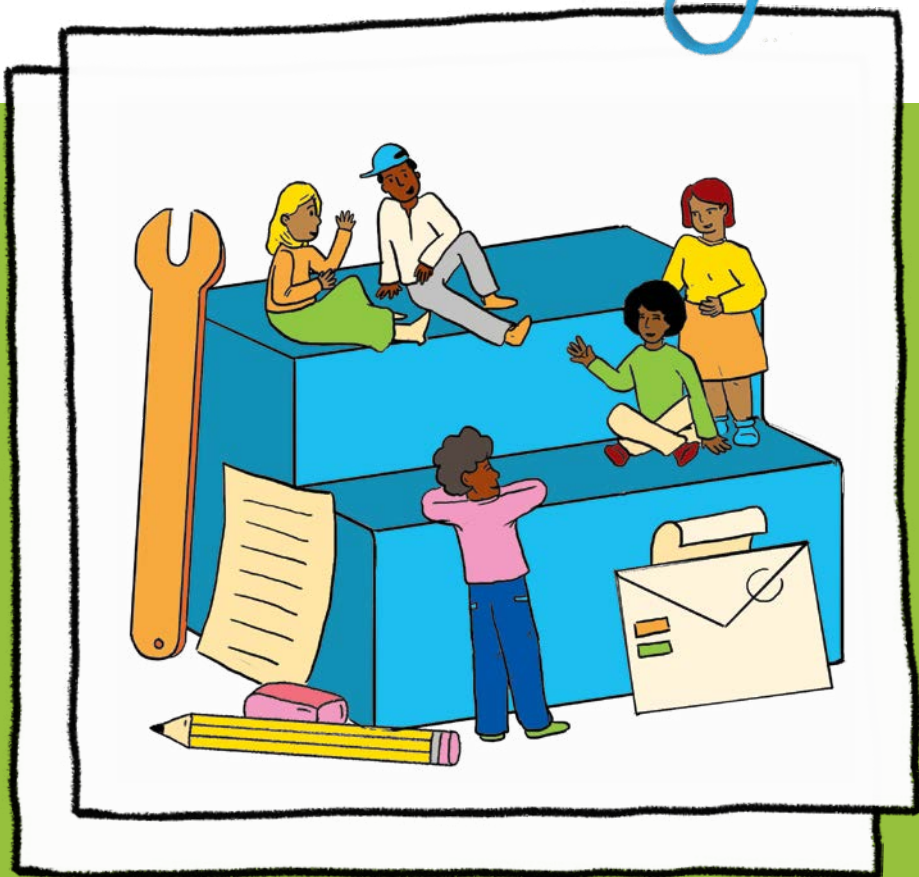


# Free to be You and Me: A living toolkit for group leaders



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# 1. About this toolkit



This “Free to be You and Me” toolkit is an adaptation of one first published in 2019 by Service Civil International (SCI). It aims to support non-formal education (NFE) trainers, youth workers, and coordinators of international volunteer projects/camps and exchanges to address Gender and Sexuality in their work. This toolkit tries to provide comprehensive information on gender and sexuality along with step-by-step procedures and easy-to-use implementation tools to help educators engage in best practises when educating youth, and/or other groups.

In 2020, African partners of SCI identified several working priorities related to gender equality and inclusion:

- \* Tackling gender-based violence in society;
- \* Tackling gender-based discrimination and stigmatisation;
- \* Encouraging women’s participation and leadership in activities;
- \* Gender mainstreaming in all projects and community action.

This living version of “Free to be You and Me”, created in 2021, is adapted to be a more flexible and practical resource, usable in different local realities. It is intended to help activity leaders to plan and carry out activities which go some way to addressing specific needs (those highlighted above and others) and to maintain an inclusive approach in their leadership.

This toolkit came to life in a cooperative framework of several projects - Step to the future: empowering youth leaders to tackle gender inequalities, and Grassroots change: Volunteering, leadership and emancipation through hands-on work and mentoring, thanks to financial support of the UNESCO's Participation Programme and the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union. Additionally, the checklists were created by the participants of the online seminar “Gender Matters!” by SCI Switzerland.



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## 1.1 Gender and SCl

SCl has been working to promote peace, non-violence, human rights, social justice and international understanding as an alternative to war since 1920. SCl is open to all, irrespective of gender identity, sex, race, ethnicity, colour, age, disability, religion, culture or language. SCl views equal inclusion, participation and treatment of all as fundamental to peace.

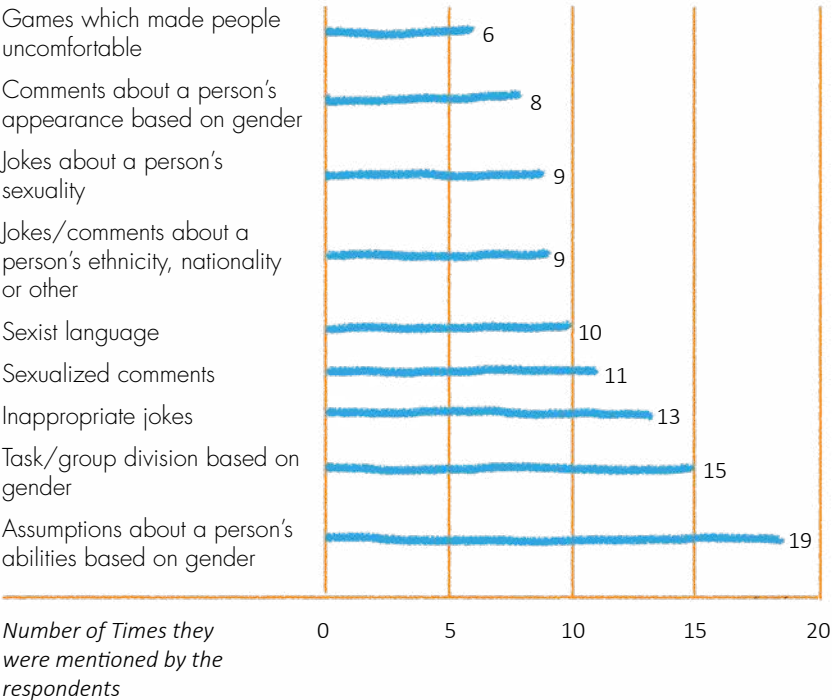
Gender inequalities arise from different treatment of people according to their gender and sexual orientation. They are expressed in economic, social, and political institutions that systematically reinforce unequal roles, rights, and opportunities. In most societies, structural inequalities result in the marginalisation and discrimination of people with non-normative gender and/or sexuality from childhood on. Connected stereotypes and prejudices influence everyday life experiences, often leading to exclusion. SCl sees this as violence and therefore seeks to deal with the issue.

## 1.2 Why we need this toolkit

SCI has been working to acknowledge, understand and address gender inequalities within its own activities and in the communities in which it works. In 2019, SCI conducted a survey to understand how safe and inclusive its activities are. It gathered personal experiences of 82 workcamp participants and 22 camp coordinators. The results helped to identify both good practices and areas for improvement.

Some SCI volunteers and participants reported that they did not feel fully safe and included during SCI activities. Below are some of the reasons for this, and some practical steps that leaders can take to change this:

Behaviours which threaten the safe space, such as microaggressions, were common during workcamps. 45% of the respondents witnessed one or more of the following issues:



"Guests of the house where we stayed were staring at the girls as we were exiting the bathroom, they asked for our phone numbers and one even asked for sexual services to one of the participants. When rejected, they keep insisting." - Participant

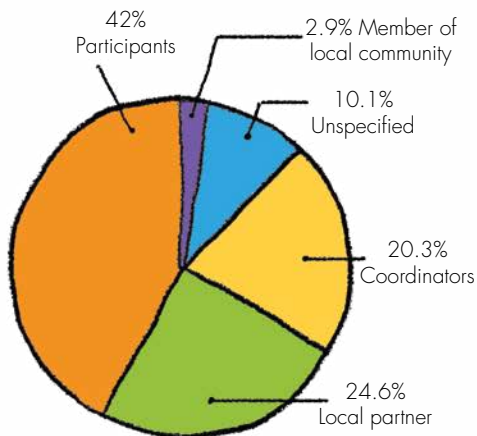
"I was told by the local coordinator in front of the whole group, that he isn't sure in what shower to put me in [male or female] because I am gay." - Participant

"[Local partner] said to [female coordinator] that a boy would be better to lead the workcamp." - Participant

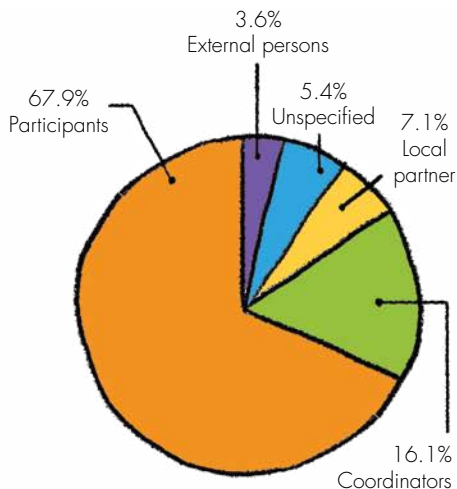


Who was responsible for these behaviours?

Who was responsible for these behaviours?



Who was the target of these behaviours?



40% of the respondents believed issues were correctly dealt with, 60% did not.

"When we organised a festival, there was a guest who touched girls inappropriately. When reported to our local partner, we were told that 'he is just a neighbour with problems, but he is not dangerous'. - Participant

"The coordinators did their best in helping and positioned themselves on our side, but most of the time they were oblivious to it." - Participant

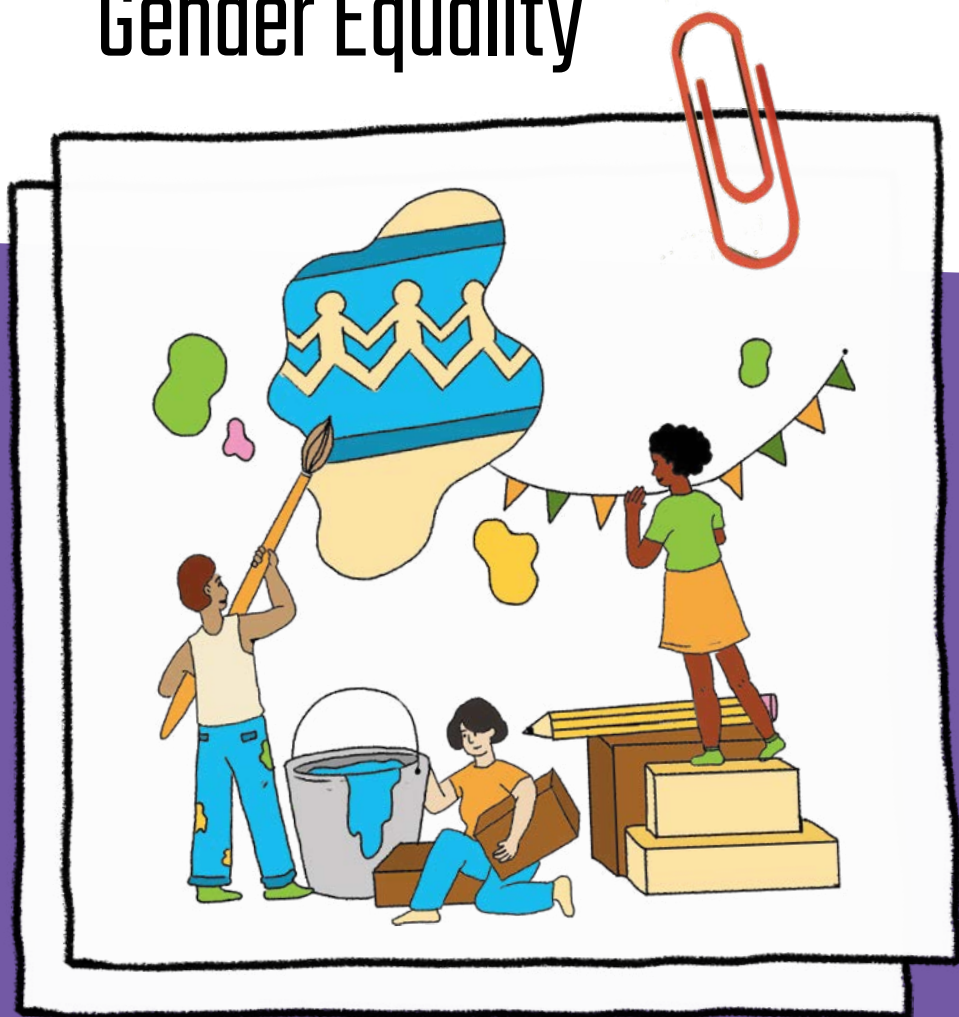
"Comments were made on the back and I realized it during the last days, so I decided not to react." - Coordinator

## Recommendations

- \* The lack of a safe space during SCI activities negatively affects volunteers and activists' experiences with SCI. Creating a safe space is necessary for everybody to fully enjoy the time spent together, create human bonds based on respect and openness, and convey SCI's message that peace is achieved in everyday interactions among individuals with different identities and backgrounds.
- \* Half of the coordinators did not feel prepared to deal with such situations. Camp coordinators as well as local partners should be properly informed with training covering the topic of gender. These examples can be used as a training tool.
- \* Conversations need to take place with local partners about basic expectations for a safe space on workcamps.
- \* Coordinators should make sure to express their openness to talking about all kinds of personal issues in order to create a safe space for everyone.



## 2. Inspiration! Past SCI activities promoting Gender Equality



In this section you can find inspiration for organising volunteer camps, sessions, and activities on the topic of gender equality and inclusion.

- \* Togo: Summer Festival Kékéli Workcamp
- \* Bulgaria: Campaign against Domestic Violence
- \* Albania: Gender Realities and Inclusion Workcamp
- \* Togo: Youth Entrepreneurship for Women's Economic Empowerment workcamp & International Women's Day action
- \* Nigeria: Building Inclusive Paths project
- \* Kenya: Women's Entrepreneurship sessions

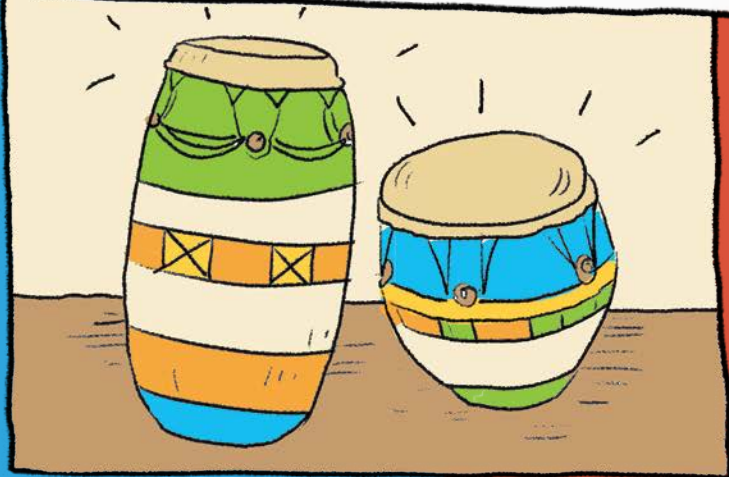


## 2.1 Togo: Summer Festival Kékéli Workcamp

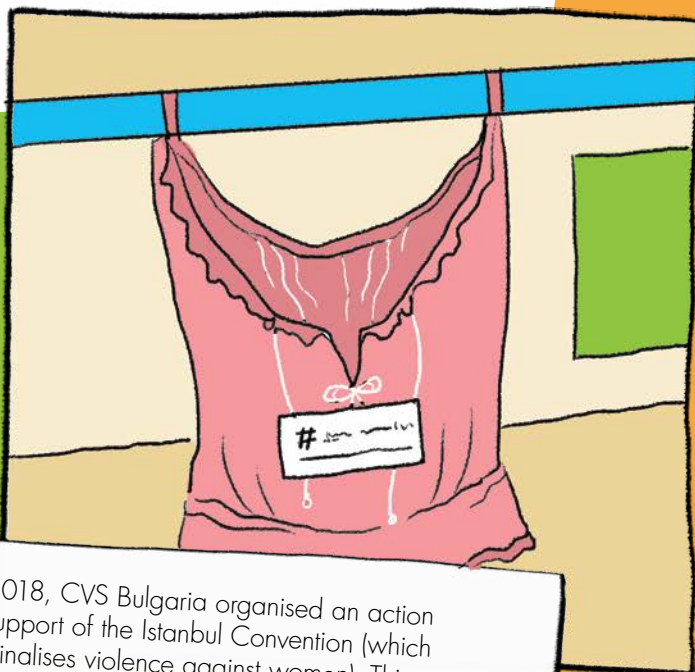
Since 2014 ASTOVOT Togo has been running a yearly cultural project called "Festival Kékéli". Kékéli means "Light" in Ewé and wants to be a crossroads of cultural expression and popular education.

Every summer, many volunteers are welcomed to this workcamp in order to discover the richness of Togolese culture. During two weeks it offers, as part of a popular education approach, several cultural and artistic activities and gives the local population and volunteers the opportunity to create spaces for intercultural exchange and to promote the cultural and artistic heritage of the region where the festival is organised.

In their 5th edition, the festival was organised on themes of women's empowerment. It highlighted female leadership in local governance and encouraged women to become more involved in local development actions. As usual, various folkloric groups will take care to value women in all its dimensions.

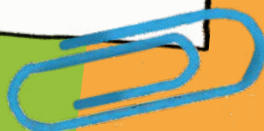


## 2.2 Bulgaria: Campaign against Domestic Violence



In 2018, CVS Bulgaria organised an action in support of the Istanbul Convention (which criminalises violence against women). This was in response to the Bulgarian government cancelling their support of the convention.

Activists shared the hashtag (translation: "the price of silence") in public transport, hanging with items of women's clothing.



## 2.3 Albania: Gender Realities and Inclusion Workcamp

In 2019, PVN Albania organised a volunteer camp involving non-formal activities with children and young people from Roma community, in street situations, and students of the school in the rural area of Tirana.

There were workshops on Gender Equality, Gender roles and gender opportunities, suitable for children and young people with fewer opportunities.

A football match was organised between children and youth from different target groups: Roma, Egyptian, LGBTI, rural areas and non marginalised groups, both girls and boys, to break taboo and promote diversity and integration



## 2.4 Togo: Youth Entrepreneurship for Women's Economic Empowerment workcamp & International Women's Day action



In 2019, ASTOVOT organised a workcamp for the economic empowerment of women and young girls in rural and semi-urban environments

The project aimed to contribute to the self-employment of girls by providing them with the necessary tools to manage a micro-business.

On International Women's Day (8th March) 2021, ASTOVOT discussed with girls about the significance of this day, and from their reflections was born a beautiful mural painting on the fence of their headquarters.



## 2.5 Nigeria: Building Inclusive Paths project

Within BIP VWAN organized a job shadowing of women organizations, series of awareness raising actions and a workcamp in a permaculture project reacting to Climate change through mitigation activities such as tree planting, waste management education in coastal communities.

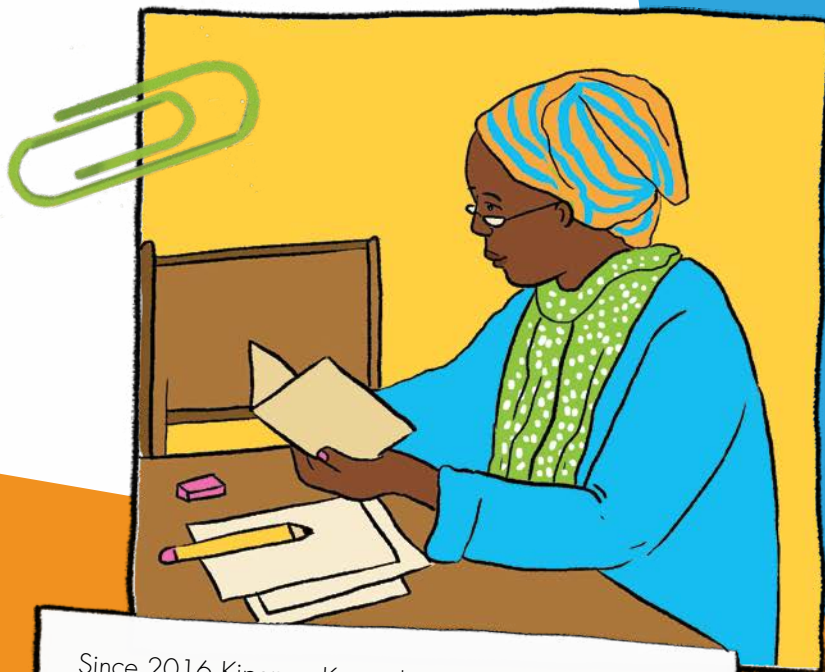
Through the project, a series of empowerment and awareness raising workshops were held to promote the understanding of shifting gender roles and Gender Based Violence.

The project also involved research focused on the perception of gender roles in western Nigeria, through the application of Gender Equitable Men scale questionnaires and interviews a deeper understanding was carved out.

A symposium was organized to disseminate findings and discuss effective actions that can promote and lead to a more equitable gender relations in Nigeria.



## 2.6 Kenya: Women's Entrepreneurship sessions



Since 2016 Kipepeo Kenya has organized sessions and trainings on business development and community microfinance for local women.

Most of the women involved are small scale traders, who have been able to acquire necessary skills to enable them to grow their businesses. Through women's empowerment, Kipepeo aims to build sustainable development and uplift communities. These projects have been possible thanks to local and international volunteers, dedicated to making them a success.

# 3. Checklists for creating a Safer Space around Gender



## 3.1 What is a safer space?

A safer space is a space where participants feel that they will not be judged for who they are and feel free to share their emotions and express themselves if they want to. Note that we use the word safer to highlight that not every participant might feel safe under the same conditions and it is important to acknowledge that every person and group is different. We try to offer some inputs on how to create as safe an environment as possible.



## 3.2 Checklist for Camp Coordinators

- \* Before participants arrive, inspect the facility and make sure that areas like bathrooms can be used by everyone and are not necessarily divided by gender. You can also create stickers for non-binary areas where anyone is free to access.
  - \* When dividing participants into the accommodation arrangement, don't necessarily create a division male/female but let participants arrange themselves. Often accommodation is quite minimal and participants might all sleep in the same room. Make sure that everyone feels comfortable with the arrangement found.
- 
- \* At the beginning of the workcamp, make sure to give a brief introduction and guidelines about the safer space. If you feel like it, you can also host a little session about gender taking inspiration from the "Free to be you and me" toolkit. You can also ask your Sending Organisation to give you some support with this process.
  - \* During the get-to-know activities, you can introduce the concept of pronouns, explain why they are important and suggest playing a game so participants all share their pronouns. This also helps normalise the concept of asking for someone's pronouns instead of assuming.
  - \* On the first day of the camp, it would be nice to dedicate some time to group dynamics. Ask the local Project Partner if you can have some time with the participants to create a group agreement. In this setting you can explain the house rules and, with the participants, you can create the set of rules that the group wishes to follow throughout the workcamp.

- \* This initial time with the volunteers might also be very useful to work on the division of care work and tasks for the following weeks. What you can do is make a list of all the tasks and make a schedule. Let participants put their names on the tasks they want to take over. Make sure to highlight that everyone should try to do all tasks at least once, according to their capacity and willingness.
- \* Throughout the week you can organise some reflection time to evaluate how the workcamp is going. At the end of a day you could dedicate 10/15 minutes for participants to express how they feel, how the day went and if there is anything they want to share or would want to change for the next day. You can decide how often this is needed.
- \* For anonymous communications, you can create a "safe box" where people can write notes and you will then take care of reading them and addressing necessary issues with the group. This might help people who don't like a direct confrontation to still get their opinion heard.
- \* In case you notice you can't handle a situation on your own, contact your Hosting Organisation and ask them to intervene and support you.



## 3.3 Checklist for Local Partner Organisations in workcamps

- \* Together with the Hosting Organisation, make an evaluation of the spaces at your disposal. In case you have multiple rooms where participants can stay, make sure to inform the Hosting Organisation. In the camp description, the Hosting Organisation could inform applicants that the spaces in the workcamp are not gendered. Those who would prefer to stay in a room with people of their own gender can state it in their Application Form.
- \* At the beginning of the camp, give a clear presentation of the programme and the activities that will be done throughout the week. Let participants know what will be expected of them. Make sure that your expectations on work are not biased. Do not assume that someone is better at a task because of their gender. Make sure that participants try as many different tasks and don't assign tasks on a gender basis but focus more on willingness and abilities.
- \* You are the link between volunteers and the local community. It could happen that the balance of the Safer Space is threatened by outside interferences. Make sure that the rest of the staff is informed about task divisions and that there is no (micro)aggression towards the participants. Be ready to mediate with other members of the local team or even with people of the local community in case a gender-based conflict arises.
- \* In case you notice any (micro)aggression in the group, inform the Camp Coordinator and together you can address the topic with the group. In case you notice you can't handle a situation on your own, contact the Hosting Organisation and ask them to intervene and support you.



## 3.4 Checklist for Hosting Organisations

- \* Together with the Local Partner Organisation, make an evaluation of the spaces at your disposal. It is important to give participants information about the sleeping accommodation in advance. In the Camp description you could add a brief description of the spaces. In case the accommodation has multiple rooms where participants can stay, make sure to inform applicants that the spaces in the workcamp are not gendered, but those who would prefer to stay in a room with people of their own gender can state it in their Application Form. In case the sleeping area is one big room with no possibility to offer separated spaces, make sure to state it in the description of the camp. Make sure that there is at least once space where the participants can have some privacy. If this is not possible, also add it to the camp description.

- \* Offer some preparation to Camp Coordinators on the topics of Gender and Safer Spaces. Give them different inputs on how they could create a safer space, how they can use a more gender-inclusive language during the camp, and stress the importance that tasks at the camp should not be divided on gender basis but more on willingness and abilities. Show them how to create a Group Agreement. If you need inputs on workshops you can check the "Free to be you and me" toolkit or contact the Gender Blenders working group: [contact.genderblenders@sci.ngo](mailto:contact.genderblenders@sci.ngo)



- \* Have a designated emergency person within your staff who has some knowledge of the topic and that is available to intervene throughout the workcamp.
- \* Before the workcamp season starts, plan Emergency Guidelines to follow in case there should be any problems throughout the workcamp. You can also search local organisations that are engaged and have experience in the topic and ask them to support you with the creation of your Emergency Guidelines.

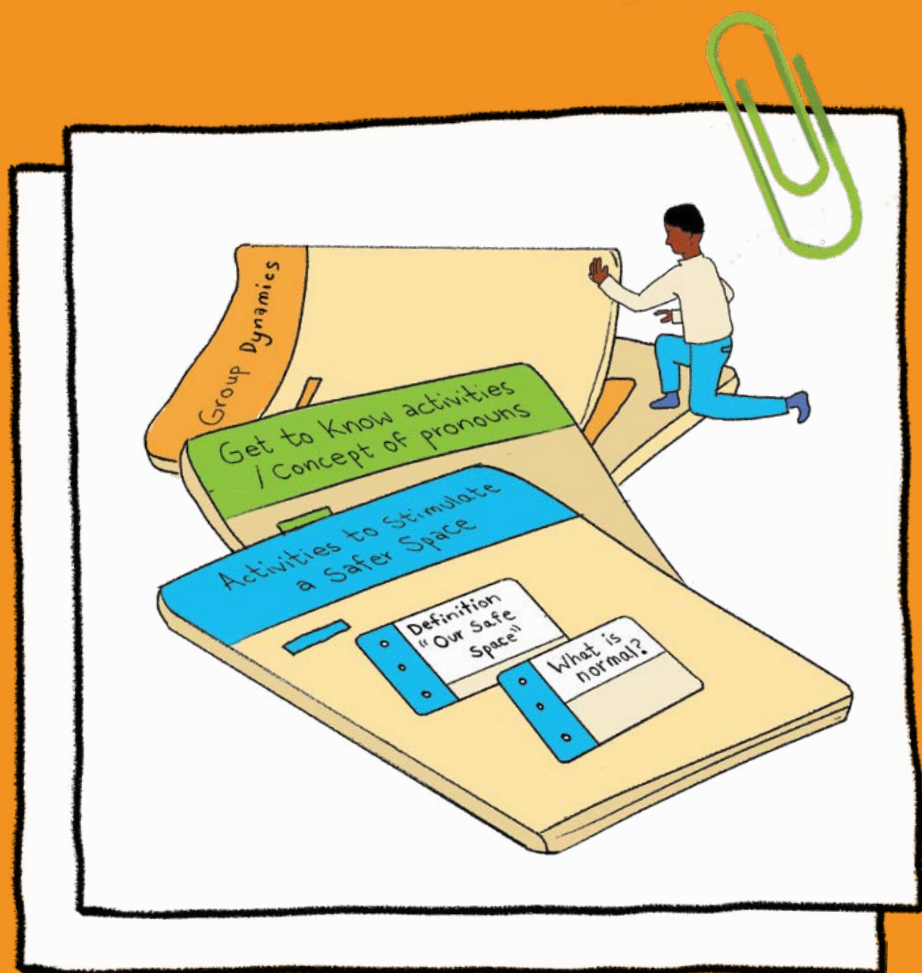


## 3.5 Checklist for Sending Organisations

- \* At the Preparation Seminar, before volunteers leave for their workcamp, make sure that the topic of Gender and Safer Spaces is brought up and discussed. Make sure that participants process the information and go through a self-reflection and have an understanding of their position and privileges. Discuss the importance of a gender-inclusive language, pronouns as well as giving an overview on what gender is. To structure these workshops, you can use the toolkit "free to be you and me" or ask the working group Gender Blenders to support you: [contact.genderblenders@sci.ngo](mailto:contact.genderblenders@sci.ngo)
- \* Inform participants that you are available to support them once they are abroad if they need you.



## 4. Non-formal education activities



# Activities to stimulate a safer space

## 4.1 Definition "Our Safe Space"

**Aim:** Creating a common understanding of a safe space for the project; Being aware of the personal needs of others; Understanding your own needs better.

**Target audience:** Seminar/ trainings/ volunteer camp groups on day 1 or 2 of their project

**Allocated time:** 45 – 60 minutes

**Method:** Brainstorming and sharing

**Materials needed:** 2 flipcharts with the questions prepared, colorful pens

**Introduction:** 5 min

Make sure that the group is feeling comfortable with each other and in a relaxed atmosphere. Explain that the project you are on is only just starting, and it is important for you and all of them that during the project everyone feels safe, comfortable and that they can be themselves without any worries. For this it is important that we understand what it means for all of us to feel safe. Divide them in two groups. If these groups are more than 5 people, divide them in 4 groups and each of the below questions can be answered by 2 groups, not just one. Let them know that in the groups they will receive a flipchart with a question and that they will have 20 minutes to answer the question as a group and as individuals. They have to write the information with colorful pens on the flipchart.

**Main activity:** 35-40 min

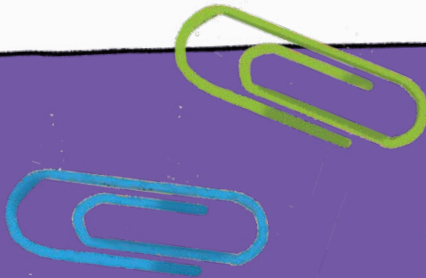
In the groups the participants will work on their flipcharts for 20 minutes and take notes on the flip chart of all the things that come up. One flipchart says: "What makes you feel unsafe?" The other: "What do you need to feel safe?" After this brainstorming the groups present to each other – first the one that defined the needs for a safe space, then the one of unsafe spaces. After that the second group will be asked to tell the first what to add to their poster, turning their negative collection into a positive one. The poster with "What do you need to feel safe?" will therefore contain all the needs of the whole group and will be put on the wall as a reminder for the whole project period.

**Debriefing:** 0-10 min

If you have already done the group agreement, make sure that it is updated with things that came up in this discussion.

**Conclusion:** 5 min

It is very important we all respect these personal and group needs and that when we communicate to each other when the needs are not met and someone is not feeling well. Always be aware of your own actions and the reactions to them.



## 4.2 What is normal?

**Topic:** non-existence of the norm

**Aim:** Discussing different perspectives and attitudes

**Target audience:** Volunteers and Young people on trainings/ camps/ seminars etc.; Young people preparing for an international project; around 10 participants

**Allocated time:** 20 – 30 minutes

**Method:** This is a discussion on what is "normal", on the basis of trivial questions from daily life. It may serve as an introduction to a workshop.

**Materials needed:** Paper, pens, seating

**Introduction:** 5 min

Hand out papers and pens. Explain that you will state questions and each participant will silently write down the answers.

**Main activity:** 5 min

The questions should not be about facts, but rather possible to answer based on opinion. Don't give too much time, they should just write what comes to their mind first

Examples for questions:

- \* How many square meters is a big apartment?
- \* What is the income of a person who earns a lot?
- \* From what age is a person no longer considered young?
- \* How many guests are invited to a small wedding?
- \* How often do you eat fish?
- \* How many cups of coffee do you drink on a normal day?
- \* How many pairs of shoes is one pair too much?
- \* How tall does a person have to be to be considered tall?
- \* What should never be missing in an average household? The 3 main things
- \* Add your own question

**Debriefing:** 5 – 15 min

Compare the answers and discuss:

- \* Why are they different?
- \* Who defines what is considered as normal as answers to these questions?
- \* Would the answers be different if we came from a different background?
- \* How do the notions of what is normal influence us?

**Conclusion:** 5 min

Thank the participants for their participation and remind them that just because something is considered "normal" does not mean it is right for us, just like every person's "normal" can be different to another's.

# Get-to-know activities/ concept of pronouns

## 4.3 Fruit salad

**Topic:** Gender roles and stereotypes; Civil Courage (possibly)

**Aim:** Get-to-know each other; Get an idea of the understanding participants have of the topic Gender, Sexuality and Civil Courage

**Target audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, seminars, trainings, camp coordinator trainings, pre-departure trainings etc. as well as in schools or with other interested groups

**Group size:**  
Minimum 8 people

**Allocated time:**  
10 - 30 min

**Method:**  
game

**Materials needed:** chairs for each person in the group, minus one

**Introduction:** 2 min

Let's create the perfect circle in which we can all see each other. Make sure no drinks or valuables are on the floor, and you do not have anything in your hands. You as the facilitator take your chair out, let them close the hole in the circle and start standing in the middle with the explanation





**Main activity:** 5 - 10 min

Explain to the participants that there will always be one person in the middle who will make a statement that refers to him- or herself in the following way: "Everyone who..." Make an example, such as "Everyone who played with dolls when they were a child.", "Everyone who likes the series 'This is us'.", "Everyone who has been to...". When the person in the middle says that sentence everyone in the circle who this applies to has to change place. Be fast because also the person from the middle will try to sit down so one person will again be left standing and the game repeats itself.

Let the participants know that if a topic comes up that applies to them but they don't feel comfortable sharing that with the group they can also just stay seated and skip that example.

You can let the participants start playing with basic examples, such as "Everyone who is blonde/ is wearing a black shirt." But after 2/3 minutes, tell them that their examples should be related to the topic of the seminar/ training/ workshop, such as the example with dolls that you gave in the beginning. Let them continue playing for 5 - 10 minutes depending on how it is going.

**Debriefing:** 0 - 20 min

This is a warm up activity so it does not need much debriefing (as it is often connected to a workshop after), but if you want to you can facilitate a reflection, starting with the following questions:

- \* How was that? Was it easy to find examples?
- \* Were you surprised by some of the examples?
- \* Why were you surprised?
- \* What did you observe about the reaction and who stood up for which statement?
- \* What did these examples represent?
- \* What were gender roles or stereotypes you could observe in these statements?
- \* For the last question you can make a collection on a flipchart to summarise the discussion.

This collection can serve you later in a seminar/ training/ workshop.

## 4.4 Story of my name

**Topic:** Relationship to one's own name, pronouns

**Aim:** Get to know; Give the possibility to participants to state clearly in which pronoun they wish used when referred to them

**Target audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, seminars, trainings, camp coordinator trainings, pre-departure trainings etc. as well as in schools or with other interested groups

**Allocated time:** 30 – 45 min

**Method:** Sharing

**Materials needed:**  
Poster with questions

**Introduction:** 5 min  
Name game

**Main activity:** 30 - 40 min

Put a poster on the wall with the following questions: "Story of my name: What experiences do you associate with your name? Can people usually pronounce your name? What does your name mean? What pronoun should be used referring to you? Can your name be translated to another language? Do you like your name? Do you have any nicknames?"

You can choose to remove 2/3 of the above if you wish.



Note: Often this game includes questions like "Who chose the name for you and why?" / "Did you ever change your name?". We recommend not to use these questions as they put some people, e.g. transgender, in the awkward position of either lying or having to explain their story and being outed at a point when they might not want to do so. Explain to the participants that they will now share with each other the history and the everyday experiences of their names, by answering the questions on the poster. Based on the size of the group you can choose whether the sharing will take place in smaller groups of 3 or 4 or whether you share in the plenary. If there are more than 8 participants we suggest you do it in smaller groups, as otherwise it becomes very long. If the participants have shared in smaller groups, make a final round in the plenary where people can share one thing about each person.

As this is a get-to-know activity no debriefing is necessary, but make sure to point out the importance of respecting and using the pronouns of people the way they want them applied and that represents them the most. The activity can be combined with a workshop about empathy and respect in a safe space, as it focuses on personal experiences and listening.



## 4.5 Portraits

**Topic:** Get to know each other

**Target audience:** can be done everywhere with groups that just met

**Group size:** minimum 8

**Allocated time:** 25 minutes

**Method:** drawing

**Materials needed:** one paper per person and pens or colours. One chair or pillow per participant.



**Introduction:** 5 min

Participants will sit in front of each other in pairs making a circle (half the group make a circle facing outwards, the other half make an outer circle each facing someone). Give a paper and a pen to each participant. Ask each participant to write the name of the person in front of them on top of the paper.

**Main activity:** 15 min

Ask all of them to draw the shape of the face of the person in front of them. After that, ask them to exchange the paper with their partner (so each participant gets their own) and the group in the outer circle moves to the right one seat. Ask to exchange the paper again with their new partner and ask to draw the eyes. Exchange papers again. After each part will be drawn the participants give each other their papers back and the outside circle moves one to the right. The following things will be drawn: • Nose • Mouth • Ears • Hair • Whatever you feel is missing

**Debriefing:** 5 min

You can use this to stick them on the wall and write their own pronouns next to the faces after the pronouns session.



# Group dynamics

## 4.6 GENDERED WORLD(S): Gender Equality and Human Rights

**Source:** <http://www.includegender.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BreakTheNorm.pdf>

**Topic:** human rights and gender equality

**Aim:** Awaken participants' creativity to find new ways to advance gender equality

**Target audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, seminars, trainings, camp coordinator trainings, pre-departure trainings etc. as well as in schools or with other interested groups

**Allocated time:** 60 min

**Method:** Brainstorming; Group discussion

**Materials needed:** Whiteboard/flipchart, whiteboard pen/marker, large papers for the groups

**Introduction:** 5 min

Brief presentation about human rights and gender equality to give the exercise a context, then guide participants through the exercise, and splitting the big group into smaller groups.

**Main activity: 25 min**

Each sub-group receives a large paper with a title previously written on it (aspects of gender equality and human rights, e.g. economic rights, reproductive rights, access to education, gender stereotypes). The groups have to imagine that in 30 years from now, there will be no inequality and no discrimination in the field that they are working on. They need to discuss amongst each other how they imagine this would look like, and write down their main ideas on the paper. In the second phase, linked to the different aspects they collected during the first phase of brainstorming (10-20 minutes) they can suggest practical, positive and concrete measures that individuals/decision-makers can take (these can be real policies they know about or imagined, creative, even seemingly impossible ones) to ensure that this imagined vision of equality will be achieved.

**Debriefing: 20 min**

The small groups share their ideas with the whole group and have a chance to reflect on each other's ideas

**Conclusion: 10 min**

Wrap-up, and if there is time, the facilitator can present a couple of sources, existing measures and further ideas.



## 4.7 Gendered lessons in fairy tales

**Topic:** Gender stereotypes

**Aim:** Raise awareness on gender stereotypes that we are confronted with as children and reflect on how they influence young people

**Target audience:** Can be on a seminar/ training/ camp or in any other group

**Allocated time:** 60 - 90 minutes

**Method:** Analysis, rewriting stereotypes

**Materials needed:** flipcharts, pens, white papers

**Introduction:** 5 min

Let the participants know that we will have a look at the fairytales that they grew up with as children. Collect a list of these on a flipchart. Then divide the participants in groups of 4-5 people. Each of the groups will choose one fairytale to work on (not more than one group per fairytale).



**Main activity:** 30-45 min (part 1) + 20-35 min (part 2)

Part 1 - analysis:

In groups the participants will collect on a flipchart in 3 columns:

- \* characteristics/ adjectives to describe male characters of the story
- \* characteristics/ adjectives to describe female characters of the story
- \* characteristics/ adjectives to describe characters of the story that are either non-binary or no gender is clearly assigned to them

After 20 minutes ask them to join you in the plenary again. Let them present their conclusions.

Collect on another flipchart answers to the following question: How do stereotypes like this influence young children in their development and views of themselves and the society around them?

Part 2 - rewriting stereotypes:

Let them go back in the same groups and work on the same fairytale. Give them a simple white paper and give them the task to rewrite the same story with the stereotypes switched around, with gender stereotypes broken. After 15 minutes ask them to join you in the plenary again and read the stories to each other.

**Conclusion:** 5 min

Thank the participants for their stories.

# Reflection time

## 4.8 Gender Self Reflection

**Topic:** Personal experience regarding Gender, gender roles, doing gender, gender in youth projects

**Aims:** Raise awareness on different experiences regarding gender; Reflect on how you deal with gender roles; Reflect on how you act on seminars regarding gendered tasks

**Target audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, seminars, trainings, camp coordinator trainings, pre-departure trainings etc. as well as in schools or with other interested groups

**Group size:** Doesn't matter

**Allocated time:** 60 – 75 min

**Method:** Self-reflection, exchange

**Materials needed:** Printed self-reflection questionnaires, enough space for everyone to find privacy

**What to be aware of:** The group should know each other a bit and everybody should have at least one person they feel comfortable with sharing personal stories. The method might force people to come out to the person they talk to. The method can bring up sensitive memories, so there should be space and time for people to have time for themselves soon after.

**Introduction: 5 min**

The facilitator introduces self-reflection. They explain that the participants will get together in pairs with someone they feel comfortable with. Gender diversity might be very interesting when talking about this topic.

It's important to point out that the participants should keep what their partner tells them to themselves. Then the facilitator hands out the self-reflection questionnaires (see below 1. Gender and me, 2. Doing Gender in daily life, 3. Doing Gender in youth projects)

**Main activity: 40 – 60 min**

The participants can go anywhere they want to, in order to think of the questions and exchange their answers. They're told to come back after a certain time. (You can use all or only some questions from the 3 questionnaires mentioned below.)

**Debriefing: 10 min**

The group gets together in the plenary again. The facilitator asks the participants what the self-reflection was like for them and how they feel afterwards. Make sure that the participants don't overshare things from the conversations, and no one feels pushed to share if they do not wish to do so.

**Conclusion: 5 min**

Make sure the participants know that you will be around for some time in case someone wishes to share with you/ needs support.

**1. Gender and Me (20 min)**

Take a few minutes and answer the following questions for yourself. Then take time to talk about your answers. It is up to you how much you want to share with the other person.

- \* What does it mean to you to be male\*, female\*, nonbinary\*, ...?
- \* Which image of being a woman or being a man accompanies you through your daily life?
- \* Which advantages or disadvantages do you have because of your assigned gender?
- \* Do you feel that you must act a certain way because of your gender?
- \* What happens when you don't act that way?
- \* What bothers you about others' behaviour regarding gender?

## 2. Doing Gender in daily life (20 min)

The goal is not to answer all or many questions. Pick 2 to 4 that you would like to talk about. Take a few minutes to think about each question on your own and then exchange in the small group.

- \* How do you talk about men\* / women\*?
- \* To what extent do you judge them by their looks, their success, their strength, sexual partners, their intelligence ...?
- \* What topics do you talk about with friends of the same gender? About which topics with friends of other genders?
- \* Have you ever told a person of another gender that you should or could do a task instead of them? What task was it? How did you/ did the other person react? Which tasks do you find important in the household? Which ones are rather unimportant? Which ones do you normally take over? For which tasks do you make others aware that you have done them?
- \* Do you think about whether you can sleep with different partners and what others think about it? Have you ever heard people judge such a situation? What was the "problem"?
- \* Do you sometimes feel judged because of your clothes? In which situations do you think about what to wear beforehand? Why?

## 3. Doing Gender in youth projects (20 min)

The goal is not to answer all or many questions. Pick 2 to 4 that you would like to talk about. Take a few minutes to think about each question on your own and then exchange in a small group.

- \* Which tasks do you do when you are part of a seminar? Moderating discussions, designing flipcharts, writing protocols, doing the dishes, shifting tables, ...?
- \* How much do you talk in group discussions? Are you always able to talk when you want to?

# Notes

A hand-drawn style illustration of a blank sheet of paper. The paper is white with a thick, black, slightly irregular border. In the top-left corner, there is a small rectangular tab with a wavy top edge, containing the word "Notes" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The paper is positioned on a solid green background that has a slight gradient, appearing darker at the bottom.

## 4.9 I have – I haven't

**Topic:** Reflection, Gender in Society, Experiences

**Aim:** Dive into the topic; Share Experiences; Reflect on how gender influenced us and the society

**Target Audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, seminars, trainings, camp coordinator trainings, pre-departure trainings etc. as well as in schools or with other interested groups

**Allocated Time:** 30 – 50 min **Method:** Positioning and Discussion

**Material needed:** Tape; Room wide enough to be able to support the total of your participants standing in a line.

**What to be aware of:** It can trigger some personal feelings and experiences; People should not comment on the contributions of others; to have a safe-space created beforehand could be helpful.

**Introduction:** 5 min

On the floor there is a line marked with tape. The participants line up in a row on this line. To the left of the line is the "I have" area, to the right of the row is the "I haven't" area. Explain that you will read out statements and they will have to position themselves. Make it clear that if someone does not feel like sharing the answer to one of the statements they can simply stay where they are and not pick a side.

### **Main activity:** 20 – 35 min

Gradually the statements will be read out. Each person answers the question by going to the "I have" or "I haven't" area. You can vary the intensity. Important things to say while explaining: Lying is allowed; Don't laugh or comment on the other person's positions. After each statement, the lineup can be viewed as a group. You can either say it's not allowed to talk or you can talk about the statement directly voluntarily. If you allow talking, it should be really clear that laughing or commenting directly on the positions of others is not allowed.

The statements can be related to your project topic. Use at least 10 – 12 statements, but it can be more too. Here are some examples:

- \* I have sent a naked picture of myself through online media to attract attention.
- \* I have participated in sexual activities that I did not feel 100% comfortable with.
- \* I have been to a feminist demonstration.
- \* I have been to a self-help group for people prone to violence.
- \* I have volunteered in a women's shelter

Add your own statement As you can see the topics can be very different. They depend on your aims of the session and your project.

### **Debriefing:** 5 – 10 min

After reading all statements there is a reflection time on the activity.

- \* What was it like to be alone on one side?
- \* What was it like to be on one side in a large group?
- \* What did you notice in particular?
- \* What surprised you?
- \* Have all questions had the same meaning for your lives?
- \* Are there differences between the individual and societal ratings of the different positions?

### **Conclusion:** 5 min

There are different experiences. Our society is very binary and heteronormativity organised. Summarise discussion of participants.

## 4.10 African gender-neutral role games

**Topic:** Challenging gender stereotypes

**Aim:** Raise awareness of gender roles, showing each gender's capacity to do all kinds of tasks, avoiding segregation in the activity

**Target audience:** Can be done in volunteer camps, trainings, schools, on day 1 of the project

**Group size:** Any, but it must be a mixed gender group

**Allocated time:** Morning routine, 15 minutes to explain

**Method:** Tasks division,  
gender role reflection

**Materials needed:**  
None

### Main activity:

There are certain tasks that need to be done each day. They are divided into mixed groups and given a rota of tasks:

- \* Cutting firewood
- \* Caring for the baby
- \* Cutting the grass
- \* Cooking
- \* Cleaning
- \* Doing the dishes
- \* Washing the clothes

### Reflection

Each day we ask participants to reflect on how they felt doing that job.

- \* Were they comfortable?
- \* Was it difficult?
- \* Did everyone participate?



## 4.11 In your shoes / tell my story (at first glance)

**Aim:** Highlight the presence of assumptions based on surface looks ; Debunk superficial stereotypes in society ; Promote open mindedness

**Target audience:** Camp volunteers, school pupils, students, preferably on day 1 of their project

**Group size:** Any even number as participants would be paired.

**Allocated time:** 10 to 15 minutes

**Method:** Sharing, exchange

**Materials needed:** Pen and Paper

### **Main activity:**

In pairs, each individual would try to answer the following without asking the other

*Your name is –*

*Your pronoun is-*

*Your hobbies are :*

*You talk about your feelings : Yes or No*

*Favorite color is – because–*

*If you could be an animal you could be a – because–*

*Your totem is–*

*Your favorite subject at school is /was–*

*E.T.C*

### **Reflection**

Person A can discuss why they chose the answers they did as B listens, B will then confirm or correct A and vice versa

# 5. Resources



## 5.1 Suggested links

Consent is as simple as tea (2.50 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8>



The danger of a single story (19.16 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs241zeg&t=594s>



I have lived as a man and a woman (15.24 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrYx7HaUIMY>



Everyday sexism (16.05 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhjsRjC6B8U>

How microaggressions are like mosquito bites (1.58 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450>



Pink or blue (3.08 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65iC2l4KEXo>



True Trans (10 videos, approximately 8 min each)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKCIWuFB3vE>

Expressing Myself. My Way. (3.36 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITRdvGnp1LU>



We should all be feminists (Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie) (30.15 min)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU\\_qWc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU_qWc)



Male and female are binary, but people aren't (Riley J. Dennis) (18.17min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2MEFj8q6rg>

### African Roots of Gender Equality (10.07 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgW8CZEnm7c>



### The urgency of intersectionality (18.40 min)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle\\_crenshaw\\_the\\_urgency\\_of\\_intersectionality](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality)



## 5.2 Definitions of terms

**Sex assigned at birth** can be defined as the physical characteristics of an individual that will often lead them to being assigned as either male or female at birth. In most instances this is decided based on the external genitalia that a person possesses when they are born which are traditionally categorised as either male and female parts. A more comprehensive and scientific criteria of what defines biological sex would be one's chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormones and secondary sex characteristics. Because all these characteristics are not always accounted for when a person's sex is assigned, sex can therefore also be regarded as a social construct. In reality approximately >2% of the global population do not possess all the characteristics that are considered traditionally male or female when they are born and are defined as intersex.

**Gender** is often conflated with sex but in reality is a separate but core component of what defines an individual and their role within society and how they identify, define and express themselves. Gender has been dealt with in the context of activism, political organising, interpersonal relationships, but also in academia. Gender studies mainly originates from the anterior academic programmes of Women's studies, which is currently developing and expanding the definition of what gender is quite rapidly. A central assumption in this field however, is based on the concept that gender is a social construct. This is generally understood to mean that gender roles and behaviours considered acceptable for a person of any given gender have no correlation to a person's biological sex, but is a result of the norms of the society in which a person lives. It is also important to note that gender is not just framed within the traditionally western and binary definitions of man/woman but also incorporates genders recognised in other societies such as hijra which exists in many South Asian societies and two spirits which exists in differing forms within Native American cultures. In a western context, non-binary gender identities that sit in between and apart from the genders of man/woman such as agender or genderfluid are also valid and increasingly recognised.

**Sexuality** is what a person feels and wishes to experience in order to enjoy themselves in terms of personal sexual interests, behaviours, intimacy with themselves and others as well as personal sexual fulfilment. There are as many possible combinations of these factors as there are people in the world, and it includes everything from what a person finds arousing to other factors such as fetishes that may or may not contribute to one's overall sexual fulfilment.

**Sexual Orientation** can be defined as the various elements of attraction that people may or may not possess towards other people. The labels that we put on these different orientations are determined and defined by the individual and also by the societies and cultures in which they navigate.

**Normativity** is the phenomenon of how one set of norms (social rules) determine what actions and outcomes are moral, desirable or acceptable vs. immoral, undesirable and unacceptable (Darwall Stephen, 2001). Norms can be universal on a global scale, norms can be restricted to smaller groups and they may also differ within a group depending on one's social identities (e.g. one's assigned gender). Gender roles are based on norms of what behaviours are suitable or unsuitable depending on one's assigned sex, or, what sex one is perceived as by the society one is in. Heteronormativity can be described as one universal set of norms as heterosexuality is widely considered to be desirable worldwide, and, people are assumed to be heterosexual unless they prove otherwise. Heteronormativity creates a hierarchy ("Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality", Rubin G., 1992; <https://tinyurl.com/yy2advcc>) where other sexualities from the sexuality spectrum are labeled as tolerable at best and punishable at worst, which can lead to persecution and criminalisation.

**Intersectionality** is an approach to explore the dynamic between co-existing social identities and how different forms of discrimination interact and strengthen each other. People can be subjects to multiple forms of oppression and discrimination because they belong to, or are perceived as belonging to, more than one marginalised group. Imagine this: an immigrant woman might experience womanhood differently compared to a local woman who does not face racism combined with sexism. In these social intersections where multiple systems of oppression interact, they are multiplied as they empower each other and create a complex and specific system of oppression that is not the mere sum of each oppressive structure. To have an intersectional perspective is to maintain an inclusive approach and understanding of the diversity of each person's background and experiences, and to not generalise or homogenise social struggles.

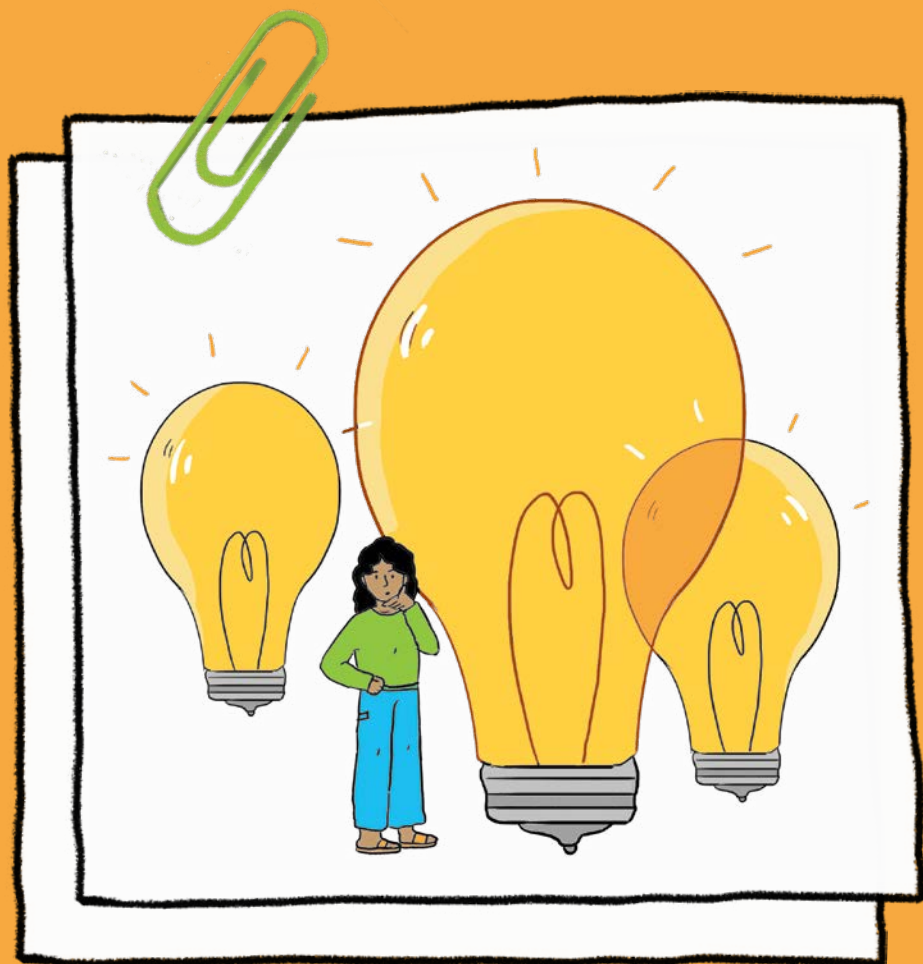


When using the toolkit we encourage you to maintain a **sexpositive approach**. Sex positivity refers to an anti-shaming view of sex and having a healthy relationship to sex. What is sex and what is healthy is up to every individual to define for themselves (e.g. how often, with whom, in what ways etc.). Having a lot of sex and having no sex are equally healthy just like having sex with only yourself or having sex with many other people. The norm of what a sexually active person looks like (e.g. young, fit and without functional variations) needs to be dismantled and questioned. Stay away from assumptions that reproduce normativity or stigma or address them when they do come up. Any sexual activity to which all included parties give their consent to is considered as healthy.

A more complex dictionary of terms is available in Free to be you and me: Toolkit for youth workers, volunteer coordinators and trainers, <https://sci.ngo/resource/free-to-be-you-and-me/>



## 6. Space for your ideas



Bring more life to this toolkit by adding extra pages with your own ideas or (local) resources.

