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# 1. Purpose & Introduction



Gender inequality and exclusion are shaped not only by what is reported in the media, but also by personal beliefs, power relations, and institutional practices within organizations. Transformative media work therefore begins with self-reflection, extends to the newsroom, and reaches outward to society.

This booklet captures key learning from the IMS-supported capacity development training series on Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) for CSOs and media partners, with financial support from the European Union through IMS. The training series was designed as a reflective and practical learning journey that supports participants to unpack gender, power, and inequality at multiple levels.

By moving from the personal to the institutional and outward to public-facing work, this booklet encourages a gender-transformative approach that goes beyond awareness-raising. It aims to support lasting change in attitudes, practices, and narratives, particularly when addressing sensitive issues such as gender-based violence, conflict, and social inequality.

## 2. Diversity & Inclusion



### Equality



means that everyone receives a pair of shoes, regardless of their differences.

### Diversity



means that we all have the freedom to wear shoes of different types and styles.

### Equity



means that everyone can get a pair of shoes that is suitable for their individual needs and preferences.

### Accessibility



means that shoes or other options are available and comfortable for everyone.

### Inclusion



means that we respect and recognize the values of everyone, regardless of whether they wear shoes or not.

### Belonging



means that we all feel accepted and valued, regardless of whether we have shoes or not, and without fear of being judged by others.

## 3. What is Intersectionality?

### A. What is intersectionality?

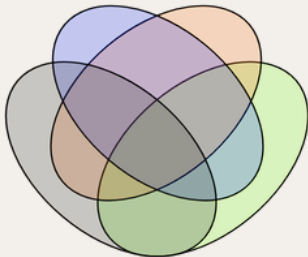
Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how multiple aspects of a person's identity combine to create unique modes of discrimination and privilege.

Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, it reminds us that no individual's experience is shaped by gender alone. For example, being a woman and living with a disability and being from a low-income rural background can multiply vulnerabilities.

### B. Benefits of an Intersectional Approach:

Using an intersectional lens leads to more effective and equitable programming. It uncovers specific needs of subgroups that a one-size-fits-all gender approach might miss. For instance, understanding that women-headed households, people with disabilities, or ethnic minority families might experience extra barriers in accessing housing or disaster recovery means we can tailor interventions (such as accessible house designs, targeted livelihood support, or translation into minority languages) to those needs.

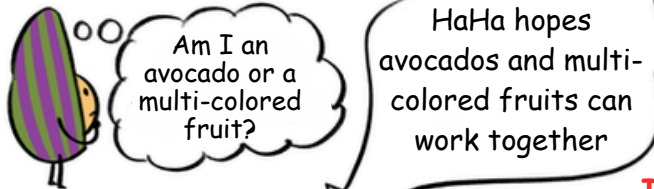
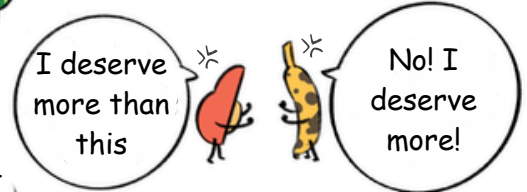
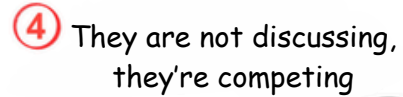
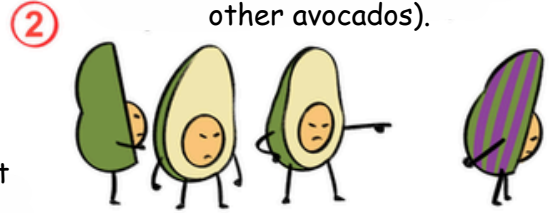
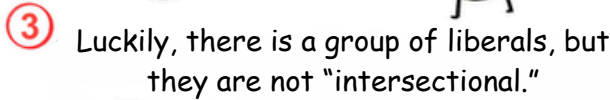
Intersectionality thus strengthens our gender sensitization by ensuring we address the multiple layers of identity that influence power and vulnerability.



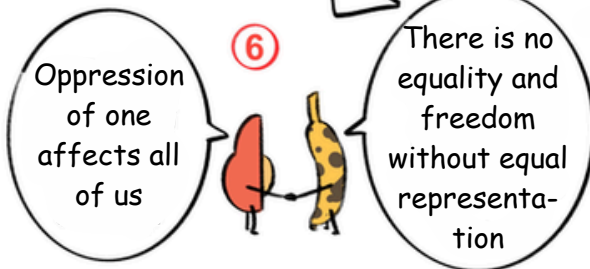
# FUN INTRODUCTION TO INTERSECTIONALITY APPROACH



But sadly, many avocados don't like HaHa. HaHa faces a lot of oppression because of its purple stripes (unlike other avocados).



**Intersectionality is the belief that oppression is interconnected and cannot be solved alone.**



Oppression is not isolated.  
**Practice Intersectionality Now!**

# 4. TYPE OF BIAS

**My name is: Unconscious bias**



- Unconscious biases are mental “shortcuts” that our brains use to make sense of the world around us. We all have unconscious biases, but by slowing down and becoming aware of them, we can reduce their impact on our decisions.

- Not all bias is unconscious. Unfortunately, it is still all too common for people to experience overt discrimination based on their race, gender, sexuality, disability, or other aspects of their identity.

**Ex: most people associate men with jobs and women with family.**



## My name is: Performance bias

- Performance bias is based on deep-rooted—and incorrect—assumptions about women’s and men’s abilities. We tend to underestimate women’s performance and overestimate men’s.
- As a result, women have to accomplish more to prove that they’re as competent as men. This is why women are often hired based on past accomplishments (they need to prove that they have the right skills), while men are often hired based on future potential (we assume they have the skills they need).



**Performance bias often leads to missed opportunities and lower performance ratings for women—and both can have a huge impact on career progression.<sup>19</sup> This bias is even more pronounced when review criteria aren’t clearly specified, leaving room for managers and others to rely more on gut feelings and personal inferences.**

Source: [www.leanin.org](http://www.leanin.org)



**GADC**

អង្គការយេនឌ័រ និងអភិវឌ្ឍន៍ ជាតិកម្ពុជា  
Gender and Development for Cambodia

# TYPE OF BIAS

## My name is: Maternal bias

- We incorrectly assume that mothers are less committed and less competent. As a result, mothers are often given fewer opportunities and held to higher standards than fathers.
- We fall into the trap of thinking mothers are not as interested in their jobs, so we assume they don't want that challenging assignment or to go on a big work trip. And because we think they're less committed, we're more likely to penalize them for small mistakes or oversights.



**Men can face pushback for having kids, too. Fathers who take time off for family reasons receive lower performance ratings and experience steeper reductions in future earnings than mothers who do.**



## My name is: Likeability bias



- Likeability bias is rooted in age-old expectations. We expect men to be assertive, so when they lead, it feels natural. We expect women to be kind and communal, so when they assert themselves, we like them less.



- If you have caught yourself having a negative response to a woman who has a strong leadership style or who speaks in a direct, assertive manner, you have use your likability bias in a workplace.



**To make things more complicated, women also pay a penalty for being agreeable and nice, which can make people think they're less competent. This double bind makes the workplace challenging for women. They need to assert themselves to be seen as effective. But when they do assert themselves, they are often less liked. Men do not walk this same tightrope.**

Source: [www.leanin.org](http://www.leanin.org)

# TYPE OF BIAS

## My name is: Attribution bias

- This bias happens when we see women as less competent than men, we don't always recognize the work they do. Even when women and men work on tasks together, women often get less credit for success and more blame for failure.
- We also fall into the trap of thinking women's contributions are less valuable. This often plays out in meetings, where women are more likely to be talked over and interrupted.



**Of course, women don't lack a confidence gene. Given we hold women to higher standards, women may rightfully feel like they have to hit a higher bar.**

## My name is: Affinity bias



- Affinity bias is what it sounds like: we gravitate toward people like ourselves in appearance, beliefs, and background. And we may avoid or even dislike people who are different from us.
- Affinity bias plays out in several ways in the workplace. Mentors say they're attracted to protégés who remind them of themselves. And hiring managers are more likely to spend time interviewing people who are like them and less time getting to know people who are different. They are also more likely to give people like them a favorable evaluation.

**Because straight white men hold more positions of power—and are more likely to gravitate toward other white men—affinity bias has a particularly negative effect on women, people of color and LGBTQ employees.**

## 5. Gender Continuum

**Gender Continuum Overview:** Explain that not all programs that consider gender are equal. The IGWG (Interagency Gender Working Group) continuum (simplified) has levels:

### Gender-Blind:

Ignores gender differences entirely. (Example: a housing project that collects no data on whether men and women benefit differently or assumes “one size fits all” without considering gender roles).

### Gender-Exploitative:

Worse, it uses or reinforces gender stereotypes to achieve outcomes. (Example: using women only as mobilizers because “women gossip so information spreads” exploiting a stereotype, or portraying women solely as victims to gain sympathy in fundraising, which can reinforce powerlessness). This approach is harmful and undermines long-term goals.



### Gender-Transformative:

Actively seeks to transform gender relations to be more equitable. This means tackling root causes of inequality norms, power dynamics, and structures. It encourages critical examination of gender roles, challenges distribution of resources and decision-making, and works to create new, gender-equitable norms. For example, a truly transformative project might not only build toilets but also use the process to empower women in leadership of the water committee, engage men in health education alongside women, and advocate for policy changes that give women equal voice in community management.

### Gender-Accommodating (Sensitive):

Acknowledges gender differences and inequalities but works around them rather than changing them. (Example: scheduling meetings when women are free from chores helpful, but not questioning why only women do chores. Or providing separate activities for women to generate income without addressing that men control household finances.) It can yield benefits but doesn't challenge the status quo.

## 6. Introduction to SOGIESC through GenderbreadPerson

People experience gender and sexuality in different ways. These differences are a natural part of human diversity. Understanding **SOGIESC** helps us respect each other, reduce stigma and discrimination, and create safer and more inclusive communities. To make these concepts easier to understand, we will use a simple visual tool called the **Genderbread Person**, which explains the different parts of sex, gender, and sexual orientation in a clear and respectful way.

### Sexual Orientation

- How a person defines their sexual attraction toward another person.
- A person can have a sexual orientation to the same gender, another gender, or not experience sexual or romantic attraction.

### Gender Identity and Expression

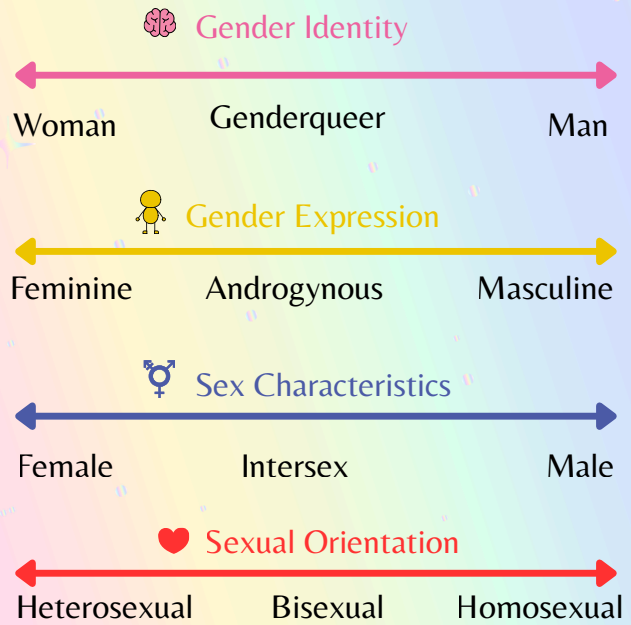
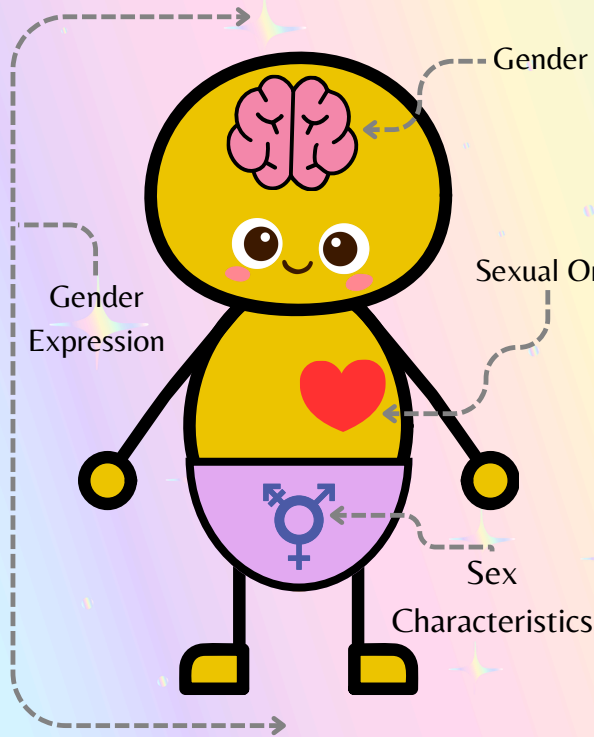
- Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender.
- Gender expression is how someone publicly presents their gender.

SO = Sexual Orientation  
GIE = Gender Identity  
= Gender Expression  
SC = Sex Characteristic

### Sex Characteristic

- Physical characteristics, such as reproductive anatomy and organs and hormonal patterns.
- Sex characteristics may not conform to those at a "male" or "female" person, such as those of people who are intersex.

# The Genderbread Person



## 7. Gender at Work Framework

The Gender at Work Framework highlights the relationships between gender equality, organisational change and the power dynamics within institutions and communities. The Framework can be used to uncover opportunities and barriers to gender equality, to map a strategy for change, and to guide evaluative efforts to mark progress. Gender at work analytical framework (Figure 2), which focuses on the four inter-connected quadrants of changes: (1) Consciousness and Capabilities, (2) resources, (3) formal rules & Policies and (4) informal norms & exclusive practices.

This framework focuses on how ideas of gender relations are formed, lived, and upheld; to understand how gender norms operate, how they interact with power, and how they can be transformed.

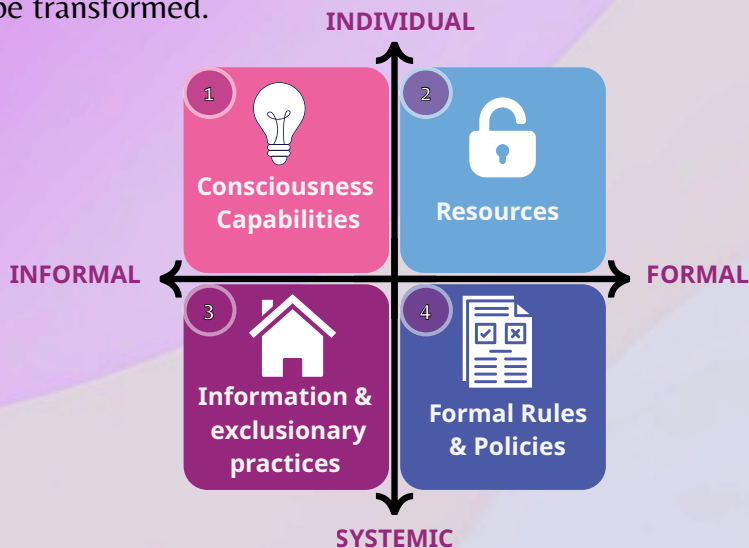


Figure 2: Gender work analytical framework

\* **Quadrant 1: Individual Consciousness**  
(Informal + Individual)

- Do staff recognize gender bias in reporting or editing?
- Are there internalized beliefs about “appropriate” roles for women vs. men?
- Are journalists aware of concepts like intersectionality or gender diversity?
- Do women feel confident to express opinions or challenge norms?

\* **Quadrant 2: Resources & Skills**  
(Formal + Individual)

- Do all genders have equal access to capacity-building (training, mentoring)?
- Do women journalists get “hard” beats (e.g. politics, business) or just “soft” news?
- Do LGBTQ+ or ethnic minority staff have equal career development opportunities?

\* **Quadrant 4: Rules & Policies**  
(Formal + Institutional)

- Are anti-harassment and gender policies written, visible, and enforced?
- Is there a gender-sensitive editorial code of conduct?
- Is leadership gender-diverse? Is hiring/promotion data disaggregated by sex?
- Does the organization budget for equity training or internal audits?

\* **Quadrant 3: Organizational Culture**  
(Informal + Institutional)

- Are meetings inclusive, or do senior male editors dominate?
- Are jokes or language in the office respectful to all genders?
- Is there an invisible “boys’ club” that influences assignments or promotions?
- Is motherhood seen as a disadvantage?

## 8. Gender Sensitive languages



(Do's)

- Use neutral and respectful terminology
- Use factual descriptions (show, don't tell)
- Ensure consent before using images or quotes
- Refer to women and men consistently

- Avoid sexualized or derogatory terms
- Do not use clickbait or biased titles
- Avoid victim-blaming language
- Do not quote minors without guardian consent



(Don'ts)

## 9. Gender & Conflict-Sensitive Journalism

What is gender- and conflict-sensitive journalism?

- Challenges stereotypes & patriarchal attitudes
- Covers diverse voices across peace & conflict
- Explains root causes and solutions of conflict
- Handles SGBV reporting with dignity and respect



# Gender & Conflict-Sensitive Journalism (Continuous)

## Guideline 1: Gender-Balanced Coverage

- Increase women experts & peacebuilders in media
- Monitor gender representation & visibility
- Use expert databases to debunk ‘no women experts’ myth
- Consult women's CSOs when covering conflict



## Guideline 2: Diversity Voices

- Gender includes men, women, LGBTQ+, boys, girls
- Highlight intersecting identities (ethnic, indigenous, disabled)
- Seek minority voices even when story not ‘about’ them
- Show differing impacts of conflict across groups



## Guideline 3: Avoid Gender Stereotypes

- Avoid portraying men as only strong and women as victims
- Highlight agency, not victimhood
- Represent women & LGBTQ+ people as survivors
- Avoid unnecessary personal details (marital status, appearance)



## Guideline 4: Use Inclusive, Non Sexist Language

- Avoid ‘he’ as generic pronoun—use they/he-she
- Avoid sexist job titles (e.g., ‘Cleaning lady’)—use neutral terms
- Use precise legal terms for violence (‘he raped her’)
- Use correct terms preferred by LGBTQ+ people



## Guideline 4 (continued): Gender-Sensitive Images

- Avoid images that depict women as weak/passive
- Avoid sensationalist LGBTQ+ imagery
- Choose neutral angles and respectful portrayals



### Guideline 5: Prioritize Gender-Related Topics

- Cover GBV in conflict, women's rights, peace leadership
- Question what is considered newsworthy
- Give visibility to marginalized groups' stories
- Hold governments accountable to UNSCR 1325



### Guideline 6: De-normalize Conflict-Related GBV

- Explain systemic patterns behind wartime sexual violence
- Center survivors' experiences—not perpetrators
- Frame GBV as a crime with historical and legal context



### Guideline 7: Survivor-Centered Reporting

- Use active voice: 'he raped her'
- Avoid re-traumatization; move at survivor pace
- Avoid graphic details unless essential
- Use images showing resilience, not suffering



### Guideline 8: Safety First

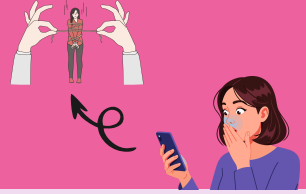
- Explain risks, ensure informed consent at every step
- Prefer anonymity for survivors
- Avoid outing LGBTQ+ people without consent
- Be willing to drop a story to protect survivor safety



# 10. Tips for Reporting on GBV

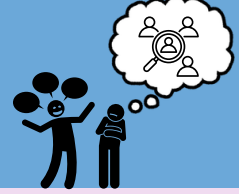
## Tip 1

Do not show images of victims or images that cause shock or distress to readers or listeners.



## Tip 2

Do not provide too many details that could identify the victim.



## Tip 3

Focus on the perpetrator's actions rather than the victim.

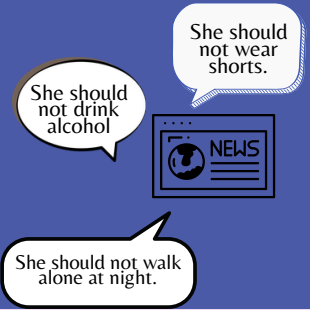


## Tip 4

Do not use messages that require women to do this or that in order to prevent men from committing violence against themselves.

For example: Bad reporting.

- She should not wear shorts.
- She should not walk alone at night.
- She should not drink alcohol.

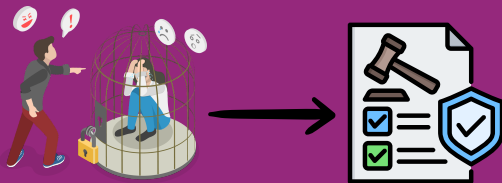


## 10. Tips for Reporting on GBV (Continues)



Do not make excuses for the perpetrator by saying that the violence is caused by jealousy, drunkenness, drug addiction, not in a right state of mind, or overcome by lust.

Tip 5



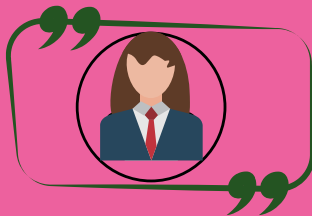
Write the title of the article to show that violence against women is a crime that requires legal enforcement or a serious problem that affects people's lives.

Tip 6



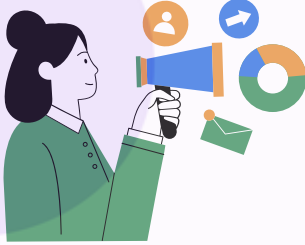
Do not report violence against women in a humorous or entertaining way.

Tip 7



Quote the opinions of relevant experts or competent institutions to raise public awareness. About the roots of violence against women, changing misconceptions in society, and understanding the level of punishment according to the law

Tip 8



## 11. Media's Role as a Change Agent

Media's role as a change agent does not begin only with published stories. It starts with individual awareness, values, and everyday choices, and is strengthened through newsroom cultures, leadership, and institutional practices. Only when these internal dimensions are examined and addressed can media contribute meaningfully to social change.

By reflecting on personal biases, power, and privilege, media professionals can challenge harmful norms and stereotypes within themselves and their organizations. Gender-responsive and inclusive newsroom practices create the foundation for ethical, accurate, and respectful engagement with communities and audiences.

When media moves outward from this internal work, it has the power to amplify diverse voices, hold power to account, and promote narratives that advance gender equality, disability inclusion, and social justice. In this way, media becomes not only a channel of information, but a transformative actor that supports dignity, accountability, and lasting social change.



## Acknowledgement

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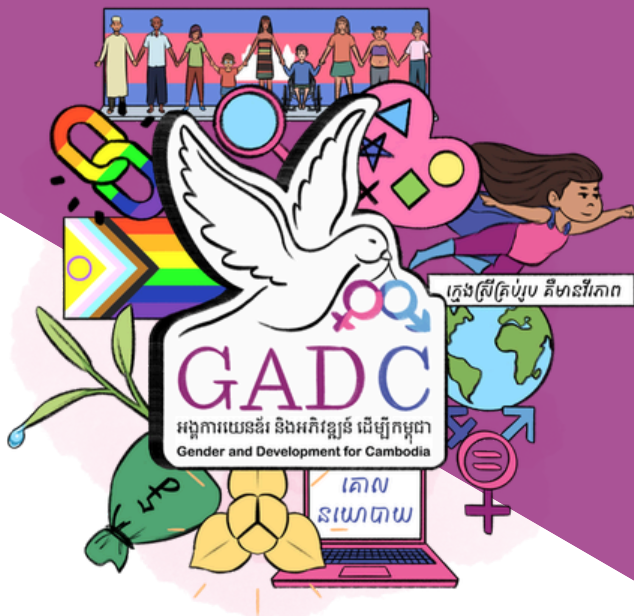


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