
CSSF Women, Peace and Security Helpdesk

Good Practice for Gender Equality Perception Surveys

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The Women Peace and Security Helpdesk, managed by Saferworld in partnership with Conciliation Resources, GAPS UK, University of Durham and Women International Peace Centre (WIPC), was established in December 2021 to increase capability across the UK Government on WPS policy and programming in order to make its work on conflict and instability more effective. If you work for the UK government and you would like to send a task request, please email us at wpshelpdesk@saferworld.org.uk. If you do not work for the UK government but have an enquiry about the helpdesk or this report, please email us at enquiries.wpshelpdesk@saferworld.org.uk

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Overseas Territories Justice Programme team

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Other UK government teams

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Not confidential



Summary

The purpose of this task is to research and collate good practice and tips in designing perception surveys in order to understand gender equality issues, including recommendations on safeguarding, meaningful participation and inclusion.

Because there are varying understandings of what 'gender equality' is, and what it might look like in practice, this paper includes a framework to conceptualise gender equality and inequality. This framework is applicable across multiple contexts and provides a mechanism for consistency across interventions.

This framework is also the foundation of an initial assessment, in order to prioritise the kinds of perceptions that the intervention wants to focus on, and to decide which changes to track over time. As such it functions as a means through which to conceptualise gender equality, and, in addition, as the basis for an initial assessment from which to build out an intervention.

The paper then outlines the ways in which organisations and institutions reflect the gender inequality in their contexts, and the ways that change may be resisted. Organisations and institutions responsible for public safety and security – policing, the military and so on – are often heavily masculinized, with concurrent implications for their policy and practice inside and outside the organization.

A further model is proposed as a framework for assessing the 'domains' of organisations and where there needs to be change for gender equality to become fully embedded. This model extends outwards from individual attitudes to include the kinds of prioritizing and resources dedicated to bringing about change, policies and practices, and the ways in which the organisation works externally.

The design of a perception survey is addressed through attention to the issues that have emerged through the assessment, and how these connect to the domains of organizational change. This section includes examples of questions that can be used in a perception survey across all the domains, depending on the outcome of the initial assessment.

Lastly, this paper outlines the core principles for operationalizing perception surveys, including guidance on data collection tools and methods, informed consent, and who can and should be involved as researchers and data collectors. It also includes guidance on key stakeholder engagement and involvement to support inclusion, triangulation and accountability.

Background and introduction

Many CSSF projects will aim to improve gender equality within institutions and organisations relevant to peace and security, such as government departments and ministries, militaries, and police forces. These projects may focus on the position, recruitment, retention and inclusion of women within these organisations, but increasingly also on the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of men who are, or are seen as, ‘gate keepers’ to women’s equality. To understand the extent of the challenge with regard to the collective attitudes and beliefs, the CSSF are interested in using perception surveys to establish a baseline, and to track how these attitudes might change over time, including as possible results of their projects.

This paper is structured to outline the core concepts of ‘gender equality’ within organisations and institutions, and to articulate the desired outcomes of interventions to challenge existing inequalities. It includes within it a conceptual framework of the mechanisms of gender inequality to help to ground the work within a shared frame of reference. The conceptual framework also helps to connect the issues of gender inequality *inside* an organization or institution, with the ways in which they perpetuate inequality *outside* the organization. This foundation will underpin recommendations for designing perception surveys that can be used to generate deep insights into institutional culture, measure change over time, and lastly, to document the kinds of resistances to change that emerge when there are shifts in gender dynamics. Documenting the ways that resistances materialize can provide valuable insights supporting the development of programming and interventions, refining the points of entry and clarifying the desired outcomes.

Organisations and institutions carry within them “deep structures”, the collection of values, history, culture and practices that form the often unquestioned ‘normal’ way of working for this institution or organization. For Gender At Work¹, there are four dimensions contributing to the deep structure, all of which need addressing for there to be transformational change. The four dimensions identified are: Individual Consciousness and Capabilities; Resources; Rules and Policies; Social Norms and Deep Structures. In the context of work with organisations and institutions, “gender transformational approaches” are interventions that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for women, including leadership, decision-making and authority, and addressing the power inequalities between men and women. The transformational aim is to fundamentally challenge structural gender inequalities and to remake organisations and institutions in more equitable ways, challenging the taken-for-granted gendered power dynamics and transforming the spaces within which men and women are working.

The purpose of this analysis as a mechanism towards gender-equitable organisations and institutions is not the sole aim; making institutions and organisations more

¹ Rao, A, Stuart, R & Kelleher, D (2000), ‘Gender At Work; Organisational Change for Equality’, Kumarian Press: Connecticut

gender-equitable internally is a necessary step towards bringing about more gender-equitable outcomes on the outside of an institution. In the context of policing, for example, these outcomes might include better responses to and convictions around violence against women and girls, resulting in greater confidence expressed by women and girls in reporting the violence perpetrated against them.

This paper will examine these four dimensions, drawing out how they connect to and reinforce the underlying inequalities of gender, and articulating the ways in which these elements also contribute to inequitable policing practices. It will also make visible the ways in which these elements are made and re-made in organisations, and the kinds of resistances to change that often emerge.

The analysis of gender inequality, and the insights into gendered organisations and institutions will form the basis of recommendations to inform best practice in designing perception surveys to measure change over time and to document the often uneven and messy processes of transformative change. The analysis of data captured over time can then be used to provide insights and learning across programme interventions.

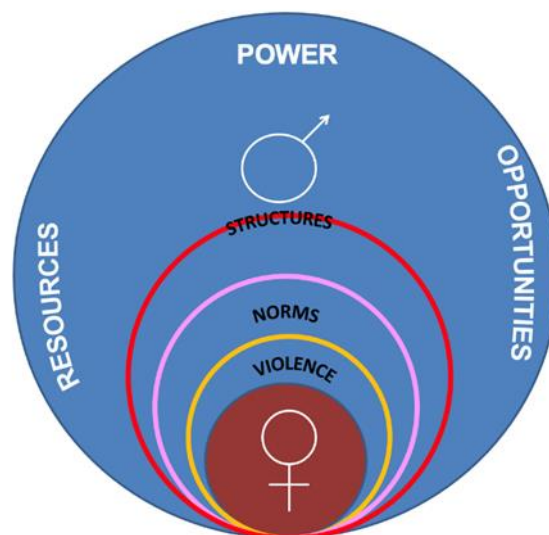
Findings and analysis

1

Conceptualising Gender Equality

A commitment to working towards gender equality in organisations and institutions requires a conceptual framework of the mechanisms of inequality, in order to provide a shared reference point and a model through which to make sense of how the dynamics function, the ways in which inequality is made and remade, and the degrees to which everyone in an organization or institution is participating in the maintenance of the inequalities. Women and men will experience, reflect on, and engage with these dynamics differently, and a core consideration for best practice in perception surveys is to disaggregate data by sex, so that the different perspectives can be considered side-by-side.

The model below² illustrates the ways in which gender inequality is maintained structurally and systematically. The blue circle represents the spaces that men occupy in the world, and their access to resources, power and opportunity. The red circle represents the relative spaces women occupy, with diminished and constrained access to resources, power and opportunity. The circles around the space occupied by women show the mechanisms through which this inequality is maintained; violence, social norms and social structures (policy, legislation and so on). It is important to note that violence in this framework is not only about the actions of individual perpetrators, but is situated within the social norms and narratives, and legitimized through policy and legislation.



² Roesch, E & Cole, H, (2014), 'Core Concepts in GBV', Unpublished

Violence against women and girls does not happen in a vacuum; social discourses shape the ways in which it is understood and how social responses function to minimize the harms. It is important to recognise that the different kinds of violence – economic, physical, sexual and emotional – are deeply interconnected and do not happen in discrete ways. Sexual violence is often connected to economic abuse and violence since sexual exploitation is a direct outcome of women's poverty and unmet resource needs. All violence includes emotional violence, and sexual violence involves physical violence. The recognition of the interconnections should also not undermine the recognition of the different dimensions of violence and the complexities of their interactions.

The table below provides some examples of the ways in which the violence experienced by women and girls is reinforced and explained by social norms and social narratives, and how this is further connected to social structures. The table outlines the different kinds of violence – economic, physical, sexual and emotional – and maps how they function to constrain the lives of women and girls, shaping and reinforcing gender inequality

	Individual Level	Social Norms	Social Structures
Economic Violence	Women are paid less than men, have fewer opportunities at work, are more likely to be in the grey economy and have less access to and control over resources. Women need to ask men for money and permission to use health services, education, other opportunities.	Men are considered the head of the household and responsible for their families. Men are the decision-makers over resources, own land, have control of 'family' budgets. Men decide which children can go to school and which do not. Men decide what opportunities women can take up and can prevent women's participation	Women do not inherit land or other resources and may be inherited by their brothers- or fathers- in law. Women cannot have bank accounts or access to credit without male co-signatories. Women need men's authority and permission to engage in trade, work, participation in financial opportunities etc
Physical Violence	Women may be hit by men, may have their possessions destroyed, may be forced to be sleep-deprived, may be unable to prevent physical violence against their children. May also be exposed to food deprivation, resource deprivation,	Women are responsible for the domestic work so will go to bed after the rest of the family and will get up first. Men are responsible for 'disciplining' their wives and children.	Men are not held to account for their physical violence against women, their actions are mitigated against by the use of social norms discourses, they are not prosecuted for their physical abuse.

	forced pregnancy, forced abortion	Men are entitled to expect domestic servicing and to express this physically, including when they believe their standards have not been met.	Men are considered the ultimate 'owners' of all household resources.
Sexual Violence	<p>Sexual violence and sexual assault within marriage; wives are forced to have sexual relationships with their husbands</p> <p>Women may be sexually exploited when they are unable to meet their economic needs; they may be sexually exploited by men for access to jobs, to education, to promotions etc. This may be direct or indirect</p>	<p>Husbands have sexual needs, good wives are supposed to satisfy their husbands. Women in marriage have a duty to be sexually available to their husbands or he may have affairs</p> <p>Women are prepared to sleep their way into good grades, good jobs or promotions and do not achieve these through their own hard work. Any woman who has been promoted or been successful must have got there through her relationships with men and not on her own merit.</p>	<p>Within in the criminal code, 'rape' only refers to sexual violence outside marriage. There is no provision for the legal recognition of rape within marriage.</p> <p>Men who sexually exploit women are responding to women's 'temptations' and are also trying to help women out.</p> <p>Men who start relationships with younger/ junior colleagues are rarely asked to leave or held to account for their abuse of power</p>
Emotional Violence	<p>Women's appearance, mothering, sexual reputations, intelligence and capabilities may be attacked</p> <p>Abusive and demeaning language will be very gendered, with words relating to women being the most powerful and the most offensive</p> <p>Women routinely denigrated in public and private spaces,</p>	<p>Cultural and social jokes and stereotypes rely on the denigration of women and the assumption that women are less competent, less skilled, and weaker than men.</p> <p>Social narratives blame women for the violence they experience and justify men's behaviours; she's a bad wife, or a</p>	<p>Legislation and policy grounded in assumptions about women's perceived weakness and men's perceived authority. Policies privilege men's experiences and expectations, and entitlements. Women expected to sustain family and domestic responsibilities, even while working. Limited maternity leave etc</p>

	sexualized 'jokes' and comments made in educational, workplace and public settings	terrible woman, or too ambitious, or neglectful of her family etc.	Little redress against sexual harassment at work in policy or in practice
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It is also important to note that the individual, social and structural levels are tightly bound together. For example, a woman heading a household is still living within the patriarchal social norms, and narratives, and within the patriarchal social structures and she would still be subjected to gender inequalities and violence. She is also likely to be the 'head of household' *only* because she is widowed, or divorced, or abandoned by a male partner; she will not be the 'head of household' if there is a man in the family. She will also be in patriarchal relation with her brothers, father and uncles. Her community will be policing her behaviour – and in particular her sexual reputation – in patriarchal ways, and her vulnerability and exposure to sexual exploitation, sexual violence and harassment will not be diminished. If she is working, she will also be working within patriarchal and masculinized systems, structures and expectations.

Globally, there are very few matriarchal societies, and those there are are small communities within patriarchal state structures. An individual's circumstance is affected by the wider context within which they live, and the ways in which the patriarchal norms and systems shape the spaces within which women and girls are living and working.

Similarly, organisations and institutions do not function outside the social norms of the cultures and contexts they are situated in. The same model can be applied to organizations and institutions to analyse the ways in women are marginalized and denied access to resources, power and opportunity within their workplaces.

The internal operation of organisations and institutions will often mirror the external social dynamics; in highly patriarchal, gender-traditional societies, the structures and practices of institutions will reflect these social values and reproduce them inside their own organisations. Within policing, for example, it is very likely within a deeply patriarchal society that sexual violence will not be a priority in terms of investigation and support for victims. It is also likely that women in the institution will be exposed to various levels of sexual harassment and abuse, including sexualized comments and 'jokes', exposure to pornography, and in some instances, sexual exploitation and abuse around work opportunities, promotions, access to training and so on. The internal and external practices of the institution mirror each other and, in addition, reflect the ways in which their social context functions³. Similarly, masculinized institutions such as militaries are also highly likely to reproduce gender inequitable

3 National Police Chief Council (2022), 'Police progress against new framework on violence against women and girls', March <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/police-progress-against-new-framework-on-violence-against-women-and-girls>; Francesca Gains and Vivien Lowndes (2016), 'How is Gender implicated in institutional design and change? The role of Informal institutions: A case study of Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales', December <https://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/schools/soss/politics/research/uic/WorkingPaper6-GainsLowndes.pdf>; Abena Asefuaba Valleyab and Molatokunbo Seunfunmi Olutayoa (2020), 'Gender, masculinity and policing: An analysis of the implications of police masculinised culture on policing domestic violence in southern Ghana and Lagos, Nigeria' <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590291120300668>

values and behaviours, including the sexualization and sexual harassment of women in those institutions⁴.

The circular model included above can be applied as a way to analyse the socio-cultural environment, and also the internal values and culture of an organization/ institution. Police forces where there are high levels of sexual harassment of women in the force are unlikely to be responding well to reports of sexual violence from the communities they serve. Equally, policing that does not prioritise gendered violence is indicative of an institutional/ organizational culture that is likely to be patriarchal at best and at worst actively hostile to the women working within it.

In order for there to be significant transformational change, the routine and embedded practices of violence – economic, physical, sexual, emotional – against women must be understood as an intrinsic part of gender inequality and not as a separate, discrete issue. Mapping the manifestations of this violence, and the ways in which it is legitimized, both socially and within an institution, can be the foundation for designing perception surveys that bring insight into the deeper and more nuanced ways in which institutions replicate and reproduce gender inequality.

Recommendations for best practice

- A. Disaggregate all data by sex in order to provide opportunities for analysis of the gaps between women's and men's experiences, perspectives and perceptions
- B. Map the ways in which gender inequality functions socially and institutionally using the framework above in order to identify entry points and "keyhole issues" that offer insights into the wider picture. Make sure that the mapping covers economic, physical, sexual and emotional violences.
- C. Include attention to the ways in which institutions and organisations work 'outside' themselves; in policing, for example, how are cases of VAWG dealt with? When policing work on domestic violence, or sexual violence, is not a priority, or when there is little commitment to best practice, this is a reliable indicator of the gendered dynamics within the organization/ institution. Equally, when practice is good and there is a demonstrable commitment to best practice, this too is a useful indicator of the likely dynamics within the organization.
- D. Use perception surveys with communities to explore how they see the practices of the organization/ institution in gendered ways.

4 US department of veteran affairs (n/d), 'Military Sexual Trauma Fact Sheet', <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886109914555219>
https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/mst_general_factsheet.pdf

2

Mapping Gender Inequality as the Baseline for Measuring Change

In order to design a perception survey, it is important to prioritise which particular areas are important in a given context, and to articulate the kinds of changes that the intervention is intending to bring about. The ways in which gender inequality is manifest and the ways in which it is justified and enabled vary widely between cultural contexts, and an initial mapping can be very helpful in providing insights into the areas of particular concern in a specific place.

The model above can be used to map the specific cultural context of the intervention; it does not need to be fully comprehensive in order to provide insights into the ways in which gender inequality manifests and is reproduced in a particular context. In some circumstances, it may be helpful to invite women's rights activists and women's organisations to participate as they will have insights and experiences around the nuances of violence, in particular, that may be useful in understanding the particular issues facing women within a context. It may also be productive to use this model with women *inside* the institutions and organisations as their experiences will have more texture. Having one analysis from outside the organization, and one from inside provides a valuable frame for comparison, and for making the links between how an institution reproduces the cultural norms of gender inequality inside itself.

A further route to deciding the focus of perception surveys can be around the ways in which VAWG is policed and managed within a criminal justice system; engaging in a rapid overview of how VAWG is reported, the levels of 'no-criming', the levels of prosecutions and the levels of convictions can provide useful insights into the levels of importance given to these issues and the seriousness with which they are addressed. Giving consideration to the ways in which VAWG is addressed or not by the institution – and which kinds of VAWG get attention and which do not – can be a useful way to prioritise what kinds of violence are minimized or normalized outside an organization, and therefore likely to be manifesting inside an organization, which in turn provides pointers for where a perception survey might be most productively focused. This then allows for the perception survey to be used over time, as a monitoring tool, to track the ways in which attitudes have, or have not, changed, and what this means for adapting and revising the intervention.

An initial assessment, then, could include the following steps:

- A. Use the model above to map the kinds of violences women and girls experience in economic, physical, sexual, and emotional domains, and to articulate the ways in which these violences are justified, explained, diminished and coded into policy and legislation.
- B. Use the tool with women's rights organisations and women's services, to harness their perspectives and insights, and to have the opportunity to hear the nuances particularly at the social level.
- C. Use the tool with women inside the institution to hear their insights and perspectives on their experiences inside the institution and to connect their experiences to the wider social and structural context.

- D. Do a rapid overview of the ways in which issues of VAWG are responded to in policing, and in the criminal justice system more widely; what is the priority? What are the levels of prosecutions and convictions? What is the gap between what women's organisations work with and what is formally reported?
- E. Use the findings from the 2 assessments and the overview to prioritise areas for attention in a perception survey and the particular mechanisms of inequality that are relevant to this context. Ensure that all four domains are represented in the survey.
- F. Design the perception survey around these priority areas and use this as both the mechanism for the baseline and for measuring change over time. It may also be a useful mechanism for making visible the kinds of resistances to change that are common when there are efforts towards changing gender inequality
- G. Use perception surveys with wider communities – men and women separately – to gain insights into how the organization is understood externally, and to provide a mechanism of triangulation against the self-reports inside an organization.

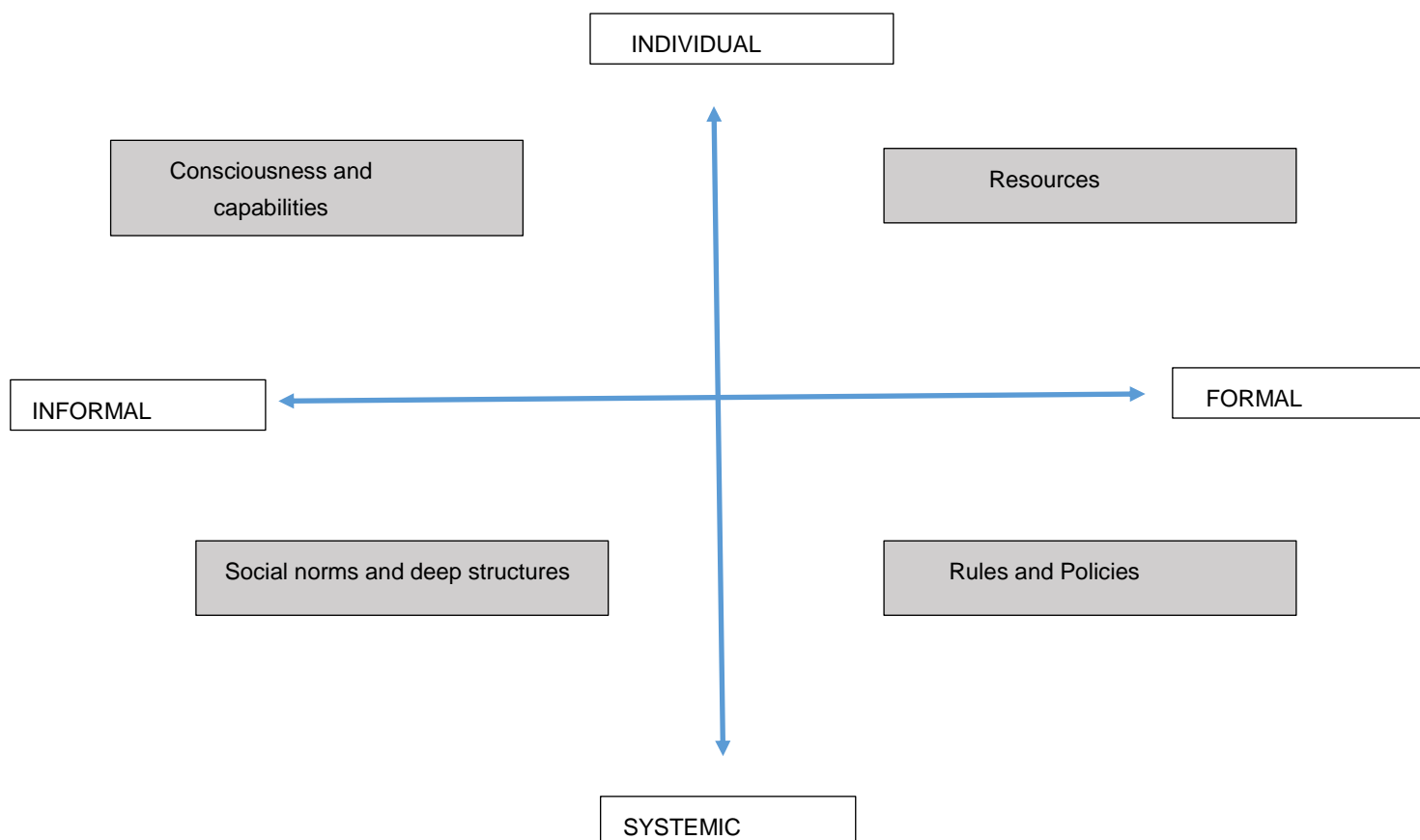
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Gendered Organisations and Institutions

Gender At Work⁵⁶ are an international feminist knowledge network working to end discrimination against women and to build cultures of inclusion. They are particularly concerned with the ways in which power operates in organisations and institutions to reinforce inequality and to continue to marginalize women. The Gender at Work framework is particularly useful in considering how to bring about institutional change and how to work towards that change being fully transformative, rather than grounded in individuals. Their work has supported multiple organisations globally in their pursuit of change in organizational cultures and practices. Oxfam, for example, have used this framework inside their own organization and with global partners to support their work on Gender Justice, and to bring alignment between expressed programming aims and organizational practices.

⁵ Rao, A, Sandler, J, Kelleher, D & Miller, C (2016) 'Gender At Work; Theory and Practice for 21st Century Organisations', Routledge: London

⁶ Gender at work, <https://genderatwork.org>



Paying attention to all the quadrants in an organization or institution can help to bring to the surface the issues that are particularly difficult in a specific organization. It may be, for example, that resistance is coming from a particular quadrant, and that this would be a significant entry point into working towards change. It may also reveal where there are tensions in an organization; if there are clear policies, for example, promoting gender equality, where are the obstacles to implementation? Are they not fully or adequately resourced, or is it about social norms and deep structures? Being able to identify the domains of resistance can help to clarify where useful attention and constructive intervention might have greatest impact.

Quadrant 1: Individual consciousness and capability

This domain is asking about the individuals in an organization; are they aware of their rights, do they support gender equality, are they willing and able to take action to make their organization more gender equitable? Do leaders understand what gender equality might look like in their organization and do they model best practices? What are the experiences of men and women, individually, and where are the tensions?

In some organisations, it may become clear that women are well aware of their rights and are pushing for change while at more senior levels, the individuals making key decisions do not see it as a priority or as a desired outcome.

Not all learning in this quadrant is transformational; it may be that there can be enough attitudinal change to remove some of the blocks without there being full

transformation. At times, it may be enough for there to be sufficient learning to end resistance to change.

Quadrant 2: Resources

This domain is concerned with the resources available to support change towards gender equality within an organization. This might include things like access to leadership and decision-making spaces, budgets, mechanisms of protection against sexual harassment and violence. It might also include resources around changing the gender pay gap, mentoring women into positions of leadership, introducing family-friendly working policies, and so on. The commitment of resources takes the work beyond words and into actions. The use of the resources may also be a mechanism for monitoring; how have the resources been used, what has the take-up been, what has the impact of those resources been.

Quadrant 3: Rules and Policies

Within organisations there are two layers of consideration around policies. First, what are the existing policies and how do these contribute to or constrain work around gender equality? What policies support the extension of women's access to resources, power and opportunity? What policies actively mitigate and protect against violence? Are there, for example, commitments to quotas to increase women's participation in leadership?

The second layer involves giving attention to the ways in which policies and rules are applied; one of the difficulties with work around gender equality is the existence of policies that are not implemented, that are honoured more in the breach, that are not usable by women who need them. There may be many reasons for this, including the failure to commit resources to the implementation, or a patchy socialization of the policies and rules, or a lack of commitment in leadership positions to implementation, including not fully implementing them, or corrupting the processes.

Quadrant 4: Social norms and deep structures

Gender carries strong power and identity dynamics, and this means that often the deep structure is a pattern of the most profound, mutually reinforcing, stated and unstated norms and practices that govern gender relations. Insights into this quadrant may be strengthened through use of the data coming out of the gender inequality mapping tool outlined in the first section of this paper. In organisations and institutions, this might include assumptions about which gender is most appropriate for which kinds of roles, who is considered a priority for opportunities and promotion, whose work is recognized, who is taken seriously and who is not⁷, and the ways in which family life is taken – or not – into consideration for staff. Policies and practices around family life are particularly important in their impact on gender inequality, since this is the point of intersection between the personal and the professional. Where women are carrying the bulk of the responsibility and work of domestic and family life, organizational policies and practices may exclude women from opportunities when they do not take into account the demands and expectations made on women outside their work. Gender asymmetries of responsibilities in the domestic sphere mean that organisations and institutions can and do rely on the unpaid work of

⁷ Enloe, C (2013), 'Seriously! Investigating Crashes and Crises as if Women Mattered', University of California Press: Berkeley

women to enable men to participate in the workplace (childcare, care for other family members, other reproductive labour) while women are constrained by these same expectations. Organisations and institutions committed to gender equality need to consider the invisible external labour of women and develop policies and practices that support women's participation in work opportunities. This may include, for example, commitments to support access to childcare, leave allowances that include recognition of care responsibilities, and a culture of reward for men who take up these responsibilities to encourage more equitable participation in both work and family life.

Many of these values, practices and assumptions are not necessarily visible to those who are enacting them, and these may be driving many of the issues in other quadrants.

The boundaries between the quadrants are porous, and change in one domain is likely to influence change in other domains. For there to be consistent, sustainable change, all the quadrants need to have been shifting together, to reinforce each other and to reshape the scaffolding of an organization/ institution. Perceptions of change in these quadrants can provide useful insights into the ways that changes are socialized, understood, and applied across an organization.

Recommendations for best practice:

- A. Include questions in perception surveys related to each quadrant
- B. Ensure that questions include hypotheticals, and in addition, hypotheticals that relate to the advice a respondent might give to a colleague
- C. Use the perception surveys to articulate the gaps and incongruences between perceptions and realities, and to identify priorities for intervention and points of entry into the organizational conversation. There may, for example, be good policies around reporting sexual harassment and the perception may be that these policies either do not exist or are not implemented effectively. Alternatively, there may be policies in place which are not adequately resourced to be effectively operationalized. Identifying the 'mismatches' as well as the aligned perceptions and realities can provide useful insight into where the work needs to happen, and where interventions can be more impactful.

4

Gender Equality, Inclusion and Safeguarding

In September 2020, the UK Government published its cross-departmental strategy '*Safeguarding Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment Within the Aid Sector*⁸' outlining the commitments of all departments involved in Overseas

⁸ UK government, 'UK strategy: safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment within the aid sector', <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-strategy->

Development Assistance (ODA), and the standards expected of all actors. The four long-term Strategic Shifts across the sector are:

1. Ensure support for survivors, victims, and whistle-blowers; enhance accountability and transparency; strengthen reporting; and tackle impunity
2. Incentivise cultural change through strong leadership, organizational accountability and better human resource processes
3. Adopt global standards and ensure they are met
4. Strengthen organizational capacity and capability across the international aid sector to meet these standards

The Strategy recognizes that sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH) are both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality and a major obstacle to women's participation in public life, leadership, and professional advancement, as well as contributing to a conducive environment for breaches in good safeguarding practice. The strategy also recognizes that issues of safeguarding are a major concern *within* organizations and institutions as well as in relation to the services and programming they deliver, which contributes too to slower paces of change. It is extremely difficult, for example, to recruit and retain women into traditionally masculinized organisations and institutions and to enable their skills, perspectives and experience to improve the work if those women are faced with gendered hostility, gendered and sexualized bullying, and they are not adequately safeguarded within their organisations and institutions.

Creating and sustaining more inclusive and safe organisations is grounded in safeguarding practice; perception surveys can be a useful tool in understanding and monitoring safeguarding against SEAH, and in working towards an enabling environment for women. Aligned with four commitments in HMG's Safeguarding Strategy, using perception surveys to explore the ways in which internal issues can be reported, the degrees of experienced safety in reporting and confidence in the processes, and the levels of impunity of perpetrators can be a highly effective mechanism generating insights and identifying points of entry and priorities for intervention. Using the Gender At Work model to frame questions around safeguarding can also help to identify organizational/ institutional gaps; are there adequate resources, for example, dedicated to safeguarding inside the organization? Do policies, procedures and practices reflect best practice and to what degree are they successfully socialized and operationalised? Do staff know what the policies are, where to find them, and how to use them?

A further consideration in terms of both inclusion and safeguarding is to ensure that the intersections between gender inequality and other inequalities and discriminations are fully recognized and accounted for. It is essential to bring a gendered lens to issues of disability, race, religion, sexuality and so on. Women with disabilities will face different constraints, discriminations and exposure to violence than men with disabilities, for example, and women with family members with disabilities are likely to be much more responsible for the provision of care, with the consequent implications for their participation in the workplace and in public life.

Recommendations for best practice:

- A. Ensure that questions in the perception survey include attention to issues of intersectionality between gender and other inequalities and dynamics of exclusion and discrimination
- B. Link questions related to the four quadrants of the Gender at Work model to the commitments in HMG's Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment Strategy to ensure that Safeguarding is fully integrated into the survey
- C. Ensure that questions in the perception survey are linked to desired outcomes and that proxy examples are used to invite transparent responses

5

Resistance to Gender Equality

Inequalities in gender relations benefit men, primarily, directly and indirectly. These inequalities may also not be fully visible to everyone, and/ or may be justified and explained through cultural and social norms, including religious teachings. As such, resistance in organisations and institutions may be more or less organized, and more or less conscious and intentional. For some, changes may be resisted because they go against trusted, long-standing social norms, or religious expectations, and for others, the resistance may be more explicitly connected to a desire to ensure that women remain subordinated.

There are many possible forms of resistance to gender equality work, and these may be more or less visible, depending on the kinds of resistance and the ways in which power operates within an organization/ institution. Senior leadership may deprioritize attention to the issues, find reasons not to allocate resources, create parallel structures for men's advancement. There may also be a genuine or a false claim not to understand what gender equality means, and the ways in which it might be brought about; for some, an endless cycle of 'training' and 'capacity building' is the most effective way to resist change. In other instances, women may try to exercise their rights through policy mechanisms and find themselves mired in delays, obfuscation, protracted processes, and isolated activity. There may also be claims, demands or expectations from men that if women have some additional support, "equality" means that men should have it too.

Using perception surveys to try to track and document the kinds of resistances that women are routinely experiencing can be a helpful way to understand the direct and indirect mechanisms that are interrupting work towards gender equality. They can also provide insight into the social norms and narratives that uphold gender inequality and how these are deployed to disrupt progress. This, too, is data that is not only useful for helping to understand the constraints, but in addition, helps to inform the entry points for intervention and programme design.

Particular attention needs to be paid to the ways in which women participate in upholding patriarchal norms and values as a mechanism of sustaining their relative

safety in an inequitable organization. Navigating inequitable social worlds and inequitable organisations and institutions can be complex for women, and many women develop sophisticated strategies to survive within them, and to find (often circuitous) routes to their ambitions and goals. There may well be more safety and greater rewards for women who do not challenge inequalities and it is important to pay attention to which women are challenging the inequitable norms. It is also important to pay attention to the ways in which VAWG work is framed and understood in the organization/ institution; if this is not taken seriously, or seen as something to be pushed to women as a low-status task or area of work, this is an indicator of wider gender inequalities inside the organization.

Institutions and organisations that are involved in the exercise of power through security (including policing) tend to be grounded in masculinized models of values, practices and behaviours⁹. For women to succeed in these environments, it may be necessary for them to adopt patriarchal and/ or masculinized behaviours and priorities, and to demonstrate themselves to be aligned with the deep structures of patriarchy. While these women may be allowed to progress in the organization/ institution, their promotion and visibility cannot be presumed to be an indication of progress towards gender equality. They may have been promoted as part of a tokenistic gesture that functions as a kind of resistance; their presence is unthreatening to the deep structure of the organization/ institution and they may also be used as visible evidence of 'change' when in reality, none of the resourcing, policy and deep structures have shifted.

Recommendations for best practice:

- A. Frame questions that enable the disclosure of resistance and invite the kinds of social norms and narratives that support resistance
- B. Use proxy questions and hypotheticals to illustrate the potential use of women as tokens to suggest change
- C. Invite reflection on which women, in which circumstances, are permitted and enabled to succeed in the organization/ institution, and use this data to reflect on the gender dynamics that this upholds.

6

Re-making gendered organisations: layers of change

Within institutions and organisations, and in relation to the quadrants identified by Gender At Work, there are layers of possible change. Using perception surveys to explore these in more depth can help to guard against surface level or tokenistic change; it is common, for example, for there to be training and capacity building at an

⁹ Enloe, C (2000), *Maneuvers: The Militarisation of Women's Lives*, University of California Press, Berkeley; Halford, S & Leonard, P (2001), *'Gender, Power & Organisations'*, Palgrave; Basingstoke

individual level, leading to individual members of staff understanding the language they need to use, without there being systemic, structural change. It is also common for there to be tokenistic promotions of women, which are then used as examples of progress, while, again, the deep structures of inequality have not changed.

After analysis of the context of VAWG, the norms and structures that support it, and the ways in which these are manifest and reproduced within organisations and institutions, perception surveys can be used to explore and capture the specific dimensions of change. Proxy indicators and questions can be very helpful in illustrating the ways in which there is systemic, transformational change and the ways in which there are less sustainable changes. One of these questions might, for example, concern the experiences and reputations of those who are trying to change an institution from within; are they respected? Are they protected? Are they taken seriously? What are their spheres of influence?

Equally, attention to the invisible work of those inside organisations who are pushing for change can be powerful in both acknowledgement of the unpaid labour of those who are advocating for gender equality, and the invisibility of the impacts of this advocacy amongst those who are resisting. Proxy questions can help to surface the internal contradictions and spaces of tension within organizational and institutional systems, illuminating the potential for clashes of principles, competing priorities and the points at which actions for change meet resistance. Perception surveys need to include opportunities for those who are pushing for change to express the kinds of resistances they face, and for those who are resistant to be able to express their reservations and their issues with their colleagues. It can be extremely helpful to have the tensions illustrated as this can provide insights into the sources of the issues; whether, for example, it is a question of tone or approach, whether it is a question of deeply held cultural norms, whether it is a question of fear of potential losses as women gain more opportunities and decision-making positions.

A further consideration might be to explore the sense of hopefulness and optimism of those inside organisations and institutions who are pushing for change. Their perceptions of the pace and significance of change, and their reports of their well-being, their stress, the resistances they face, may provide valuable insights into the challenges they encounter, the attitudes and values they are engaged in trying to change, and where their efforts have seen success. These kinds of exploratory questions can be aligned to the quadrants to reinforce the understanding of where the issues are, where the tensions are, and where there have been successes that might be leveraged.

7

Recommendations and best practice in perception surveys

The recommendations included in each section above form the basis of the structure for a perception survey outlined below. This table outlines the sections of a

perception survey around gender equality and examples of questions that may be helpful to use and/or adapt to specific contexts.

Appropriate Language

All perception survey language needs to be clear, concrete and specific. Every effort must be made to ensure that ambiguity and potential for misunderstanding is minimized and that the terms are familiar, readily utilised and widely understood. There should be no acronyms or abbreviations that may not be easily understood. Language in relation to sexual violence in particular, and especially issues like sexual harassment, must be direct, clear and transparent with no room for minimizing or deflection. It may also be helpful to include a glossary at the beginning of the survey to provide clarity in the event of uncertainties.

Sections	Sample Questions, with Safeguarding and Inclusion referenced throughout
Community perceptions (men)	<p>If a woman in your community was sexually assaulted, where would you suggest she seek support?</p> <p>If a woman reports violence to the police, how do they usually respond? What do they do with the woman? What do they do with the perpetrator?</p> <p>When a woman is beaten or assaulted by her husband, how do the police respond?</p> <p>What do you think is an appropriate response, and what would you think the police should do in these circumstances?</p>
Community perceptions (women)	<p>If a woman in your community was sexually assaulted, where would you suggest she seek support?</p> <p>If a woman reports violence to the police, how do they usually respond? What do they do with the woman? What do they do with the perpetrator?</p> <p>When a woman is beaten or assaulted by her husband, how do the police respond?</p> <p>What do you think is an appropriate response, and what would you think the police should do in these circumstances?</p>
Threats and realities of violence	<p>What kinds of violence do women and girls experience in your community?</p> <p>What do you see women and girls doing to protect themselves?</p> <p>How do you think women and girls can better protect themselves?</p>

	<p>What do you think the police could or should do to reduce the violence that women and girls face?</p> <p>How effective do you think the police are at protecting women and girls from all kinds of violence?</p>
Quadrant 1; Consciousness and capability	<p>How much time and attention do you think the police give to issues of violence against women and girls?</p> <p>How often do you think individual police staff understand the issues of violence against women and girls?</p> <p>What kinds of violence do they understand and respond to well? What kinds of violence do they not understand?</p> <p>How much do you think the police care about violence against women and girls?</p>
Quadrant 2; Resources	<p>How much time and resources do you think the police dedicate to violence against women and girls, compared to other kinds of crime?</p> <p>How much time and resources do you think they should dedicate to violence against women and girls?</p> <p>What do you think are the most prevalent crimes against women and girls? How much police time do you think is spent on these? What do you think would be an appropriate balance?</p> <p>What experiences have you heard about in relation to the resources and time that the police can commit to these issues?</p>
Quadrant 3; Rules and Policies	<p>What are the police rules and expectations in relation to how men and women behave within the police?</p> <p>What happens to men in the police if they are involved with any kind of violence against women? If they are involved in prostitution, for example, or if they are known to beat their wife?</p> <p>What happens if someone makes a complaint about a specific officer? Where would you report your concerns and what would you expect to happen?</p> <p>How do the police support staff who are pregnant, or who are responsible for the care of young children or the elderly?</p> <p>What kinds of safeguarding policies do the police have and how do you think they are implemented?</p>
Quadrant 4; Social Norms and deep structures	<p>How easy is it for women to be promoted within the institution?</p>

	<p>How do women succeed in working their way through the ranks?</p> <p>What kinds of policing work are women mostly involved with?</p> <p>How do male police officers work with women officers?</p> <p>What kind of respect do communities have for women police officers?</p> <p>What is your experience of women working with the police? What have you heard from others?</p>
Potential resistances	<p>Do you think that communities trust women in the police? What are your concerns about women in policing?</p> <p>Are there any kinds of work that you think women shouldn't be involved in, or aren't suited to be doing?</p> <p>What happens to women who are ambitious for promotion within the police?</p> <p>What do you think happens to women who are successful in the police? What have you heard about the difficulties they face?</p>
Tokens of gender equality	<p>What do you know about women in the police? Where do you see them?</p> <p>How much do you think women in the police are bringing change for women in communities?</p> <p>How much do you think women in the police are bringing change within the police force?</p> <p>What would you like women to do and to be able to do within policing?</p>
Layers of meaningful change	<p>What changes have you seen in policing practice?</p> <p>What changes would you like to see?</p> <p>What changes do you think will be difficult to implement?</p> <p>What changes do you have concerns about? How might we mitigate against these concerns?</p> <p>What do you think communities are concerned about?</p>

Data Collection

Data collection can happen in a number of ways depending on the context and the environment of the organisation. Surveys can be administered in multiple ways, including online which can help with anonymity and confidentiality. In contexts where gender equality is a particularly sensitive issue and something that is difficult for

individuals to talk about, an online approach might help to provide an environment where it is possible to be more honest. Online individual surveys are written research instruments and not verbal ones, and this mitigates against the possibility of being overheard. In addition, this is data collection within a workplace and therefore not something that will be done on personal or home computers; organizational privacy and security will be applied to this data as much as it is to any other confidential or sensitive data.

In other contexts, 1-1 interviews may provide more opportunity for discussion and be a more fruitful approach. These 1-1 interviews should also be anonymized, and should take place in spaces where they cannot be overheard in order to provide more privacy. These interviews should also take place within work time, and as part of people's work responsibilities. Where there are going to be 1-1 interviews, these should be presented and implemented as a whole-team exercise. They should not be opt-in or opt-out as a process; making this a whole-team exercise not only ensures the diversity of opinion and perspective, but also mitigates against the potential for individuals to be singled out and for there to be resistance outside the process.

Lastly, focus group discussions can be a productive way to generate wider discussions and to explore some of the issues in more detail. FGDs inside the organization should be planned with care: they should be disaggregated by sex; they should pay attention to issues of hierarchy and professional status since it is hard for junior staff to be fully honest in front of more senior staff; they should have clear and explicit ground rules around privacy and confidentiality; they should be focused around specific themes and issues; they should be used only in contexts where there is already interest in and buy-in for work around gender equality and a significant number of staff already engaged in working on it. In contexts and organisations where there is more resistance and more undermining of the work, or where there are only a few identifiable staff involved in the work, focus group discussions are not appropriate and will likely generate more difficulties for the work and the individuals involved in it.

Focus group discussions can be used with women's rights organisations and women's services since they are much less likely to experience negative consequences as a result of their participation, and there can be rich data in their discussions. Similarly, with work with communities, there may be significant value in the discussions in focus group discussions around their perceptions in relation to the organization and institution. With community groups, there should be disaggregation by sex, women's groups and men's groups as women may not speak freely in groups with men, and men may dominate the content of the discussion.

Data collection can be planned according to the context and the needs of a specific institution and community, as a series combining a mix of groups and individual interviews around the same questions. Sequencing is also important; the initial assessments to help to shape the perception surveys can be done first with women's groups and communities, and then with staff inside the institution/ organization so that the wider context is initially understood before there is enquiry into how these issues manifest inside an organization/ institution. This is good practice in terms of ensuring that key stakeholder perspectives and experiences inform and shape the design of the survey.

When the design and content of the survey has been finalized, the mix of groups and individual interviews can be decided according to the context. The context, and the specific issues around gender inequality in that context, will shape the most

appropriate ways to operationalize the perception survey and to set a frame of reference for on-going monitoring of change over time. Sequencing around on-going data collection with communities and women's groups can also be planned in order to provide comparators against the initial assessment, as well as triangulating the data from inside the organization. It is important to sustain this kind of triangulation in order to mitigate against the potential for biased reporting (organizations, for example, have a tendency to over-report positive change and to under-report more challenging issues). Continued involvement of key stakeholder groups also underpins wider accountability, supports inclusive approaches, and

Researchers and Data Collectors

There are a number of considerations in the decisions around researchers and data collectors, and these will be informed by the context and by the degree to which work around gender equality is established within the organization/ institution.

As an overarching principle, interviews and focus group discussions should be conducted by pairs of data collectors to ensure that all the information is adequately captured and that there is an observer of the interview. Research pairs should be either two women working together or a woman and a man. For the purposes of safeguarding and best research practice around gender issues, there should not be pairs of men working together.

In contexts or organisations where there is strong resistance to work around gender equality, it may be helpful to bring an external advisor into the work, to hold the principles, provide capacity building and quality assurance, and to hold the responsibility and accountability for the work. This will help with the participation of local staff, and provide them with an additional layer of both care and safety in relation to their colleagues and to others in their communities.

In contexts where there is already established work around gender equality, and where there is some buy-in to the work, it may not be necessary to bring in external technical support. Women's rights organisations in some contexts are likely to have the relevant skills, to be able to support data collection and to provide the capacity building. In these circumstances, it is ethical to partner and work with these organisations in recognition of their skills, to amplify their work and their expertise, and to encourage accountability by the police to community groups.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Aligned with best practice in all data collection, the purpose and the boundaries of the survey should be explained in full to everyone participating. This explanation needs to be in clear language, with a description of how the information will be held and used. Participants must also be invited to ask any questions that they may have, or issues that they may want to clarify.

Participants should then be asked to sign a form consenting to their participation and the use of the data for this piece of work. If the survey is online, this can be achieved through an 'opt-in' note on the first page of the survey.

The individual personal details of the participants will not be recorded in recognition of the sensitivity of this topic, and in order to support honest contributions. As with all sensitive research data, it is important to code the data so that it is identifiable in terms of the demographic, and so that the individual is anonymized. For example, a

code that identifies sex, age bracket, and whether someone is inside the institution, part of a women's group, or a member of the community would be enough to make the data valuable and usable without compromising the confidentiality of participants.

Researchers and data collectors need to be trained in the codes, and the consistent application of these codes, and also held to the standard of confidentiality.

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