

### 1.2.7 Gender sensitivity

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Gender equality can be sensitive in certain contexts, particularly if it includes any reference to sexual orientation. Although gender equality is theoretically mainstreamed and supported through the legal frameworks and international commitments applying in all EaP countries, women are still not able to fully exercise their rights because the implementation and enforcement of those laws are not at the desired level. Gender analysis carried out by the British Council via desk research in 2018/19 as well as our experience in the region, tells us that although young women have equal access to education and have a high attainment level, they face challenges accessing well-paid jobs and holding higher positions. The traditional patriarchal culture and traditional stereotypes prevailing in many EaP countries further contribute to women's low self-esteem. Mainstreaming gender equality through the Learning Hubs will be one of the project's priorities. This will be done not only through ensuring equal participation of men and women in the project but also through teachers' training on how to promote a gender-sensitive environment in the classroom and address the gender imbalances and stereotypes that continue to be reinforced through school culture, curricula, and textbooks, as well as mass media.

We have planned several measures to ensure that gender is fully mainstreamed in the delivery of the programme.

First, we will ensure that both **boys and girls equally benefit** from the programme.

- Before the launch of the project, we will undertake equality screening of the programme using the British Council's Equality Screening and Impact Assessment guide. This will ensure that we identify any gaps and challenges in advance and undertake necessary measures to reach out and provide equal access for boys and girls to benefit from the programme.
- Our previous experience and data demonstrate, that while at secondary level we have secured initial gender balance across the English Clubs, in some countries the number of boys engaged through the clubs dropped to 30%. To address this, the project team will first have discussions with boys, their parents and teachers to understand the reasons for boys' passive engagement in comparison to girls'. The team will revise the Learning Hubs' programme as needed to make it more attractive for boys, for example by incorporating Premier Skills<sup>1</sup> resources to interest more boys to attend Learning Hubs.
- Twice a year we will carry out gender monitoring to gather disaggregated data by gender and analyse the participation of boys and girls and take necessary measures to address any imbalances.

Secondly, we will invest in the skills development of teachers to ensure **gender-sensitive environments** in the Learning Hubs in order to try to address stereotypes about women's roles and position across different sectors of society and to encourage confidence-building amongst young girls. To do this, we will:

- Use the Gender Toolkit developed as part of the 2018/19 CSSF-funded project to ensure that teachers have the appropriate skills for mainstreaming gender equality throughout the Learning Hub activities and in their teaching practice. The toolkit will enable teachers to use the right resources, games, stories and images to promote understanding and acceptance of the topic and to naturally influence changes of mindset and the building of confidence amongst young women towards pursuing more ambitious careers and pro-actively engaging in community development and peace-building activities.
- Enable students to learn about gender equality and explore the impact of gender roles and responsibilities, stereotypes and expectations, so as to think how these influence girls' and boys' opportunities and lives.

Gender will be **mainstreamed** through our internal and external monitoring processes.

- The British Council's **Gender Consultant** will regularly attend the project management calls and advise as necessary to ensure greater mainstreaming of gender through the project.
- We will review and manage any risks related to gender through our quarterly **risk management framework**. Medium to high risks will be escalated higher and the project team will seek advice from the British Council's Gender Team on addressing the risks identified.
- The **Result Evaluation and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Frameworks** will be revised to ensure that the tools that are used for data gathering and analyses collect disaggregated data and provide an opportunity for in-depth analyses on gender mainstreaming results and impact.

Finally, we will work with our partners with specific expertise in this field in the EaP region, such as UNFPA and other organisations, to learn from their experience and to incorporate their best practice / resources into the project.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://premierskillenglish.britishcouncil.org/>