



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Sustainable  
Development  
Goals

Bangkok Office  
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau  
for Education

TOOL

8

# Gender and the National Education Sector Plan: Design and implementation



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## Objectives

The objectives of this tool are to:

- raise awareness about the importance of having a clearly defined national education policy regarding gender equality;
- introduce gender analysis in the context of education policy;
- identify key issues within policy for gender equality;
- help trainees think about education policy-making for gender equality in their own context.

## Key information



### Setting the scene

See **Tool 7** for an introduction to gender and the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) and information about the analysis phase. The NESP should respond to the challenges raised by the sector analysis. Tool 8, therefore, considers NESP design and implementation.

### Policy formulation

Policy formulation involves setting priorities and key strategies.<sup>1</sup> (see **Tool 6**). Policy priorities are identified and then translated into strategies that constitute a coherent framework for action. Governments should have a clearly worked out and explicit policy on gender equality for the NESP.

### Programme design

The NESP should provide a rationale for action that sets policy priorities and strategies and guides programming. Programming should include goals, general and specific objectives, activities and outputs. From a gender equality perspective, NESP programming should include objectives, activities and outputs regarding the promotion of gender equality in education.

### Costing and financing the plan

A credible NESP includes realistic costings based on sustainable resource availability. The human and physical resource requirements for implementing the NESP are costed using target indicators, performance norms and unit costs. Such costings can also help mobilize additional domestic and international resources for NESP implementation. The cost of any gender equality programming needs to be determined and included within the NESP budget, either as a separate section, or included within the main sections as separate line items where this is possible.

### Implementation arrangements and capacities

Implementation arrangements should clearly define who is responsible for:

- NESP implementation overall;
- specific programmes.

This may be based on existing organizational arrangements or new structures. The roles and responsibilities of each body in the implementation arrangement must be clearly defined and agreed upon, with necessary authority and resources given.

1 Global Partnership for Education and UNESCO IIEP. 2015. *Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation*. Paris: UNESCO IIEP.

From a gender perspective, responsibilities for promoting gender equality in education sector policy and programming, at all levels, need to be clearly defined and appropriately resourced.

## Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical for ensuring that NESP implementation is achieving the targets that have been set. Key indicators need to be developed and agreed among the stakeholders for this purpose. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) is one of the key tools for monitoring progress and should include routine monitoring, periodic reviews, annual reviews and reports.

From a gender perspective, there need to be indicators which can be used to measure performance in achieving gender equality. It is also good practice to include regular reviews of performance using gender analysis. Evaluations are carried out at mid-term and at the end of the plan. These should include a specific and comprehensive gender analysis of NESP performance as a key component of the evaluation.

**Box 1** illustrates some key indicators relating to gender equality in education.



### Box 1 Selected indicators for gender equality in education

Indicators used in the UNESCO *Global Education Monitoring Report*:<sup>2</sup>

- percentage of female teachers at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels;
- inclusion of gender equity issues in the national curriculum framework;
- percentage of schools with basic sanitation facilities (percentage of single sex toilets);
- percentage of students aged 13–15 experiencing school-related gender-based violence by type of violence (bullying and physical violence).

Other key indicators include:

- gender disparities by level of education (Gender Parity Index or GPI) in enrolment, learning outcomes, progress, achievement and completion;
- gender disparities across population groups (e.g. GPI for the poorest 20 per cent of households compared to the richest; rural/urban GPI, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO. 2016. *Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All. Global Education Monitoring Report 2016*. Paris: UNESCO.



## Box 2

### Case study: Gender indicators in Papua New Guinea's NESP

Papua New Guinea's National Education Sector Plan covers the period 2010–2019. Gender is mainstreamed across the plan. However, there are also some additional specific indicators designed to improve gender equality in education system management. These include:

- gender focal points to be appointed in all provinces by 2010;
- number of women on Provincial Educational Board Committees;
- GPI (across educational levels).

Source: National Executive Council. 2009.<sup>3</sup>



Self-study and/or group activity

### Reflect on the gender-responsiveness of your country's NESP

**Handout 1** provides a framework of gender equality questions. Use this to reflect on and analyse your country's NESP.

#### Self-study

- Try to answer as many questions as possible.
- Where you cannot provide answers, identify colleagues who may be able to help.

#### Group work

- Give each group a few of the questions from **Handout 1**.
- Each group needs to discuss, analyse and if possible also research their allocated questions. Groups could be given the research task to do as 'homework' one evening, during the training course.

The framework in **Handout 1** is based on *Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Appraisal* (Global partnership for Education and UNESCO IIEP 2015) and *Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans* (Global Partnership for Education and UNGEI, 2017). It will help you to consider gender issues more comprehensively when contributing to the preparation of your country's NESP.

2 Papua New Guinea. National Executive Council. 2009. *Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019*. Department of Education: Papua New Guinea.



## Further reading

Global Partnership for Education and UNGEI. 2017. *Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans*. Washington DC: GPE.

Global Partnership for Education and UNESCO IIEP. 2015. *Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation*. Paris: UNESCO IIEP.

UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre. 2012. *Gender Responsive Policy Analysis*. [https://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/womens\\_empowerment/gepmi/RBAP-Gender-2012-GEPMI-Module-2.pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/womens_empowerment/gepmi/RBAP-Gender-2012-GEPMI-Module-2.pdf).

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## Handout 1

General questions	Gender equality questions
<b>Sector-wide</b>	
1. Does the plan cover all subsectors including formal/non-formal education, primary/ secondary/ tertiary, etc?	Are gender issues considered on a sector-wide basis in education? For example, has gender equality been considered with regard to: the legal and policy framework (see <b>Tools 5 and 6</b> ); early childhood care and education (see <b>Tool 12</b> ); primary/basic education (see <b>Tool 13</b> ); secondary education (see <b>Tool 13</b> ); tertiary education; community learning centres (see <b>Tool 14</b> ); teachers: e.g. recruitment, deployment and professional development (see <b>Tool 21</b> ); the curriculum (see <b>Tool 18</b> )?
<b>Based on a sector analysis</b>	
2. Does the NESP summarize key results of the sector analysis and identify key challenges based on those results?	Does the ESP summarize the key results from a gender perspective and identify key challenges to gender equality in the sector? Has a comprehensive gender analysis been conducted in preparation for drafting the NESP? Have both demand- and supply-side factors been analysed (see <b>Tool 2</b> )?
<b>Coherent and consistent strategies</b>	
3. Do the general objectives, specific objectives and activities address the key challenges and their underlying causes?	Do the objectives and activities address the key gender challenges and their underlying causes identified in the gender analysis? Are there targeted strategies for marginalized populations addressing their gender-based challenges? Is there provision for capacity building for gender equality in key institutions/key personnel?
4. Are there any major inconsistencies in the presentation of general objectives, specific objectives and activities across different sections of the NESP (e.g. narrative of the strategies, logic framework, action plan)?	Are there any important gaps in terms of objectives and activities in responding to gender inequality issues? Are the proposed strategies for gender equality logical with clearly identified activities, results, outputs and outcomes?
<b>Sound cost framework</b>	
5. Has the plan been costed?	Has the costing been informed by gender-responsive budgeting? (See <b>Tool 9</b> ).
6. Is the data presented by education level?	Are sex-disaggregated statistics fully available?
7. Is the data presented by year?	

General questions	Gender equality questions
8. Does the cost framework specify the capital and recurrent expenditures as well as the staff salaries share?	
Sound action plan	
9. Does the action plan contain a precise timeline for each activity?	Does the action plan contain a precise timeline for each activity relating to gender objectives?
10. Does the action plan contain a responsible authority for each activity?	Does the action plan contain a responsible authority for each activity relating to gender objectives?  Is there a gender focal point who coordinates gender activities within and outside the ministry of education?
11. Does the action plan contain the total cost and source of funding for each activity?	Are all gender-related activities fully costed and the source of funding stated?  Is there a separate budget for gender-related activities?
Monitoring tools and mechanisms	
12. Does the NESP contain a description of the monitoring tools and mechanisms that will be used to monitor progress, or does it mention a plan to develop them?	Does the NESP contain a description of the monitoring tools and mechanisms that will be used to monitor progress in terms of gender equality results?  Are all NESP indicators sex-disaggregated?  Is there provision to hold gender-responsive reviews and evaluations? These might be specific gender analyses of progress or there might be a plan for gender to be mainstreamed in all monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
Sound indicators	
13. Are most of the indicators well-defined, meaning they contain a target, a timeframe and are measurable?	Are the indicators for gender equality well-defined, meaning they contain a target, a timeframe and are measurable?  Do the indicators directly reflect outcomes of the programmes and outputs of the activities?  If using proxy indicators, is the logic behind selecting the proxy indicator sound?  Do the NESP indicators include standard indicators for measuring gender inequality in education (e.g. GPI)?  To what extent do the NESP indicators include indicators for SDG 4 (global and thematic indicators)?
14. Do most objectives have corresponding outcomes, and do most activities have corresponding outputs?	Do gender-related objectives have corresponding outcomes, and do activities have corresponding outputs?  Are there clearly defined outputs and outcomes with regard to gender equality in the NESP?
Capacity development	
15. Does the NESP contain a programme on capacity development that is based on an assessment of capacities?	Have capacities relating to achieving gender quality objectives been assessed, and is there a capacity development programme to address these? E.g. for teachers, school leadership, technical staff at central/district ministry level.  Does capacity to gather and analyse gender statistics need strengthening?  If a capacity gap is identified, is there a capacity development plan included in the NESP?

General questions	Gender equality questions
<b>Strong government leadership</b>	
16. Did the NESP's preparation process demonstrate strong leadership of the government?	<p>Is there any government leadership on gender equality?</p> <p>Are there any issues regarding leadership for gender equality?</p> <p>Are both men and women leaders represented?</p>
<b>Broad stakeholder participation</b>	
17. Did the preparation of the NESP involve a participatory process that included a broad range of stakeholders: central government, decentralized levels of government, civil society, teacher unions, non-governmental organizations and development partners?	<p>Did the preparation of the ESP involve a participatory process that included a broad range of stakeholders, including both governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in promoting gender equality?</p> <p>Was there a specific consultation process on achieving gender equality, involving all relevant stakeholders?</p> <p>Was there a working group on gender equality?</p> <p>Are marginalized populations such as LGBTI involved in stakeholder participation?</p> <p>What ongoing role will these stakeholders play in monitoring the implementation of the NESP?</p>



## References

Global Partnership for Education and UNESCO IIEP. 2015. *Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation*. Paris: UNESCO IIEP.

Papua New Guinea. National Executive Council. 2009. *Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019*. Papua New Guinea: Department of Education.

UNESCO. 2016. Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2016*. Paris: UNESCO.









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Cultural Organization

**Education  
Sector**

**UNESCO Bangkok Office  
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education**

Mom Luang Pin Malakul Centenary Building  
920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong, Klongtoei  
Bangkok 10110, Thailand  
Email: [iqe.bgk@unesco.org](mailto:iqe.bgk@unesco.org)  
Website: [bangkok.unesco.org](http://bangkok.unesco.org)  
Tel: +66-2-3910577 Fax: +66-2-3910866