



Assess a Program's Gender Status

Activity 0.1: Understanding and Applying the Gender Equality Continuum

Objectives:

- Understand the difference between a gender-blind and gender-aware program.
- Know the difference between a gender-exploitative, accommodating and transformative program.
- Determine where along the gender equality continuum your current program or strategy sits.
- Identify the key steps needed for a more gender transformative program.

Preparation:

Review the **key concepts** and **background research** to be sure your team has a good understanding of **behavior change and gender** and is aware of the gender-related social and behavioral determinants.

Gather the following program documents to help you go through this activity:

- Current strategy or marketing plan
- Formative research results
- Monitoring and evaluation results
- Other programmatic documents
- Activity Template (see below)
- Relevant resources from the I-Kit

Be sure you have enough copies of any templates, handouts or resources needed for this activity. Consider printing the **Gender-Related Social and Behavioral Determinants Handout** from the step page to use as reference during the activity.

Expected Outcome:

A completed checklist that helps you determine where your current program sits along the Gender Equality Continuum.

Purpose:

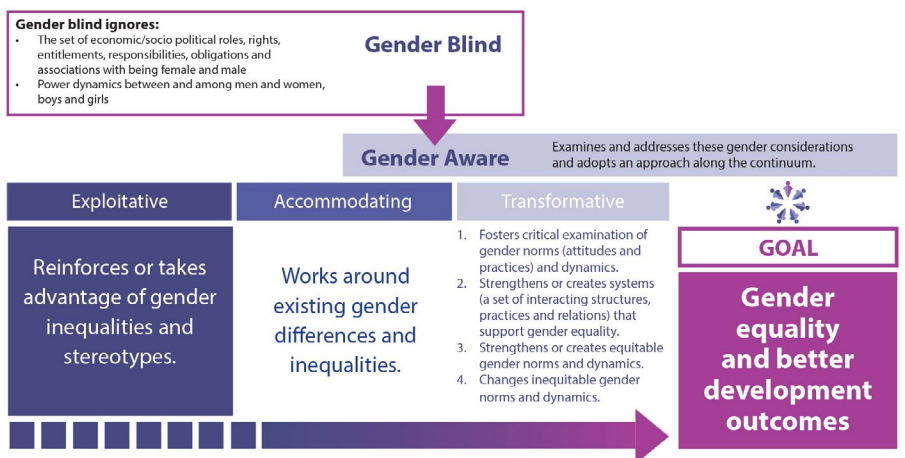
The purpose of this activity is to help you understand the Gender Equality Continuum and how to apply it to your program. Once you recognize where your program sits along the continuum you will better answer the questions in the checklist under Activity 0.2: Using a Checklist to Review your Program's Current Status.

Introduction:

Now that you have been implementing your program, it is a good time to review your SBCC strategy or marketing plan to see how it is working, what changes may need to be made and if you need to take a closer look at integrating gender and how best to do that.

Instructions to complete this activity

Behavior change communication programs generally fit along the **Gender Equality Continuum** (IGWG, 2013), which can be used as a planning framework or as a diagnostic tool. The continuum shows a process of analysis that begins with determining whether interventions are gender blind or gender aware.



As a planning framework, you can use the **Gender Equality Continuum** to determine how to design and plan interventions that move your program along the continuum toward transformative gender programming. As a diagnostic tool, it can be used to assess

if, and how well, your interventions are currently identifying, examining and addressing gender considerations, and to determine how you can move them along the continuum toward more transformative gender programming.

Instructions to complete this activity:

Review the Gender Equality Continuum. Think about your current SBCC or social marketing program.

Key Steps:

1. Review program documents, including your current strategy or plan, quarterly and annual reports, work plans, and monitoring and evaluation results. Based on your understanding of the program, decide if it is gender blind or gender aware.

If you are having trouble, ask the team whether your program critically analyzes or considers:

Questions:	Yes	No	Unsure
1 The defined set of economic, social and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements and obligations associated with being female and male?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 The power dynamics between and among women and men, girls and boys?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If you answered **NO** to any of the questions above, or are unsure, your program may be gender blind. It is recommended that you go through each step in the strategy development to thoroughly assess how to make your program **gender aware**.*

Gender blind policies and programs ignore gender considerations. They are designed without any analysis of the culturally defined set of economic, social and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements, obligations and power relations associated with being female and male, or the dynamics between and among women and men, girls and boys.

Gender aware policies and programs examine and address the set of economic, social and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements, obligations and power relations associated with being female and male, and the dynamics between and among women and men, and girls and boys.

2. Once you decide if your program is gender blind or gender aware, consider where the project sits along the gender continuum: exploitative, accommodating or transformative.

If you are having trouble, ask the team whether your program critically analyzes or considers:

Questions:	Yes	No	Unsure
1 Does the current program or activities reinforce or take advantage of unbalanced gender norms, roles and relations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Does the current program or activities provide privilege to men over women, boys over girls?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 In order to reach the program goals, does one sex enjoy more rights or opportunities than the other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your strategy, messages and activities, are gender exploitative and doing more harm than good. It is recommended that you go through each step in the **strategy development process** to thoroughly assess how to make your program **gender transformative**. The **checklist** in the next activity will help you to determine where to focus your attention.

An SBCC or social marketing program that is gender exploitative can intentionally or unintentionally reinforce or take advantage of gender inequalities and stereotypes in pursuit of a project outcome, or whose approach exacerbates inequalities.

Questions:	Yes	No	Unsure
1 Does the current program or activities acknowledge the role of gender norms and differences in the uptake of health services, working around or trying to adjust the strategy or plan to compensate for these norms and inequalities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Does the current program or activities try to limit harmful impact on gender relations but does not seek to change the underlying structures and norms that perpetuate inequalities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your strategy, messages and activities, are gender accommodating. It is recommended that you go through each step in the **strategy development process** to thoroughly assess how to make your program **gender transformative**. The **checklist** in the next activity will help you to determine where to focus your attention.

An SBCC program that is gender accommodating may recognize gender and its importance but rather than addressing the gender differences and inequalities, activities are designed to work around them. Your program is supporting a gradual shift toward challenging rigid gender norms and inequalities.

Questions:	Yes	No	Unsure
1 Does the current program or activities allow for critical examination of gender norms and dynamics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Does the current program or activities strengthen or create systems that support gender equality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Does the current program or activities work to change inequitable gender norms and dynamics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your strategy, messages and activities, are gender transformative. Although your strategy may be transformative, it is recommended that you go through the **checklist** to identify if there are parts of your strategy you can strengthen.

Exploitative Gender Programming is when policies and programs intentionally or unintentionally reinforce or take advantage of gender inequalities and stereotypes in pursuit of project outcomes. This approach is harmful and can undermine program objectives in the long run.

Accommodating Gender Programming is when policies and programs acknowledge, but work around gender differences and inequalities to achieve project objectives. Although this approach

may result in short-term benefits and realization of outcomes, it does not attempt to reduce gender inequality or address the gender norms that contribute to the differences and inequalities.

Transformative Gender Programming is when policies and programs seek to transform gender relations to promote equality and achieve program objectives. This approach attempts to promote gender equality by:

- Fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms and dynamics.
- Recognizing and strengthening positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment.
- Highlighting the relative position of women, girls and marginalized groups, and transforming the underlying social structures, policies and broadly held social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities.

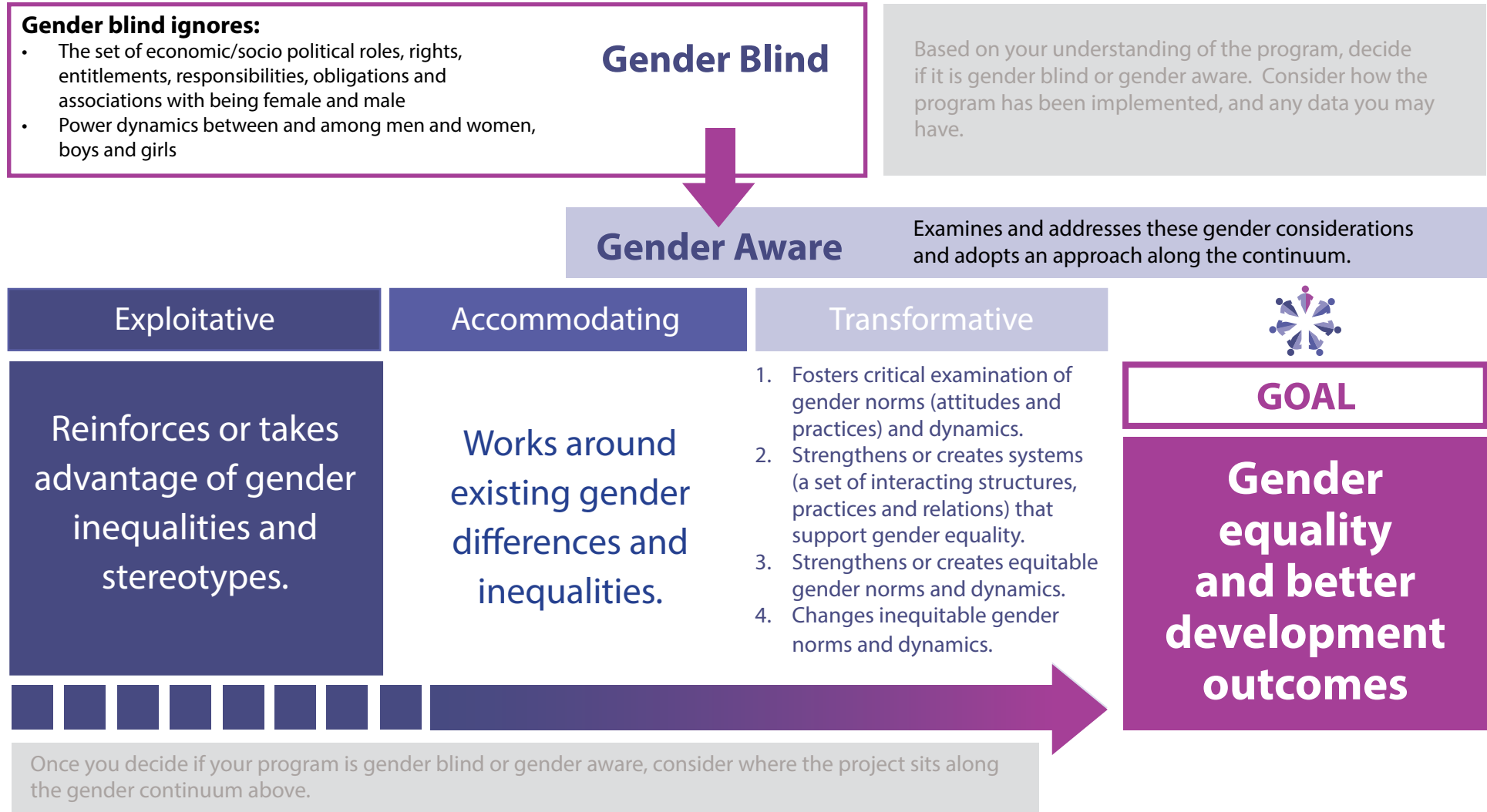
This activity was adapted using the following resources:

Interagency Gender Working Group. Gender Integration Continuum. Accessed March, 2016 from http://www.igwg.org/igwg_media/Training/FG_GendrIntegrContinuum.pdf



Gender and SBCC Implementation Kit

Template 0.1.1: Gender Equality Continuum



Now that you know where your program sits along the Gender Equality Continuum, think about and list what steps you can take to integrate gender for a more transformative approach. Keep these with you to refer to as you revise your SBCC strategy.

Adapted from: http://www.igwg.org/igwg_media/Training/FG_GendrIntegrContinuum.pdf