

A Mapping and Content Analysis of Gender Practices in Donors Who Fund Global Health Research*

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Summary

With the inception of the Sustainable Development Goals, gender, has once again evolved into a global priority. Research for development donors are grappling with how to best present their gendered stance. One of the key entry areas for gender integration is through health research. This project assesses the current landscape of gender practices in institutions that fund global health research for development – exploring concepts of gender equality, monitoring, application, and policy.

1. Relevance

In the current political climate, gender has become an integral component of sustainable change and meaningful development. Amongst the world's most influential research donors, there is little cross-communication and analysis on how best to integrate gender institutionally to effectively support recipients of funds in the Global South.

2. Aims & Objectives

This project aims to identify, map, and analyse the theoretical and conceptual practices to gender in global health research funding institutions. In doing so, the findings seek to fill the gaps in gender approaches and aid these institutions in improving their transparent gender methods.

3. Methods

This project looked at 27 key funding institutions that support global health research. This review looked at institution's publicly available information related gender: definitions, strategies and requirements, indicators, tools, frameworks, and monitoring and evaluation. This information was collected and analyzed through a scoping review of the selected donors. The results were synthesized through a content analysis approach utilizing qualitative text data. Based on this collected information, the project produced a visual map or catalogue web platform of gender approaches. A summary of the qualitative data has been presented in a 30-page report, including donor recommendations.

4. Results

This project discovered clear gaps within donor's institutionalized gender practices, unclear expectations on gender in the research supported, and highlighted areas for recommendation. It is apparent that there is significant disjointedness between how gender is defined and how it is implemented on. Donors fail to align their definitions and understanding of gender with the operationalization of gender. There is a lack of publicly available information, inconsistency across institutions' gender practices, and redundancy in gender tools. Though gender is clearly a priority for the selected donors, its integration is at the institution-wide framework level, often missing or ignored within the health programmatic-level. The keys areas of recommendations were outlined as clearer indicators, informed tools, comprehensive frameworks, and concrete strategies and recommendations.

5. Conclusions

This project explores an area often misunderstood within gender but critically important in shaping the gender research field for global development. This project showcases the importance of transparent gender approaches across the donors who dictate the gender field, specifically in global health.

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