles of gender sensitive M&E apply to both adolescent girls and women and in general the same approach should be taken to thinking through how gender matters for your program and M&E, there are differences in how gender and gender inequality effects girls and women. In particular, adolescent girls face the overlapping issues related to gender and age inequities, both of which are disempowering – typically the lowest status person in a household is the youngest female. Adolescent girls are also particularly vulnerable due to the great significance placed in most settings on their transition to adulthood – because these are so linked to marriage and childbearing in many settings, this transition affects girls much more than boys. While these are in large part programming questions in the sense that all programming should think carefully about delivering gender and age-appropriate content, it matters for M&E as well so needs to be considered.

Karen: I think that there are also issues, especially when interviewing very young adolescents, about their level of cognitive development. Questions can't be very complicated and it's quite hard for them to think abstractly. There are also more ethical issue to take into consideration as they are younger and likely will need parental/guardian consent.

- **Are there lessons learned from gender-sensitive M&E to M&E on youth inclusion?**

Jeff: Yes, certainly – mainly that the way that gender impacts youth is different than for adults – the gendered expectations are different, but no less pervasive. As noted in the previous responses, programming and M&E need to be aware of the different ways that gender and age interact. There are many good evaluations of programs that have successfully included youth – these are your best source for specific lessons on youth inclusion.

- **If our goal is gender transformation and we want to design a program to help adolescents, both males and females, surface their basic assumptions and then to question these--being careful to guide which assumptions get questioned so that the fabric of society and culture isn't torn apart. How would we mention gender transformation when groups and societal processes are the units of change rather than individual self-efficacy?**

Jeff: This is a challenging question we all face – it is important to remember, however, that societies and social movements are composed of individuals who have collectively acted to bring about change, so the place to start is with individuals. These programs should of course be supported by efforts to change things at the structural level through working with government and other social institutions.

Selected resources:

Investing when it counts: Generating the Evidence base for policies and programmes for very young adolescents: Guide and tool kit

<http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/InvestingWhenItCounts.pdf>

Girl Centered Program Design

http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2010PGY_AdolGirlToolkitComplete.pdf

Measuring Success of Youth Livelihood Interventions: A Practical Guide to M&E

<http://www.gpye.org/measuring-success-youth-livelihood-interventions>

DCED Webinar on Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: <http://www.enterprise-development.org/page/wee-webinar>