

Guidelines for Integrating Sex and Gender Considerations in CAREG Projects

The Canada-Africa Research Exchange Grants (CAREG) program is managed by Universities Canada and funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Context

As stipulated in section 3.2 of the CAREG guidelines, all research funded by IDRC must address one or more of the Centre's four program areas: 1) Agriculture and the environment; 2) Global health policy; 3) Science and innovation; and 4) Social and economic policy. Woven through all four program areas is a focus on gender issues, ensuring that men and women can contribute equally to the search for solutions and benefit from advances.¹

The purpose of these guidelines is to enable researchers to better integrate sex and gender considerations in the research process and in project activities. Research partners are required to address sex and gender in the CAREG application form and in reporting.

Definitions

Sex refers to the biological and physiological traits that distinguish females and males, whereas gender refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men. Gender roles and expectations are learned, can change over time and are variable within and between cultures.

“Any research theme that deals with people ... makes gender relevant, whether people are subject of research, are participating in research or will be affected by the outcomes of research.” - DFID

“Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status and have equal opportunity to realize their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results.”ⁱⁱ Gender equality is vital to poverty alleviation. To tackle the causes and impacts of gender inequality and understand gender dynamics in development, sex and gender considerations should be integrated in all projects.

Integrating sex and gender considerations

Integrating sex and gender for the purposes of CAREG is to consider the concerns and experiences of women and men as an integral part of the research process and of project activities – from the design, to the management, implementation and communication of results. It is to recognize that women and men experience different conditions, opportunities and needs in life and are affected differently by social, political and economic processes.

Below are some guiding questions and tools to guide partners in addressing sex and gender in the research process and in project activities.

Guiding questions

- How are sex (biological) and gender (socio-cultural) considerations taken into account in your research process and accounted for in your project activities? If they are not, what is the rationale?
- Have your core research questions been considered through a sex and gender sensitive lens?
- Is there a reasonable balance of women and men involved in the project's management, research process and in community uptake?
- To what extent does your literature review of prior studies point to differences between women and men? What aspects of sex and gender were examined?
- To what extent have the perspectives and needs of women and men been taken into account in the research approach? To what extent will it be possible to collect sex disaggregated and gender data that is reflective of the needs of women and men? Is your sample size appropriate to capture sex disaggregated and gender data?
- To what extent does your research design account for ethical issues that might have particular significance with respect to sex and gender?
- To what extent has sex and gender been accounted for in capacity building?
- To what extent has sex and gender been accounted for in communications and application strategies?
- To what extent have differentiated outcomes and impacts of the research on males and females been considered? Are there clear, measurable and achievable results that would allow for sex and gender sensitive reporting?
- To what extent is there flexibility and openness to respond to new/innovative methods or opportunities to integrate sex and gender that present themselves during implementation?

Tools

To integrate sex and gender considerations in the research process and in project activities project partners are strongly encouraged to incorporate sex disaggregated data, gender sensitive indicators and a gender analysis (the following definitions are drawn from DFID's 2009 *Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming*).

"Accounting for both gender and sex in research has the potential to make the research more just, more rigorous and more useful". - CIHR

Sex disaggregated data: Counting numbers of men and women by sex (and further disaggregating by other relevant variables such as age, ethnicity, etc.) can help to better illustrate who is affected by the intervention, and facilitate a better understanding of the differentiated impacts upon women and men.

Gender-sensitive indicators: Use of gender sensitive indicators can help to analyse changes in gender relations over time and can facilitate more in-depth analysis than simple sex disaggregation.

Gender analysis: Gender analysis explicitly takes into account power relations and the different ways in which women and men of all ages experience their societies (e.g. cultural and political gender dynamics, division of labour, access to and control over resources etc). A gender analysis helps to minimise the possibility that research results are based on incorrect assumptions and stereotypes and should lead to research that considers the implications for women and men in the given context.

Conducting a gender analysis includes: gaining an understanding of gender relations; identifying barriers to women's participation; gaining an understanding of women's needs and interests and opportunities to support both; considering the differential impact of the project on women and men; establishing sex disaggregated baseline data, identifying expected results, indicators and risks.

End Notes

ⁱ *Innovating for Development: Strategic Framework 2010-2015*, IDRC.

http://www.idrc.ca/EN/AboutUs/WhatWeDo/Documents/12652071211Strat_FrameworkExSum.pdf

ⁱⁱ *An Integrated Approach to Gender-Based Analysis*, Status of Women Canada, 2004.

<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/SW21-124-2004E-2.pdf>

References

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