



READ AND REFLECT

Action planning with the gender integration continuum

IDEAS FOR ACTION PLANNING

Here are some ideas for activities and ways of working that are either gender accommodating or gender transformative.

Do your homework

What is the status of gender equality within your organisation or institution? Are there internal issues that need to be recognised and dealt with? Where is transformation or accommodation needed?

Inclusive consultations and decision-making processes:

Religious minority women, religious feminists and victims of discrimination and inequality on the grounds of gender/sexual orientation and religion or belief should be included in data collection, consultative and decision-making processes. This should help to ensure that their perspectives and experiences are heard and taken into account. For transformation to be possible, it is also important to engage men in work for gender equality – based on the needs identified by women.

Collection and analysis of disaggregated data on religion and gender

Whether we are talking about a community development project or national level policy-making, policies and programmes to promote FORB and/or gender equality need to be based on a realistic assessment of existing inequalities and discrimination. This necessarily includes having disaggregated data on the gendered aspects of FORB violations and the religious or belief aspects of gender discrimination. Collecting and analysing this data enables us put in place policies and programmes that are relevant to women's needs, to track progress and setbacks over time, and to evaluate and adjust policies and programmes accordingly.

Awareness-raising and education to address discriminatory social norms and practices

Organisations from grassroots community groups to government policy-makers can work with this! Depending on your organisation/institution's mandate and capacity, your interventions could focus on religious leaders and communities, the media, politicians, justice sector actors, scholars, teachers, artists and others who contribute to shaping and disseminating norms and practices around religion and gender. Creative and effective use of social media is one means to do this.

Advocate for the review and reform of policies and laws that discriminate on the basis of religion and/or gender

Particular attention should be paid to religiously justified personal status and family laws, which often discriminate on the grounds of minority status and gender in relation to, for example, custody, marriage, divorce, inheritance and property issues.

Developing gender-sensitive religious interpretations

Worldwide, people of faith are using their religious standpoints to promote gender equality and reinforce women's voices and agency within their religious communities. People engaged in this work often face stigmatisation, exclusion and even attacks if their interpretations are viewed as 'heretical' or 'unacceptable'. How could you or your organisation, faith community or institution be involved in or support such efforts? How could you manage risks? One possible activity could be to help develop or support a female religious leadership platform, with representatives from diverse faith traditions and geographical areas, committed to the promotion of both FORB and gender equality.

Dialogue and cooperation between actors

Networks and coalitions between freedom of religion or belief advocates, gender equality advocates and faith actors can help generate a better mutual understanding of the different approaches these actors take in working towards a common goal. Attention should be paid to intersections and possible synergies, as well as to areas of real or perceived conflict, and how to overcome such conflicts. There is also a need to systematically engage men and boys in such coalitions, not only as agents of gender equality, but as co-beneficiaries. Could your organisation help develop, join or support such a network?