



Pathways to gender Justice – Second Phase Overview – May 2008

The Canadian Council for Refugees is working on the second phase of the Pathways to Gender Justice Project, which aims at helping organizations engage in gender justice internally, with staff and service users. During this second phase, the CCR is developing a template to be used together with the Pathways to Gender Justice Toolkit, launched by the CCR in November 2006 and available at the CCR publications table and online at <http://www.ccrweb.ca/Gender.pdf>

The toolkit and the template are intended to assist organizations and individuals working with and for immigrants, refugees and non-status people, to build gender justice within an organization's management, programs and services as well as in frontline workers' interventions. More specifically, the template gives organizations and individuals concrete recommendations on how to apply the learnings acquired through the use of the toolkit in different areas of their organization.

This template is currently being developed collectively with managers, front line workers, program participants, service users and researchers from organizations across Canada. With this template, we hope to contribute to ongoing organizational development and transformation towards full gender competency. We would like to emphasize that "gender" is about all of us, so gender justice is a process that should involve everyone, not just women and girls. Gender-based analysis benefits all sexes and genders including women, men, intersex and transgender people.

The template and toolkit are developed with an understanding that different forms of oppression intersect and create different experiences of the migration and settlement process. Social and individual power relationships are affected by sex, gender, race, ability, sexual orientation, status, level of income, age, faith and nationality, among many. These factors and the way they intersect impact on people's life in general, work, education and the social services they receive.

In the following pages, you will find an overview of the sections of the template, as well as a draft example of a template section. This is included for illustration purposes. We welcome your feedback on the following content. This is one of the ways you can participate in the project, as we are currently looking for individuals and organizations to get involved in making the template as useful and easy to use as possible, and to help promote it locally across Canada. Also, the template will be pilot-tested in different organizations during this summer. If you or your organization would like to be involved, or if you want to give feedback on this draft, please contact the Project Coordinator, Yukyung Kim-Cho at gender@ccrweb.ca

Overview of the sections of the template

1. Presentation and objectives of the template

- Brief reference to CCR Gender Tool Kit, and reasons for the creation and use of this template.
- Objectives of the template: ongoing organizational development and transformation towards full gender competency
- Intersectional, anti-oppression approach

2. How to use the template

- Each organization is different, each organization will determine its own path towards gender justice
- Challenges and recommendations
- Areas where the toolkit can be applied (brief presentation of areas, and reference to what page or section to go in order to engage in a chosen area or areas)

3. Start here: a quick & easy general self-assessment questionnaire (allowing orgs to identify specific areas where they can decide to undertake improvement)

4. The Areas

- Mission and Vision
 - a) Assessment (brief, easy to use questionnaire)
 - b) Template (what to do)
 - c) Example
- Governance: Policy
 - a) Assessment (brief, easy to use questionnaire)
 - b) Template (what to do)
 - c) Example
- Governance: Board
 - a) Assessment (brief, easy to use questionnaire)
 - b) Template (what to do)
 - c) Example
- Communications and outreach
- Management: Human Resources
- Management: Budget
- Direct services: Program design
- Direct services: workers' competency
- Etc.

6. Evaluation and follow-up

7. Appendixes

- Best practices
 - Other resources
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DRAFT for illustration purposes

GOVERNANCE

In applying a gender-based approach to governance, one possible first step is to start working with board members. This will help lay the ground towards changing the mission statement or developing a gender policy. Leaders at the governance level need to take ownership of the gender-based approach to the organization's work and fully understand its importance. This is a good strategy to multiply the number of proactive supporters in key positions in the transformation process.

Mission and Vision

(...)

Policies

(...)

Board

General principles:

In terms of Board composition, organizations generally use the concept and practice of “gender parity”, which refers to equal presence of women and men. That is extremely important, but not enough: it would be a significant shortcoming if all the women and men who sit in the Board fit within prescribed gender patterns of appearance or behaviour. As well, an organization's Board should recognize the diversity of gendered identities, including transgender people, and intersex people, and make significant efforts to include them in its composition.

From an intersectional perspective, a Board should have diverse representation in terms of other identity characteristics or political interests that intersect with gender, such as race, sexual orientation, faith, ability, immigration status, etc., in order to be sensitive to gender issues as they affect immigrant and refugee communities or sub-communities differently.

It is also important to avoid tokenism, i.e. having people on the board just because of the ‘identity’ or ‘community’ they represent without a true commitment by the board to address the issues such a ‘group’ is facing.

Gender parity and gender inclusiveness, and intersectional representation are not enough if the gender justice perspective is not fully supported by Board members. In other words, the Board (women and men, transgender or intersex people from diverse communities)

should become intentionally engaged towards progressively integrating gender to the organization's work and become increasingly familiar and at ease in using the gender-based approach in an intersectional manner.

a) Assessment (brief, easy to use questionnaire)

Look at the demographic composition of your board.

How many men, how many women sit around the table?

Who on the board is using a gender-based approach or is interested in building gender justice?

Are there any board members who identify as feminists? If so, what does this mean for them?

Are there any representatives of particular groups? What diverse communities or issues are represented and voiced?

Whose interests are represented on the board?

Are refugee and immigrant women represented in the Board?

Who are leading Board members? Who are dominant?

How willing or ready is the Board to undertake the path to gender justice?

b) Template (what to do)

An organization should be proactive in recruiting diverse board members.

Recruit board members not only based on personal identity, but also on experience, contribution and dedication. This should be built into your outreach work targeting the diverse communities you serve and that need to inform your organizations' work.

Election of Board members: explicitly encourage nominations that allow the organization to count on diverse and competent representation. Build this into the formal procedural aspects of nominations and elections.

To avoid tokenism: the person who represents a community is there because, on the one hand, she brings her community's issues to the process and, on the other hand, the board is committed to address the issues of that group. This commitment can eventually be included in a gender policy, can be explained to new board members and reminded to the board through regular training sessions.

Discuss and agree with Board members around training needs and a training plan to gain competency. Training should aim to bring Board members up to speed on gender, but from an increasingly intersectional perspective.

Build gender analysis as an intentional, ongoing endeavour that informs the Board's agenda and meetings. Make sure the intersectional approach is integrated.

c) Example