Developing Gender Responsive Learning Environments

An IREX Toolkit for Teachers

Toolkit developed for the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA) and the International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP). TEA and ILEP are programs of the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, implemented by IREX.
Introduction
The benefits of a good education are well known: improves the health of families, increases an individual's earning potential, provides the building blocks for both research and entrepreneurship, and enriches lives. But given the critical importance of education to both individuals and whole societies, how do we ensure that girls and boys are learning—and succeeding—at equal levels around the world?

With this in mind, IREX is pleased to present its Developing Gender-Responsive Learning Environments toolkit. IREX produced this resource with the expertise of its teacher training team, its Gender Community of Practice, and gender and education expert, Dr. Caroline Manion, and piloted it with over 200 high school teachers from nearly 50 countries across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Eurasia for the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA) and International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP), implemented by IREX and funded by the U.S Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This toolkit is free for educators around the world to use.

While there are many gender-based barriers to education—socio-economic, cultural, and institutional—the toolkit focuses on practical tools that individual teachers can put to immediate use in their classrooms. It addition, it contains key definitions related to gender and education, references to international commitments to gender equality in education, and a list of supplementary online resources and suggested reading materials.

We hope that this resource helps to raise awareness, spark discussions, and encourage sensitive and productive learning environments for students of all genders. You are welcome to translate these materials into other languages. Please note the citations for resources from other organizations throughout the document.

We would love to hear how you use the toolkit in your schools and classrooms. Please email us at irex@irex.org to share your stories with us!

About IREX
IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing thought leadership and innovative programs to promote positive lasting change globally. IREX works with individuals, institutions, and governments to expand access to and improve the quality of education worldwide. IREX designs programs and provides consulting to support lifelong learning starting at the primary and secondary levels, continuing through higher education, and including continuing professional training. For more information about us, please visit www.irex.org.
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Profiles of Gender-Responsive Teaching

This toolkit was piloted with more than 200 teachers from over 50 countries who participated in either the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program or the International Leaders in Education Program, funded by the U.S. Department of State and implemented by IREX. Some of their stories about pioneering efforts to promote gender-responsive teaching and learning environments are highlighted on the following pages.
**PART I: GLOSSARY OF KEY CONCEPTS**

**Sex:** Biological differences between men and women (UNGEI, 2012: 3)

**Gender:** The social and constructed differences in women’s and men’s roles and responsibilities, which are learned, vary from culture to culture and change over time (UNGEI, 2012: 3).

**Gender Bias:** Gender bias occurs when people make assumptions or stereotypes about behaviors, abilities, or preferences based upon gender.

**Gender Equality:** Provision of equal conditions, treatment, and opportunity for both men and women to realize their full potential, human rights, and dignity, as well as opportunities to contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development (UNGEI, 2012: 3).

**Gender Equity:** is the process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on an even playing field (UNESCO, 2009: 23).

**Gender Awareness:** is an understanding that there are socially and culturally determined differences between women and men based on learned behavior, which affect their ability to access and control resources. A school head that is gender-aware will understand that special attention should be given to the way education is delivered to both male and female students because society (and, more specifically, teachers), may value girls and boys differently. This has implications for their learning (UNESCO, 2009: 9).

**Gender Analysis:** investigates the different experiences, knowledge, and activities of women and men in a given context. It explores these differences so that policies, programs, and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women...Gender analysis is usually supported by the use of sex-disaggregated information and data, and requires good understanding of and sensitivity to the socio-cultural context. In the area of education, gender analysis can be integrated into curriculum analysis to assess how a given curriculum may have an impact on boys’ and girls’ learning attitudes, motivation, and achievements, as well as how they perceive themselves. (UNESCO, 2009: 25).

**Gender Blindness:** is the failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are given to them in specific social, cultural, economic and political contexts, and backgrounds. For instance, a gender-blind teacher may think that school education is gender-neutral because there is no difference between boys and girls in teaching and learning. However, in reality, teachers’ unconscious gender-stereotyped attitudes and biases can affect classroom practices, and result in differential treatment towards both boys and girls (UNESCO, 2009: 8).
Gender Sensitivity: is the ability to recognize gender issues. It is the beginning of gender awareness (Mlama, Dioum, Makoye, Murage, Wagah & Washika, 2005: 2).

Gender Responsiveness: refers to taking action to correct gender bias so as to ensure gender equity and equality (Mlama et al., 2005: 2).

Gender Mainstreaming: The process used to ensure that women’s and men’s concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all legislation, policies, and programs. This leads to equal benefits for women and men and ends the perpetuation of existing inequality (UNGEI, 2012: 3).

Gender Stereotype: refers to attitudes and beliefs about the characteristics associated with, and the activities appropriate to, men or women in a given community.

Hidden Curriculum: Refers to the often invisible or unspoken school rules, procedures, structures, and norms that shape students above and beyond the official curriculum.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy: Refers to the practices through which teachers (and others) create and apply particular labels to their students and their parents, based on common-sense assumptions, background information, and observations. This labeling influences subsequent educational and social career paths (Wotherspoon, 1998: 26).

Social Construction: A process through which a given community assigns, reinforces, and legitimizes particular gender roles (Mlama et al., 2005: 2).

Profile of Gender-Responsive Teaching:
Armand Gnaboto, Cote D’Ivoire

Promoting Leadership Positions for Girls
In Cote D’Ivoire, Armand Gnaboto used gender-responsive teaching in his English classroom to bring girls to the forefront of classroom learning. Notably, Gnaboto has instated a “Secretary System,” where girls use test scores to compete for the class “English Secretary” position. As girls work harder to get the best grade and ultimately be next in line for the position, they learn faster and become important classroom leaders. This stimulates student interest in the subject, and Gnaboto has seen a rise in female English Club participants.
PART II – GENDER EQUITY AS A COMPONENT OF INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

Benefits of Gender Equity in Education
Promoting gender equity in education is important for many reasons, both at the level of the individual and at family, community, and country levels. We’ve listed some of the potential benefits of gender-equitable and -responsive education below. Can you think of any others?

- Develops the potential of all children
- Improves confidence
- Improves quality of education
- Effective learning
- Improves employment and income earning opportunities
- Poverty reduction
- Healthier mothers and healthier children
- Inter-generational education effects (children of educated parents are more likely themselves to go to school)
- Social development
- Promotes civic participation

International Commitments to Gender Equity in Education
For close to 25 years, the international community has been constructing and pursuing goals and strategies related to the achievement of gender equity in education. Below, we identify and briefly present a range of international commitments to gender equity in education. Links are provided that may help you learn more about the commitments and how you can take action.

- Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All, 2000
  http://www.unesco.org/education/efa

It proposes 12 major strategies and sets 6 major goals to achieve quality education for all by 2015. The gender specific goals are as follows:

Goal 2 is to “ensure that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.”

Goal 4 is to “achieve a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.”
Goal 5 is to “eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.”

➢ **UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2000**

The 8 MDGs form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. They have promoted new efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest. The education related goals are as follows:

Goal 2 is to “ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.”

Goal 3 is to “eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.”

➢ **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995**

The Platform for Action is an agenda for women’s empowerment. It seeks to remove all the obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural, and political decision-making.

➢ **World Declaration on Education for All, 1990**

The World Declaration on Education for All, adopted by the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, spells out targets and strategies to meet the basic learning needs of all. The goal is to have universal access to learning; focus on equity; emphasize learning outcomes; broaden the means and the scope of basic education; enhance the environment for learning; and strengthen partnerships.

➢ **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979**

The Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It defines discrimination against women and establishes an action agenda for putting an end to sex-based discrimination. In particular, Article 10 of the Convention stipulates specific rights to education that governments ought to ensure.
➢ UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960

The Convention states unequivocally that discrimination in education is a violation of rights detailed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is UNESCO’s first international instrument in the field of education to have binding force in international law. Its purpose is not only the elimination of discrimination in education, but also the adoption of measures to promote equality of opportunity and treatment.

➢ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

The right to education for all was recognized by Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

[Source: UNESCO, 2009: 29-29]

Profiles of Gender-Responsive Teaching

Mohsin Moosa, Pakistan

Educating Parents about the Importance of Girls’ Education in Balochistan

In 2013, Mohsin Moosa set out to increase girls’ secondary school enrollment rates by educating parents about the importance of girls’ education. As a TEA Pakistan alumnus, Moosa used an Alumni Small Grant to fund his project. Through four-day Mother’s Workshops, Father’s Day Workshops, and Market Day Festival Trainings, Moosa was able to directly impact over 600 mothers, fathers, and students. These workshops also provided mothers’ practical tools for increasing literacy in the home and encouraged them to spread their knowledge to their local community. As enrollment rates continue to increase, Moosa plans to add an “Elder Sister” component, where educated young women facilitate community learning.
PART III - GENDER ISSUES IN EDUCATION

Despite decades of efforts to promote quality education for all, around the world inequities in educational access, retention, output, and outcome persist. Below we provide a snapshot of gender-based inequities in education worldwide:

- As of 2012, 31 million primary-school pupils worldwide dropped out of school. An additional 32 million repeated a grade.
- While girls are less likely to begin school, boys are more likely to repeat grades or drop out altogether.
- 61 million primary school-age children were not enrolled in school in 2010.
- 53 percent of the world’s out-of-school children are girls and two-thirds of the illiterate people in the world are women.
- Children who are born to educated mothers are less likely to be stunted or malnourished. Each additional year of maternal education also reduces the child mortality rate by 2 percent.
- Women with a primary school education are 13 percent more likely to know that condoms can reduce their risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. An education can help decrease the spreading of this virus by promoting safer sexual practices.
- Education empowers women to make healthy decisions about their lives. For example, women in Mali with a secondary level education or higher have an average of 3 children, while those with no education have an average of 7.

Factors Affecting Gender Equality in Education

**DEMAND**

**Socio-economic factors**
- Poverty
- Direct costs (fees, uniforms, transportation)
- High opportunity costs/lower rate of return
- Household/agricultural tasks
- Residence in remote, low population areas
- Limited employment opportunities for graduates
- Lower pay for women

**Cultural factors**
- Parents' low level of education
- Lower priority for girls' education
- Girls' education perceived as incompatible with traditional beliefs and/or religious principles
- Early marriages and pregnancies
- Role of the girl/woman as a wife and mother
- Skeptical attitudes towards the benefits and outcomes from educating girls

**SUPPLY**

**Political/institutional factors**
- Budget constraints
- Aid conditions
- Insufficient public support for the poor
- Political instability
- Inconsistent educational policies
- Poor quality of education programs
- Lack of relevance to local learning needs
- Lack of clear strategy for women and girls' education
- Lack of public support for women in scientific activities
- Limited employment prospects
- Poor data collection mechanisms
- Inadequate elements for progress assessment and policy formulation

**Factors linked to the school**
- Limited school/classroom space
- High school fees
- Low proportion of female teachers
- Teachers who are un/under-trained/not sensitized to gender issues
- Stereotypes at school (curricula, textbooks)
- School curricula in conflict with traditional culture
- Orientation of girls/women to non-scientific fields
- Lack of accommodations for or exclusion of pregnant adolescents and young mothers
- Sexual harassment; insecurity
- Distance from school
- Lack of school cafeterias
- Poor quality of bathrooms
- School calendar incompatible with farming cycles

**RESULTS**
- Limited access to schooling
- Low female enrolment
- School drop out, particularly at puberty age
- Low female participation in scientific/technical fields
- High proportion of illiterate women
- Reduced employment opportunities
- Reduced contribution to national economic and social development
- Girls' limited bargaining power
- Absence from the political decision-making processes

PART IV – ASSESSMENT & ACTION-PLANNING TOOLS

TOOL #1: How Gender-Friendly is Your School?

This gender lens can help you to understand your school’s gender sensitivity and responsiveness to the different needs of girls and boys (whether you teach in a single-sex or co-educational classroom) and help you make necessary changes to ensure that gender equality is promoted in schools.

Security and Health Issues
- Is the school close enough for all school-age boys and girls to walk to?
- Can both boys and girls be safe on their way to school? Are services provided to ensure their safety, such as transportation?
- In the school and on the way to/from school, do girls and boys feel safe from: bullying? discrimination? sexual harassment? abuse?
- What kind of support do boys and girls receive, if any? Is there any special provision to reduce stigma/discrimination that girls and boys may face? Is it different between boys and girls?
- Are girls who get pregnant supported by the school, and do they feel free to continue schooling?

School and Classroom Facilities
- Are there well-maintained and an adequate number of functional bathrooms for both girls and boys?
- Is there clean drinking water in school available and accessible for all students, including girls and boys?
- Are there enough seats and seating space for both girl and boy students?
- Do seating arrangements give an equal opportunity for both boys and girls to participate in class and interact with the teacher and other students?

Curriculum
- Does the curriculum reflect the needs and life experiences of both boys and girls? For example, does the curriculum offer a wide variety of subjects that will provide girls and boys with the necessary knowledge, skills, and capacities needed in adult life?
- Do both boys and girls feel confident in making subject choices that may not be traditionally male or female subjects?
- Do girls participate and achieve equally with boys in math and sciences and boys in disciplines such as literature and history?
- Does the curriculum promote peace and equality for boys and girls regardless of their race, class, caste, disability, religion or ethnic background?
- Do curricular/extracurricular activities equally attract the participation of both boys and girls?
- Are there activities to counter negative stereotypes about boys and girls?
- Are there activities (such as sports, cultural events, etc.) organized by teachers and/or students that intend to eliminate gender-based discrimination and promote fair and mutually supportive gender-friendly culture in the school?
**Guidance and Counseling**
- Does the school have some kind of guidance/counseling programs and facilities?
- What kind of aspects do these services include? Does it include sexuality/reproductive health/specific subject choice? Can both girls and boys have equal access to these programs?

**Teaching and Learning Materials**
- Does each boy and girl have essential schoolbooks and other learning materials?
- Do teaching and learning materials portray girls and boys of varying socio-economic and religious background, including those with disabilities, with equal prominence, potential, and respect?
- Are the materials and resources used by the students free from gender stereotypes?

**Student Participation in Decision-Making**
- Do students take part in deciding the school’s rules?
- Does the school decision-making body listen to the voices of both girl and boy students? If yes, how?
- Does the school encourage both boys and girls to express their opinions, needs, and concerns freely?
- Do both boys and girls have equal opportunities to participate in all school and classroom activities?
- What kind of activities are boys and girls offered or assigned by teachers?
- Are both boys and girls given equal opportunity in the management and leadership of school clubs, teams, and associations?
  - Is there a class or activity leader/leader team?
  - Is the leader a boy or a girl?
  - How is the leader’s team composed?

**Teachers**
- What is the ratio of male teachers to female teachers?
- Do community leaders and parents value female and male teachers equally? Does it translate into formal recognition?
- Does the school head (male or female) treat both male and female teachers equally? Are they given equal responsibilities and opportunities?
- Do all teachers encourage girls and boys to speak and contribute equally?
- Do all teachers value the views of boys and girls equally?
- Have both female and male teachers and the school head participated in gender training courses?
• Do both male and female teachers have relevant training to support both girls and boys on reproductive health issues?

**Community Members and Parents**

• Are community leaders and parents equally supportive of both boys and girls to attend school?

• Are community members and parents volunteering in the school? Do men/fathers and women/mothers participate equally as school volunteers? Do the school volunteering activities of men/fathers and women/mothers reinforce or challenge gender stereotypical roles?

• Are community women and men with special knowledge or skills brought into the class as resource persons?

[Source: UNESCO, 2009: 55-57]
TOOL #2: How Gender-Responsive Are Your Teaching and Learning Materials?

This tool will help you assess the level of gender responsiveness of the teaching/learning materials you are using, have created, or need to update. The reflection initiated should open the way to further remedial action, if necessary.

**Overall View**

- Briefly examine the text, pictures or part of the material you wish to analyze.
- Summarize the content of the material that you are analyzing.
- What is your overall opinion on the ways that boys and girls are depicted in the teaching/learning materials from a gender perspective? What is the central message?
- Is the document easy to read/understand?
- What part(s) of the teaching/learning materials seem to promote gender equality? Why?
- What part(s) of the teaching/learning materials seem to perpetuate gender bias and stereotypes? Why?

**Frequency of Appearance of Female and Male Characters**

- How many men and women are portrayed or mentioned in the texts and pictures?
- When and how often do female characters appear compared with male characters?
- When does the first named man appear? When does the first named woman appear?
  - For instance, female characters in a text can be referred to without being named, whereas male characters are named; this leads to an impression that male characters are given more importance.
- How often are men and women characters named in the teaching/learning materials?

**Nature of Appearance of Female and Male Characters**

- What kind of activity (productive/reproductive/community) is each person involved in?
- How are women and men portrayed? Nurturers - Economic producers - Leaders - Victims – Others?
- What psychological traits (resourceful, smart, brave, coward, gentle, etc.) are attributed to female and male characters?
- How are family roles distributed between male and female characters (caring for children, helping children with their homework, playing with children, cleaning the house, cooking, repairing, etc.)?
- In what specific activities are girls and boys involved?

**Illustrations**

- How are both women and men portrayed in pictures/drawings? How do women appear in comparison with men especially in terms of their picture sizes?
- Are the illustrations culturally appropriate and/or gender-responsive?
- Do the illustrations portray both women and men positively and in ways that are free from gender bias?

**Places**

- Where is the action/activity taking place in pictures/drawings? Is it in a public area or in the private domain?
- Which places signify importance and why? Are women and men both portrayed in these places?
- What impact does positioning of each person have on his/her visibility?

**Results**

- What are the implications of the activities in which the people are involved in terms of hierarchy, importance, and portrayal of gender relations? Are men and women portrayed on an equal footing?
- Are female characters presented as autonomous individuals or only shown in relation to males?
- What issues are prominent?
  - The multiple roles of women/girls
  - Women taking initiative to control their lives
  - Women/girls questioning their life conditions
  - Women leaders/girls as school leaders
  - Women/girls as equal partners of men/boys
  - Women in non-traditional employment
  - Others?
- Is the content realistic in terms of women’s/men’s, girls’/boys’ roles and responsibilities in your community?
- What kinds of individual role models are presented for both girls and boys? Are there
any differences you can note?

- Can you see any changes in the respective roles of women and men in society based on the teaching/learning materials? What are these changes?
- Would these same changes be possible in your own community? Why or why not?
- Do the teaching/learning materials promote gender equality, women’s self-reliance/girls’ empowerment?
- How do the teaching/learning materials promote equal partnership between women and men, girls and boys?
- Do the teaching/learning materials reinforce gender stereotypes? If so, in what way?
- Is there anything you would like to improve in the teaching/learning materials to make them more gender-responsive?

[Source: UNESCO, 2009: 60-62]

Profile of Gender-Responsive Teaching:
**Mohamadou Sylla, Senegal**

**Improving Vocational and Technical Schools**
In an effort that benefitted over 4,500 students and 150 teachers, Mohamadou Sylla trained 50 English language teachers at girls’ technical and vocational schools in Senegal through an Alumni Small Grant. The International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP) alumnus aimed to make teachers more gender-sensitive and provide clear strategies for applying gendered approaches in their teaching. Recognizing that girls confront greater challenges in education due to “social constraints such as early marriage, poverty, [and] housework,” his workshop shared and expanded on gender-responsive lesson-planning techniques, taught teachers how to use the internet to expand their lesson repertoire, and facilitated the creation of career-relevant language lessons.
PART V – INNOVATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

TOOL #1: What Does Being a Gender-Sensitive Teacher Entail?

This tool presents a set of recommendations for all teachers to adopt gender-sensitive attitudes towards their students.

A gender-sensitive teacher should be encouraged and trained to:

**Perception of Learners’ Abilities**

- Value equally the learning ability of both female and male learners (girls/women, boys/men)
- Facilitate both female and male learners’ abilities to learn and progress equally and develop their potential to the fullest

**Learners’ Attitudes Towards Each Other**

- React cautiously to unfriendly and potentially gender-biased attitudes that learners may demonstrate towards other female and male learners
- Help learners question these attitudes in order to prevent them from happening in the future

**Learners’ Participation in the Classroom**

- Call on or address both female and male learners a balanced number of times and for all subjects
- Give both female and male learners an equal opportunity to write on the writing board a balanced number of times on all subjects
- Give both female and male learners equal opportunity to present their work or answers to the class
- Give similar duties to both female and male learners (example cleaning, moving furniture, etc.)
- Support and encourage both female and male learners to be class leaders, possibly having one female and one male as co-leaders

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**Teaching to Promote Gender Equity: General Principles**

- Give all students equal attention in advising and mentoring.
- Don’t overlook capable but quiet students.
- Revise curricula if necessary to include female experiences and to include them in more than just stereotypical ways.
- Give each student equal attention and equally specific feedback.
- Monitor classroom dynamics to ensure that discussion does not become dominated by verbally aggressive students.
- Vary the structure of the classroom to include more than just competitive modes of learning

Source: University of VA Teaching Resource Center
Teaching/Learning Environment

- Use materials that portray female and male characters in equal numbers and involved in similar activities; if not, the teacher should try to call on learners and help them challenge stereotypes in the portrayal of female and male characters in the teaching/learning materials used
- Display posters on the walls that portray female and male characters in equal numbers and involved in activities together
- Have a classroom seating plan that enables both female and male learners to participate and have equal opportunities to learn

Mentoring, Guidance, and Counseling to Learners

Provide guidance and counseling, if possible, as well as mentoring support to both female and male learners with regard to the continuation of their studies, job perspectives, or psycho-social needs. This support should be delivered in a gender-sensitive way so that both boys and girls do not choose stereotyped paths (for instance, girls should not be led to select subjects that are traditionally regarded as being more “feminine” or boys should not be led to select subjects that are regarded as being more “masculine”).

Personal Development and Training

- Seek advice on teaching methods that are more gender-sensitive from:
  - other teachers
  - the school head
  - the school inspector
  - ministry personnel or from ministry issued policies and relevant support material
  - gender experts and attending formal training courses
  - parent-teacher associations, whenever relevant
  - non-government organizations (NGOs), whenever relevant
  - self-study (printed and/or online materials etc.)


TOOL #2: Gender- Responsive Lesson Planning

Developing a quality lesson plan is a skill that teachers apply in their daily lives; however, creating a gender-responsive lesson plan involves a specific set of skills. The good news is that these skills can be developed and applied by all teachers, men and women. It is important to recognize that the content of a lesson will generally be determined by the syllabus and/or curriculum and that the gender responsiveness of any given lesson involves action on the part of the teacher in its delivery. Gender-responsive lesson planning requires that teachers consider and take action with respect to several dimensions:
**Materials**

Review the teaching and learning materials for gender responsiveness. Does the material contain gender stereotypes? If so, what techniques can be used to address them? Faced with a history textbook that portrays only male heroes, draw up a list of female heroines. If a chemistry textbook portrays only male scientists as inventors, include a discussion of female scientists.

**Methods/Pedagogy**

Select teaching methodologies that will ensure equal participation of both girls and boys. Some teaching methodologies like group work, group discussions, role play, debates, case studies, and explorations can be very effective in encouraging student participation and will therefore give the girls opportunity to participate more actively. In practice, take care that dominant individuals do not sideline less assertive ones.

**Learning Activities**

The lesson plan should allow all students to participate. When doing a practical science experiment, ensure that both girls and boys have a chance to use the equipment and chemicals. When assigning projects, ensure that both girls and boys are given leadership positions and roles and take into account how the learning materials will be distributed equally to both girls and boys, especially in cases of shortages.

**Classroom Set-Up & Interaction**

Consider how to arrange the classroom and interact with the students in a way that will promote equal participation of both girls and boys. Plan in advance to ask substantive questions to both girls and boys. Think about where to stand, sit, or move about the classroom during the lesson.

**Class Management**

Allow time to deal with gender-specific problems, if any, such as girls who have missed class due to menstruation, household chores, or family responsibilities. Watch for indications of bullying, sexual harassment, impact of HIV/AIDS, peer pressure, among others.

**Feedback & Assessment**

Make time for adequate feedback from both girls and boys to ensure that both girls and boys have understood the lesson. [Source: Mlama et al., 2005: 9-10]
**TOOL #3: Gender-Responsive Language Use in the Classroom**

This is an activity that you can do with your students, and involves gender and education awareness raising and analysis about gender-responsive language use in classroom interactions.

*Step One:* With your students, identify terms that are used to refer to girls and to boys in your school/community.

*Step Two:* Discuss whether these terms seem negative or positive (and why), and consider what the impact of their use might be on boys and girls.

*Step Three:* With your students, identify the non-verbal communication among students and between teachers and students.

*Step Four:* Discuss whether the communication patterns seem negative or positive (and why), and consider the impact of its use on girls and boys.

[Source: Adapted from Mlama et al., 2005: 15]

**TOOL #4: Recognizing Gender Bias and Gender Stereotypes in School/Classroom/Textbook Imagery**

This activity is another one that you can do with your students and is easily implemented in same-sex or co-educational contexts.

*Goal:* To introduce the concept of gender stereotype to students and have them critically reflect on the potential impacts of gender stereotyping on boys and girls. This activity builds students’ critically thinking and critical analysis skills generally, and with respect to gender stereotyping in school materials in particular.

*Step One:* Select several images from your class text(s)

*Step Two:* Present these to your students and ask them to reflect upon and respond to the following questions:

- How many men and how many women do you see?
- What roles are men playing?
- What roles are women playing?
- Are these pictures gender-responsive?
- How could the illustrations be improved to be more gender-responsive?

*Step Three:* Select one of the textbooks you are using and work to review and analyze it for gender stereotypes, using the following questions:

- How many times do women/men, boys/girls appear in the textbook?
- What roles are they playing?
- Could some of the role be reversed?
In your opinion is the book gender-responsive?

*Step Four:* Select one illustration or sample text in the textbook that is not gender-responsive and suggest ways that it could be made gender-responsive.

[Source: Adapted from Mlama et al., 2005: 15]

**TOOL #5: Who is the Scientist? [*Note that this activity can be easily used in single-sex and co-educational classrooms]*

*Goal:* To introduce the concept of gender stereotype to students and have them critically reflect on the potential impacts of gender stereotyping on boys and girls.

*Step One:* Ask your students to each take out a piece of paper and draw a picture of a scientist.

*Step Two:* Have students hang their pictures around the room. Once this step has been completed, ask students to reflect on what they see, using the following prompt questions:

- How many images portray the scientist as a man?
- How many images portray the scientist as a woman?
- Is it difficult to tell if some of the images are either of a man or a woman?

*Step Three:* Ask students to consider why they drew their scientist the way they did and have them share their ideas.

*Step Four:* Define and describe what the term gender stereotype refers to and then have students identify the gender stereotypes that may have influenced their perception of what a scientist is.

*Step Five:* Have students reflect upon and then identify potential impacts of gender stereotyping on boys and girls, as well as how they think such stereotyping could be reduced and their role(s) in the process.

[Source: Adapted from Towards Women in Science and Technology, 2012: 55-56]
Profile of Gender-Responsive Teaching:

Alice Sayo, Kenya

Helping Girls Avoid Early Marriage

Growing up in a community where “girls are not given equal opportunities to study like boys [due to] lack of economic resources, marginalization, and poverty... and negative cultural and religious practices,” Alice Sayo surpassed expectations when she went to school, became a teacher, and was promoted to assistant principal. She eventually became a girls’ education activist, and after returning home from the International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP), Sayo trained local schools on learner-centered instruction. She raised funds for Maasai girls and opened a new school specifically targeting girls who would otherwise be married young instead of achieving an education.

TOOL #6: Girl-Friendly Teaching Checklist

As the original document in which the following checklist appears, says, “It is important to first make it clear that girl-friendly teaching is also boy-friendly teaching. Whatever changes teachers can make in their teaching styles and activities to encourage and support girls’ learning will also be of benefit for boys.” One simple reason for this is that recognizing and being responsive to the learning needs of girls also translates into gender-responsive teaching for boys, as teachers become more skilled at recognizing, reflecting, and acting on gender bias and gender-based inequities in their classrooms. A second reason is that boys lose the opportunity to learn with and from girls in classrooms where girls’ learning and participation are limited: the exchange of ideas and peer-to-peer learning opportunities is important for the development of all children.
This resource provides a checklist for concrete actions that you as a teacher can take to make your classroom “girl-friendly”.

- Becoming conscious of the number of questions asked and answered by boys and by girls and the amount of attention given to different students in the class
- Being aware of the impact of the seating arrangements in class on classroom interaction – do boys sit at the front and dominate? Are the girls huddled in a corner and left alone?
- Understanding the often lower levels of self-confidence in girls and ensuring that they are given time to think and answer a question before moving on to another student
- Experimenting with different students groupings to find which are the most comfortable and effective for different forms of learning – all girl groups, mixed groups, groups in which there are mostly girls, and 1 or 2 boys? Girls tend to enjoy and benefit from non-competitive, collaborative activities, working in groups towards a common objective
- Providing examples and activities in class which reflect girls’ interests and experiences as well as those of boys
- Without being patronizing or condescending, praising and encouraging girls in their work and extending invitations for further assistance as needed
- Being openly questioning and critical of teaching and learning materials (such as textbooks) which do not include or reflect girls’ interests and which portray women and girls in menial roles
- Being sensitive to girls’ needs to occasionally leave the class for the bathroom (especially if it is shared with boys and so may be very uncomfortable to use during break times)
- Having a zero tolerance policy with clear punitive measures for gender-based teasing and harassment in class and outside

[Source: INEE, 2005]
PART VI – SUPPLEMENTARY ONLINE RESOURCES

VIDEOS

Gender-Responsive Teacher Education:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZuUY4Vwh3k  
This is a 27-minute video of a round-table discussion concerning gender-responsive science teacher education. Included in the discussion are reasons for the lack of participation of girls in science and math subjects and corrective strategies that teachers can apply.

Gender Stereotyping in the Classroom :  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3BFwRGoId4  
This is a seven-minute video that offers easy to understand discussions of what gender and gender stereotypes are and their impact in the classroom.

How to Avoid Gender Stereotypes :  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZFNsJo-aco  
This 20-minute video TED Talk discussed the negative impact of gender stereotypes and discusses ways to challenge them.

School Gender Gap :  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZPmXfScoRw  
This one-hour video from Penn State University focuses on a number of questions and issues related to changes in the educational performance of boys and girls.

Teaching Boys:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAsrjPuC_rg  
This 45-minute video offers a detailed discussion of boy-friendly teaching issues and strategies, particularly focused on challenging negative and harmful gender stereotypes.

UNICEF: To Educate a Girl :  
http://teachunicef.org/explore/media/watch/educate-girl-feature-length-film  
This 75-minute video uses real life stories of girls in Nepal and Uganda to uncover the answer to the question – “What does it take to educate a girl?” Additionally, the site provides links to further teaching and learning resources for high school and middle school.
Profile of Gender-Responsive Teaching:
Rita Banerjee, India

Encouraging Service Learning & Community Outreach

After participating in the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA), Rita Banerjee directed a student-led tutoring program. The program enabled 17 year old girls at her school to tutor, mentor, and conduct human rights activities for slum children and adults. Banerjee believes that the female mentors became leaders with a sense of civic responsibility as they kept journals, communicated with the media, conducted interviews, and learned writing, discussion, and critical thinking skills. They also administered women’s empowerment and children’s rights workshops to imprisoned mothers.

RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS & PROGRAMS

Education for All/Global Monitoring Report World Inequality Database on Education:
http://www.education-inequalities.org/
This site offers information on status of inequities in education, including gender-based ones, through easy to use and customizable tables, charts, and graphs.

Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE):
http://www.fawe.org/about/index.php
The website of FAWE offers numerous innovative resources to support teachers, administrators, and policymakers in creating gender-responsive classrooms.

Gender and Development Network – Girls’ Education in International Development:
http://www.gadnetwork.org.uk/girls-education
This website offers a space for building, sharing and distributing knowledge concerning girls’ rights in education in the context of international development work.

International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) Policy Forum on Gender Equality in Education:
http://genderpolicyforum.wordpress.com/
This site details the activities and outcomes of an IIEP/UNESCO initiative that focuses on moving “beyond access” to consider how schools and classrooms can promote equitable educational participation and outcomes for girls.
Plan International/Because I’m a Girl Program:
http://plan-international.org/girls/
A well-known campaign, the website for the “Because I’m a Girl” program offers information and resources concerning gender-based inequities, in schools and out, the impact of such inequities and ways to eliminate them.

UNESCO Forum on Gender Equality:
This site offers a range of information and resources on the topic of gender equality in education, including multimedia, publications, statistics, and information on various international conventions and programs aimed at combating gender-based inequities in schools.

UNESCO World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education:
This site includes more than 120 maps, charts, and tables featuring a wide range of sex-disaggregated indicators produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The Atlas enables readers to visualize the educational pathways of girls and boys in terms of access, participation, and progression from pre-primary to tertiary education. It also illustrates the extent to which gender disparities in education have changed since 1970.

UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality:
http://www.unicef.org/education/
This site offers a range of information and resources on gender equality in education, including information on UNICEF’s widely respected Child-Friendly School Initiative.

United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative:
http://www.ungei.org/index.php
This site offers news, research, and resources on the topic of girls’ education. You can also access detailed country profiles that provide information on the status of gender-based inequities in education, strategies, and impact.

Voluntary Services Organization “Making a Success out of School Gender Clubs”:
This document describes how school-based “gender clubs” have been developed in several countries, their goals, how they operate, guiding principles and practices, and expected impact.

World Bank Girls’ Education Programming:
This site offers information on World Bank activities in girls’ education policy and programming.

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

**Creating Gender Equity Through Your Teaching:**
This resource offers straightforward guidance on how to promote gender equity in your school and classroom.

**Teachers Guide: Gender Justice for Global Development (Oxfam Canada):**
Offers a teachers’ guide and seven units on gender and global issues in high school social studies classrooms.
PART VII – SUPPLEMENTARY READING

Practicing Gender Equality in Education (Oxfam GB, Beyond Access Initiative):
http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/ProgIns_wholebook.pdf
This website offers a broad array of information on girls’ education, with a particular focus on better understanding in-school factors contributing to gender inequities and the possible strategies to address them.

Strategies and Tools for Gender: Access and Inclusion Section*:
[Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction, Section 2, Chapter 3 , UNESCO IIEP, 2010]
This chapter contains a list of practical strategies to achieve gender parity, equality, and equity in education during emergencies and early reconstruction.

Gender Equality / Girls and Women's Education: INEE Good Practice Guide*
[INEE, 2003]
This INEE Good Practice Guide provides a series of practical strategies, checklists, and resources for ensuring gender equality and girls’ and women’s access to education in education in emergency and reconstruction programs.

Education Action Sheet from the Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action*
[UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2006]
The Gender and Education in Emergencies section of this handbook contains an overview of the gender dimension of education, talks about how to use a gender lens when planning education, and, through a series of checklists, articulates what we need to know to design and implement gender-responsive education in emergencies. It also contains a list of key actions to ensure gender equality programming in education and a checklist for assessing gender equality programming.

Guidelines on Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Sheet 9.1: Ensure girls' and boys' access to safe education*
[UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2005] Pdf pages 83-84 / Document Pages 73-74
The Education Action Sheet within these guidelines articulate a series of key minimum prevention and response actions to ensure girls’ and boys’ access to safe education and protect them from gender-based violence.
Looking at Textbooks from a Gender Perspective: A Framework for Analysis*
[by Jackie Kirk, IRC Healing Classrooms Initiative]
This tool provides a framework for analyzing textbooks from a gender perspective.

Gender Equity Strategies: Mentors for Girls in School*
http://ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/doc_1_89_mentors_for_girls.doc
[Jackie Kirk, SoE/SBEP Gender Equity Support Program, September 2004]
This one-page strategy sheet articulates the reasons why the presence of a woman teacher is important for girls and focuses on the benefits and challenges, when it is impossible to recruit a woman teacher, of hiring women ‘mentors’ to lead particular activities and discussions with female students.

Gender Equity Strategies: Girl-Friendly Teaching Checklist*
[Jackie Kirk, SoE/SBEP Gender Equity Support Program, September 2004]
This one-page strategy sheet offers a series of girl-friendly teaching actions that teachers can take to make sure their teaching is gender equitable and that the classroom experience is equally empowering for boys and girls. While it was developed for South Sudan, the information is universally useful.

Gender Equity Strategies: Comfort Kits for Female Learners*
[Jackie Kirk, SoE/SBEP Gender Equity Support Program, 2004]
This one-page strategy sheet articulates the ways in which insufficient or inadequate sanitary protection can prevent girls from accessing education and describes ‘comfort kits’ used in to increase access in Sudan, containing: a bar of soap, four pairs of underwear, and six reusable sanitary pads.

Gender Strategies for Education in Emergencies: Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence In and Through Education*
[INEE Gender Task Team]
Using the INEE Minimum Standards as a framework, this tool provides a series of concrete and practical strategies and promising approaches for preventing and responding to gender-based violence in and through education.

Increasing Knowledge and Awareness about Gender*
http://www.ineesite.org/en/resources/increasing_knowledge_and_awareness_about_gender
[FRESH Tools for Effective School Health, UNESCO 2004]
This tool provides 28 sample exercises that teachers/facilitators can use to help young
people better understand what gender is and how it affects their lives. Two Fact Sheets, entitled “The Rights of Young People” and “Sex and Sexuality”, are provided to support the activities.
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* Source: INEE, 2005]

**References**


